

Connecting with God's Power

Opening Text: Luke 5:17-26

Introduction: I love every one of these passages about Jesus. I have a passion for these accounts of the Gospels. It is so important to pursue the revelation of Who Jesus really is. We are not done yet knowing Him. 2 Corinthians 3:18 says that we become what we behold – the more we see Jesus the greater the change in our lives.

1. The 'teachers of the Law' convention

V.17a - *Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem.*

In this passage, we see Jesus speaking to a crowd. It was not the usual crowd of the marketplaces, nor the crowd of common people that followed Him to the desert. This was a more sophisticated audience, an educated crowd – they were Pharisees and teachers of the Law.

They had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. *Every town!* – This looked like a convention for educated religious leaders. They had travelled from far and wide, no doubt at some expense, to come and hear this Rabbi from Galilee.

The conference started well, with a great teaching session by Jesus. However, what followed was unlike anything they had ever seen or heard.

V. 26^b - *"We have seen strange things today!"*

The real Jesus doesn't do the mundane and predictable. As you and I seek to know Him more, we will find that He will always exceed our wildest expectations.

4 statements from each of the 4 gospels that describe well what it was like to be around Jesus:

- **Matthew 9:33** - *33 And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marvelled, saying, "It was never seen like this in Israel!"*
- **Mark 2:12** - *12 Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"*
- **John 9:32** - *Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind.*
- **Luke 5:26 AMPC** - *26 And overwhelming astonishment and ecstasy seized them all, and they recognized and praised and thanked God; and they were filled with and controlled by reverential fear and kept saying, We have seen wonderful and strange and incredible and unthinkable things today!*

Jesus did things that had never been seen, things that had never been heard of, and that were unthinkable. Jesus came as an extraordinary Jesus.

2. Happy with teaching but missing the power

17 - *Now it happened on a certain day, as He was **teaching**, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. **And the power of the Lord was present to heal them.***

We all know that this passage included the healing of the man lowered from the roof. However, in the context we see that the power of God was present to *heal them* – Heal them who were listening - that included all the Pharisees and teachers of the Law. The power was present for everybody! However, there is no record here that anyone received healing, other than the paralysed man, who joined the meeting as it was already in progress.

Why is that? – I believe that part of it is expectation, or rather, lack of it.

Part of it could also be that their interest, their only focus, was simple the ‘teaching’.

Well, Jesus is revealed here as not just a “teacher” but also a “healer”! Thank God for good teaching but let’s not act as if God’s power is absent. No. the power of the Lord was ‘present’ to heal. Not absent. Let us never be just happy with good theology but lack power. We can have both.

3. Making a power connection

The power of the Lord was present to heal

- It was present but it was inactive.
- It was available, but unclaimed.

a) That power to heal was always present with Jesus:

Luke 6:19 – *And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all”*

b) In **Luke 8**, we see how Jesus moving through a crowd of people, suddenly stopped to acknowledge that He felt power go out from Him

A woman with an issue of blood for 12 years made a connection with His power through her faith and was healed (Luke 8:43-48).

I wonder how many times that happens when we come to the presence of Jesus: we come, we sit, we hear the teaching, but nothing changes:

- Either because that is not the expectation we came with, or

- Simply because we do not place a demand on what is available from God. And so, the power is present but we act as if it was absent.
- c) However, that is not what happened to the paralysed man. He was not supposed to be in the “Teachers of the Law Convention” and there was no room for him inside. However, his faith-filled friends placed a demand on that healing power available and the man connected with that power!

It is great to be in a meeting and hear the word. However, when the word is mixed with faith it produces results.

Hebrews 4:2 - *For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.*

- d) I love the story of these 4 men and their faith. They came **firstly** to bring their friend to Jesus (how important that is, that we bring our friends to Jesus) but **secondly**, they brought with them their faith.

When we come together, let’s bring our faith with us. The faith they brought ignited the atmosphere and a great healing took place.

Final thoughts: Learning to know Jesus

V.21 - *And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”*

Who is this? – that is the most frequently asked question about Jesus in the gospel of Luke:

- **Luke 7: 49^b** – *“who is this who even forgives sins?”*
- **Luke 8:25^b** – *Who can this be? For He commands even the winds and water, and they obey Him!”*
- **Luke 9:9** - *Herod said, “John I have beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things?” So he sought to see Him.*
- **Luke 9:18** - *18 And it happened, as He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, “Who do the crowds say that I am?” 19 So they answered and said, “John the Baptist, but some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets has risen again.” 20 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered and said, “The Christ of God.” BINGO!*

An uneducated, simple fisherman with an accent from Galilee like Peter, knew Jesus accurately. The pharisees and the teachers of the Law with all their education kept asking *Who is this?* They didn’t know Jesus. In fact, the whole event was very strange to them although they were learned men. The Apostle Paul, warned Timothy of people that are *‘always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth’ (2 Timothy 3:7)*

All our learning should result in a greater revelation of the Truth - Jesus. In all our learning let's learn about Jesus. Let us know and pursue the knowledge of God (Hosea 6:3). We became what we behold.

And with all our learning let's never act as if there is nothing else beyond teaching itself. No. The power of the Lord is present to heal, transform, change people's lives. Let's connect with His power with expectation, placing a demand on the anointing and taking steps of faith!