

Intimacy and Solitude - Luke 4:38-44

We are going to pick up in the gospel of Luke where we left off a couple of weeks ago. The events we are about to read come just after Jesus rebuked an unclean demon in the synagogue. After witnessing this, the people were amazed that His words commanded such authority and power. Rob did an amazing job presenting this text. I was greatly blessed by the 3 application points: Walk in Authority, The Opposition of the Enemy, and The kingdom of Darkness Will Fall. There is some overlap with the current passage, and I am going to avoid repeating much of what Rob has already stated so not to be redundant. If you didn't hear his last sermon, I suggest you go onto the website and give it a listen.

Let us go into today's text:

Luke 4:38-44 (ESV)

"And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. ³⁹ And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.

⁴⁰ Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. ⁴¹ And demons also came out of many, crying, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

⁴² And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, ⁴³ but he said to them, "I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose." ⁴⁴ And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea."

Luke and the other gospel authors used many techniques in their writing, as guided by the Spirit of God, to bring the reader into the text. One of these techniques is called juxtaposition. **Juxtaposition** is an act or instance of placing two elements close together or side by side. This is often done in order to compare or contrast the two or to show similarities or differences between them. This is extremely relevant to believers in Jesus Christ because in His Person is both God and man residing together. The interconnection of which is a mystery and a miracle that only God can fathom. Yet, as believers who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God, we are in a constant struggle with our flesh. Our old self, in the flesh, is juxtaposed to our new self, in His Spirit. In the same way, we are creatures that desire intimate relationships, but also require times of solitude. This is demonstrated by Jesus' example in the current passage.

In this life, as we follow Jesus' example, we grow in our faith and, even though we may not try, we sometimes act counter to God's will. We do what we don't want to do. Have you ever heard the phrase, "They're not acting like themselves today."? The same cannot be said about God. He always acts according to His character.

We cannot separate who God is from what He does. He is who He is because He does what He does, and He does what He does because He is who He is.

Exodus 3:9-14 (ESV)

“And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. ¹⁰ Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” ¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?” ¹² He said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

¹³ Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” ¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

God chose to reveal Himself to His people in various forms at different times. This culminates in the Person of Jesus Christ, as testified to by His disciples, and in whom God will be glorified when He returns to gather the people of every nation and separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And His disciples, from which we have the New Testament writings, did not testify on their own, but they spoke from God as they were carried along by His Spirit. It is of utmost importance that we seek Him in His Word and by His Spirit.

We will draw from the parallel passages, Matthew 8:14-17 & Mark 1:29-39, to better understand the events and their context.

1. Luke 4:38-39 (ESV): “And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. ³⁹ And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.”
 - a. Even though he was not present to witness the event, Luke was a doctor and would have had a good understanding of her condition, as it was explained to him by eyewitness accounts. We are not told how serious her condition was, a high fever could result from a cold, flu, or it could have been a more serious infection.
 - b. ‘They’ in verse 38 refers those in Peter’s house, and they petitioned Jesus on her behalf for healing. They had just been amazed at His authority in the synagogue, and they had faith that He had authority over sickness as well.
 - c. In Matthew 8:14-15 (ESV): “And when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him.”
 - d. In Mark 1:30-31 (ESV): “Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told him about her. ³¹ And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them.”
 - e. From the 3 passages we see the full picture as Jesus who stood over Peter’s mother-in-law and having rebuked the fever, He touched her hand, and lifted her up.
 - f. Here are 4 important aspects from this healing.
 - i. The fever left her and immediately.
 - ii. There was no recovery time after the healing.
 - iii. Her attitude after the healing was to serve.
 - iv. There was an intimacy in Jesus’ healing as He touched her hand to lift her up. He was not afraid to touch her even though she was sick.

- v. Jesus passed this authority onto His disciples and we see miraculous healings by Peter and Paul. This authority to heal, immediacy of the healing, and the attitude change from the healing is also seen when Peter healed the beggar who was lame from birth in Acts 3:7-8. Here we read “And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. ⁸ And leaping up, he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.” I love how each one had a unique expression of worship after receiving God’s healing touch.
2. Luke 4:40-41 (ESV): “Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. ⁴¹ And demons also came out of many, crying, “You are the Son of God!” But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.”
- a. Result of Jesus’ increasing popularity in the region was that **all** those with **any** sick were brought to Him.
 - i. We may wonder about their motivation: did they want the healing, or did they want to know the healer?
 - b. Again, we see the intimacy in which Jesus healed them **all** through the way He laid His hands on every one of them.
 - i. There is not one disease, sickness, or ailment that Jesus does not have authority over.
 - c. Demons came out of many and cried out “You are the Son of God!” and they knew He was the Christ.
 - i. We read that **many** had demons come out, not all. Not all who were sick had demons come out. We cannot attribute sickness to demons.
 - ii. In *A Pocket Lexicon to the Greek New Testament*, they make a distinction between ‘sons of God’ and ‘the Son of God’. The phrase ‘sons of God’ is seen in an ordinary sense as referring to the angels and to demons and it can also refer to all mankind as having been created by Him and in some cases the saints. But in the unique sense, Jesus is the only Begotten Son of God and is specially united with Him.
 - iii. They knew He was the Christ (Christos or Messiah), God’s representative on earth, by whom His will is perfectly performed¹. Christ or Messiah means the Anointed One. There were three types of people that were anointed in Israel: prophets, priests and kings. Anyone who was anointed in Israel could be considered a messiah in an ordinary sense. But Israel was promised a single individual, The Messiah, who would be consecrated or anointed by God as all three. The Hebrew name given to Jesus, Yesh’ua, means Jesus is salvation, and as the Christ, He is the Anointed One of God. Let’s examine more closely Jesus as The Prophet, The High Priest, and The King of Kings.
 - This is best seen in Revelation 1:4-5 (ESV) “John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is

¹ Souter, A. (1917). [*A Pocket Lexicon to the Greek New Testament*](#) (p. 267). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.”

- The prophets were the mouthpiece of God, His faithful witness, speaking what they heard from Him. In Deuteronomy 18:18 the Lord told Moses “I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.” Jesus is the Prophet, the very Word of God, and speaks according to God’s Authority. Hebrews 1:1-2 (ESV) “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.”
 - As a mediator between God and man, the high priest would enter the Holy Place and offer a sacrifice to God on behalf of the people on the Day of Atonement. Hebrews 9: 11-12 (ESV) “But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) ¹² he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.”
 - Kings were established for Israel by God for peace, prosperity, and the welfare of the nation, the prototypical king being David, a man after God’s own heart. However, we have a King greater than David. Revelation 19:11-16 (ESV) “Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. ¹³ He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. ¹⁵ From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. ¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.” This is our hope in the soon coming King!
- d. In Matthew 8:16-17(ESV), we read “That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: “He took our illnesses and bore our diseases.””
- i. Also from the Pocket Greek Lexicon, a Messianic title used by Jesus Himself was ‘*the Son of Man*,’ representing Himself as the whole human race in one Man, who has to suffer but will be glorified²
 - ii. 1 Peter 2:24-25 (ESV) “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been

² Souter, A. (1917). [*A Pocket Lexicon to the Greek New Testament*](#) (p. 267). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

healed. ²⁵ For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”

3. Luke 4:42-44 (ESV): “And when it was day, he departed and went into a desolate place. And the people sought him and came to him, and would have kept him from leaving them, ⁴³ but he said to them, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.” ⁴⁴ And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judea.”
 - a. The next morning He departed to a desolate place. He left those who He was living with in a close and intimate way to be in solitude, even for a short time.
 - i. Mark 1:35 (ESV) “Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.”
 - ii. Jesus knew that real intimacy came in solitude with the Father and He modelled this for us.
 - iii. 6 reasons Jesus chose solitude:
 - **To prepare for a major task** Luke 4:1-2, 14-15. After Jesus was baptized, He spent 40 days praying in the wilderness. After this He was tempted by Satan and then began His public ministry.
 - **To recharge after hard work** Mark 6:30-32. Jesus sent the 12 disciples out to do ministry. When they returned, He encouraged them to separate from the people who were following them to rest.
 - **To work through grief** Matthew 14:1-13. After Jesus learned that his cousin John the Baptist had been beheaded, He went away by Himself. Yes, even the Son of God grieves.
 - **Before making an important decision** Luke 6:12-13. Early in His ministry Jesus spent the whole night alone in prayer. The next day He chose his 12 disciples.
 - **In a time of distress** Luke 22:39-44. Hours before Jesus was arrested, He went to the Mt. of Olives and went a short distance away from His disciples to pray. He was in great emotional agony knowing what he was about to face.
 - **To focus on prayer** Luke 5:16. Many times in Jesus’ ministry He spent time alone in prayer.
 - b. The people sought Him and came to Him.
 - i. Mark 1:36-37 (ESV) “Simon and his companions went to look for him, ³⁷ and when they found him, they exclaimed: “Everyone is looking for you!””
 - ii. They came to Him than they found Him in the desolate place. It seems like they knew where to look for Him. Also, there was an urgency in finding Him.
 - c. They would have kept Him from leaving them.
 - i. They want Him to stay. The word ‘kept’, in verse 42 of Luke 4, has the idea of holding fast or holding something back, like to take possession of, or to restrain something the way a ship is tied to the dock. Jesus could not be restrained.
 - ii. They marveled at His Authority and miracles.

- d. Jesus told them that he must preach the good news to other towns, for He was sent for this purpose.
 - i. In Luke 19 we see the encounter Jesus had with Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector. Upon Zacchaeus realizing who Jesus is receiving Him joyfully, we read starting in verse 8 (ESV): “And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.”⁹ And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham.”¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

Three Applications:

1. Find a place of solitude.
 - a. Jesus often withdrew to a solitary place as an example.
 - b. We should seek Jesus in the solitary places and find intimacy with the Father.
 - c. It is a place to be free from the distraction of this world. Colossians 3:1-2 (ESV) “If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. “
 - d. Where is your solitary place to be intimate with the Lord? [Time spent in solitude with God is not time spent alone](#). Our intimate relationships will thrive as we draw closer to Him.
2. Put your relationship with God first.
 - a. Our intimacy with God should make all other relationships seem as hate.
 - b. Seek first the kingdom of heaven. Jeremiah 29:13 (ESV) “You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.”
 - c. Are there any relationships in your life that are keeping you out of the close intimate relationship with God?
3. Love others, because God loves you.
 - a. A person that receives the healing touch of Jesus, that is the true healing of salvation, will honor Him with their lives, not out of obligation but out of love. This is the same love that caused God to send His only Begotten Son to take the sins of us all upon Himself and offer forgiveness to all who believe.
 - b. Just like the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law and the beggar lame from birth, the effect of true healing results in a heart of worship and a life of love.
 - c. Do you believe this morning? If so, love God and love others. If not, the gift of God is eternal life and is available to you if would but believe and trust Him as Lord and Savior.

I will end with 1 Corinthians 4:7-18 (ESV) “But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.⁸ We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair;⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;¹⁰ always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.¹¹ For we who live are always being given over to death for

Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. ¹²So death is at work in us, but life in you.

¹³Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak, ¹⁴knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. ¹⁵For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

¹⁶So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, ¹⁸as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal."