

# Luke 5:17-26

## "Our Amazing Savior"

July 14, 2024

### 1. Intro

- a. Our passage for this morning is in Luke 5, verses 17-26...
  - i. But the story actually begins in John chapter 5 (you don't need to turn there)
    1. In this chapter, we find Jesus back in Jerusalem for a feast, and in Jerusalem he encounters a man who had been paralyzed for 38 years
      - a. This is the man who sat helplessly by the pool called Bethesda, hoping year after year, month after month, day after day, to make it into the water when it was stirred
        - i. He believed that if he could just get into those waters, he would finally find healing
        - ii. But Jesus had other plans for this man
          1. So he asked him, *"Do you want to be healed?"*
            - a. Incredibly, the man DID NOT say "YES!", but instead complained about not being able to get into the water before everyone else
          2. But in spite of the fact that this man had no clue who it was that stood before him, Jesus said to the man, *"Get up, take up your bed, and walk..."*
            - a. And at once, this man who had been paralyzed for nearly FOUR DECADES, got up, rolled up his bed, and walked!
          3. Now this would have been an AMAZING miracle, except for one little fact...
            - a. Jesus healed the man on the Sabbath
              - i. Can you imagine the AUDACITY of Jesus to do such a thing?!
              - ii. Can you imagine what disregard Jesus was showing to his Father's rules by doing such work, ON THE SABBATH?!
  - b. Sure, we laugh and roll our eyes at such things, but for the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, this was absolutely unheard of
    - i. So verse 16 of John 5 says, *"this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath."*
    - ii. And instead of quietly walking away, Jesus very intentionally escalates the argument, as he replies in verse 17, *"My Father is working until now, and I am working."*
      1. And John says in verse 18, *"This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God."*
        - a. Friends, this is only the fifth chapter of John, and the religious leaders were ALREADY trying to figure out how they could KILL this man!
        - b. WHY?

- i. Because he was breaking the Sabbath
- ii. But ALSO because he was calling God his own Father, THEREFORE making himself EQUAL with God!

2. The heresy of this carpenter's son from Nazareth was absolutely unacceptable

- a. And so they began to try to figure out how they could rid themselves of this man

2. This is where we find ourselves in Luke 5

a. From Mark's account, we know that Jesus is back at Capernaum

- i. Mark says that Jesus was "at home," so most commentators believe that he was back at Peter's house, which served as a sort of "homebase" for him in that area

1. And so verse 17 begins...

2. *17On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal.*

a. There are many things we can note from this first verse...

i. Luke wants us to see that there aren't just a few Pharisees and Scribes gathered around on this day

1. There are Pharisees and teachers of the law from EVERY village of Galilee

2. Pharisees and teachers of the law from the surrounding region of Judea

3. And EVEN Pharisees and teachers of the law from Jerusalem itself

a. This was no small gathering of the religious leaders

i. There could have easily been 20 or 30, or maybe even more religious leaders in the house on this day

1. And many of them were probably THE top religious leaders – men from the very heart of Israel, Jerusalem

2. In fact, some of these men were very likely the men from John 5 who were seeking to kill Jesus

ii. This is important for us to realize

1. There were others in the house on this day, gathered to hear the teaching of Jesus

a. But one of the main reasons why the house was SO crowded was NOT because of the masses that were seeking healing and knowledge

i. But instead because of the Scribes and Pharisees who were seeking judgment and death

1. It's not hard for us to imagine the tension in that room

a. The eager anticipation of those who had come to be blessed on this day

b. And the cold, bitter condemnation of those who had come to set things straight

i. And in the middle of all of it, was the Lord Jesus

b. And Luke tells us that the power of the Lord was with him to heal

iii. But this makes us pause to ask a question, doesn't it?

1. When Luke says that the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal, does that mean that there were times when the power WAS NOT there?

a. We want to be very careful in answering this question

i. If we say that there are times when Jesus did not have the power to heal – or in other words, he was not capable of healing, even if he

wanted to – then we would be forced to separate the divine nature of Christ from his human nature

1. In essence, we would end up with the conclusion that Christ was a man just like us, but when he was anointed with the power of God, THEN he could perform miracles
  - a. This belief actually has historical roots in the Kenosis Heresy that emerged in the church in the late 1800's
  - b. Philippians 2 says that Christ emptied himself while he was here on earth as a man, so that must mean that he emptied himself of many of his divine powers
    - i. Again, Jesus was just a man like us – except for those unique moments when he was anointed by God to perform signs and wonders
- b. We've talked before about Bethel Church in Redding, California, and how they have a rapidly growing influence in many churches today
  - i. Although they outwardly deny the Kenosis heresy's view of Christ, their teaching would suggest otherwise
    1. One of their primary beliefs is that Christ serves as an example for us of what WE are capable of, if we would just believe
      - a. If our faith is strong enough, then the anointing power of God will be with us, and we can heal the sick
      - b. If we confess all the right things, then the anointing power of God will be with us, and we can speak prosperity into our lives
      - c. If we would just believe, then the anointing power of God will be with us, and we will do even greater works than Christ himself!
  - c. This is the danger of separating the divine nature of Jesus from his human nature
    - i. It eventually then becomes all about us, doesn't it?
2. So how do we answer the question then? Did Christ not always have this power of healing, at all times?
  - a. Matthew Poole says in his commentary:
    - i. "Doubtless he always had this power, for he was always *the Lord that healeth us*. The Divine nature once united to the human was never separated from Christ, BUT it did not always put forth itself, being as to that directed by his will."
      1. The power of the Lord to heal was ALWAYS with Jesus, for he was God in the flesh
      2. But it was not always his WILL to heal
        - a. We see this in Mark, chapter 6, when Jesus was rejected in his hometown of Nazareth
        - b. Verse 5 says that "he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. And he marveled at their unbelief"
          - i. Jesus, the Son of God, was fully capable of healing many in Nazareth
          - ii. But it was not his will to do so, for the people of his own hometown had rejected him

- b. But that was not the case on this day in Capernaum
          - i. This was a day for making a statement
          - ii. This was a day for drawing a line in the sand
          - iii. This was a day for the power of the Lord to be on full display
        - iv. And so verse 18 continues...
3. <sup>18</sup>And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus, <sup>19</sup>but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus.
- a. Again, don't forget that the reason why the house is so crowded is because of the Scribes and the Pharisees
    - i. Not only were their cold and hateful hearts seeking to persecute Jesus, but they were ALSO hindering those who needed him the most from being able to get to him
      - 1. There's a lesson for us in that, isn't there?
        - a. What manmade traditions have WE created in OUR day that are hindering others from seeing Christ?
        - b. What rules and regulations have WE created in the church that actually stand between Jesus and those who need to be healed by him?
          - i. Jesus spent a lot of time teaching in the synagogues, and even in the Temple
          - ii. But, as we'll see next week, Jesus also spent a lot of time hanging out with tax collectors and sinners
            - 1. We ARE called to be holy and set apart
            - 2. But we are ALSO called to point the sick and the needy sinner to Jesus
              - a. And so we must be ever-vigilant not to allow our religiosity to stand in their way
- b. Well, as we see from this story, the crowds of Scribes and Pharisees were NOT going to stop this man and his friends on this day!
  - i. So they carry him up on the roof
    - 1. They actually dismantle part of the roof
    - 2. And they lower the man down right in front of Jesus
      - a. Now the carpenter in me cringes a little at what these people did
        - i. I don't know exactly what all is entailed in removing the roof tiles of a 1<sup>st</sup> century Jewish home
        - ii. But a part of me wants to say, "Now who is going to fix that?!"
          - 1. You have to wonder if Peter is standing off to the side thinking, "Man, I just had that roof replaced last year... now look at what they have done!!"
      - b. But Jesus sees beyond all of these material concerns, doesn't he?
        - i. As verse 20 says...
4. <sup>20</sup>And when he saw their faith, he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."
- a. It's interesting... in John 5 when Jesus heals the paralytic, he heals the man first, and then LATER addresses the man's sins
    - i. John tells us that later that day, Jesus found the man in the temple and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you."
  - b. But in THIS story, Jesus BEGINS by saying, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."
    - i. So what is the reason for the different approach?
      - 1. Jesus doesn't do anything on a whim
        - a. He had purpose in EVERYTHING he did, and EVERYTHING he said

- ii. So WHY, when he sees this paralytic laying before him, does he say, “Man, your sins are forgiven...”?
    - 1. I believe without a doubt that it was because Jesus KNEW who his main audience was in that room
      - a. He knew that these religious leaders, with their cold and hateful stares, had come to stand against him
      - b. He knew the hardness in their hearts as they sat there and kept the sick and needy from entering the house
      - c. He knew that they desired to kill him, for back in Jerusalem he had called God his Father, and had sought to make himself EQUAL with God
    - 2. Jesus knew what was in their hearts, so he threw a rock at the hornets nest and told the man his sins had been forgiven
      - a. He got the response he was looking for, didn't he?
        - i. Verse 21 says...
5. <sup>21</sup>And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”
- a. Here we see THE great error of the religious leaders of Israel
    - i. They were spot-on in their second question...
      - 1. “Who can forgive sins but God alone?”
        - a. They were absolutely correct with those words
    - ii. But where they utterly failed was in not seeing Jesus for who he was
      - 1. They didn't see the Son of God before them... they saw the son of Joseph, the carpenter
      - 2. They didn't see the Word made flesh... they saw a man speaking blasphemies
        - a. As John wrote in John 1:9-11,
          - i. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.
  - iii. The Pharisees and the teachers of the law SHOULD HAVE BEEN the ones who recognized the Messiah FIRST
    - 1. THEY were supposed to be the experts in the Scriptures
    - 2. THEY were supposed to be the ones who most understood the heart of God
      - a. But they had become blinded in their sin
        - i. And so they did not see the Son of God before them... they simply saw a man uttering all sorts of ridiculous blasphemy
  - iv. But Jesus IS the Son of God, and so he sees DIRECTLY into the thoughts of their hearts
    - 1. Verse 22 says...
6. <sup>22</sup>When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, “Why do you question in your hearts? <sup>23</sup>Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’?”
- a. Now this is a bit of a rhetorical question, isn't it?
    - i. On one hand, you could argue that it is easier to say, “Your sins are forgiven,” because who can verify whether or not it is true?
      - 1. Any false teacher can go around telling people their sins are forgiven...
        - a. We see that happening all over the place today, don't we?
          - i. And people follow these false teachers IN DROVES
      - 2. But I don't think that was what Jesus was referring to in this question
        - a. I believe he was speaking of TRUE forgiveness of sins

- i. As the Pharisees had rightly said, he was speaking of the TRUE forgiveness of sins that only GOD could grant
  - 3. So, which is easier?
    - a. To tell someone their sins are TRULY forgiven?
    - b. Or to tell a paralyzed man to get up and walk?
      - i. Well, the point Jesus is making is that they are both EQUALLY impossible for any mere man
        - 1. And this is made clear by his next statement...
- 7. <sup>24</sup>*But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” – he said to the man who was paralyzed – “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home.”*
  - a. In these words we find the first use in Luke’s Gospel of one of Jesus’ favorite names for himself...
    - i. The Son of Man
      - 1. This title that Jesus gives to himself is used 82 times in the New Testament
        - a. At one level, this title of “Son of Man” expresses the great humility of our Savior
          - i. Jesus was the very Son of God, yet he humbled himself, taking on our humanity, that he might seek and save the lost
          - ii. The Son of God left the glories of heaven to become the Son of Man, not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many
            - 1. Jesus as the Son of Man is the incomprehensible expression of God himself taking on human flesh
        - 2. But in this case, Jesus is not speaking to his humanity or his humility...
          - a. He is speaking to his AUTHORITY
          - b. And in doing so, he is pointing the thoughts of these Jewish religious leaders back to a passage of Scripture that would have been VERY familiar to them...
            - i. Daniel 7, verses 9 through 14 (let’s look at these together)
              - 1. <sup>9</sup>*As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. <sup>10</sup>A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened... <sup>13</sup>I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came ONE LIKE A SON OF MAN, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. <sup>14</sup>And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.*
      - c. What a GLORIOUS vision Daniel is given in these verses!!
        - i. Daniel sees the very throneroom of God himself
          - 1. Yet in this throneroom there is not just ONE throne placed, but verse 9 says that THRONES were placed
            - a. We don’t really think about this, but in Jewish theology there are MASSIVE implications for the fact that Daniel saw more than one throne in heaven

- i. Deuteronomy 6:4 says, “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is ONE.”
          - ii. There is only ONE God in heaven, and Yahweh is his name
          - iii. So why would Daniel see more than one throne??
        - b. The vision goes on...
      - 2. And in this vision, one like a son of man comes to be presented before God Almighty
        - a. And astonishingly, to this one like a son of man a KINGDOM is given!
          - i. Dominion... Glory...
          - ii. All peoples, nations, and languages will serve the one like a son of man
          - iii. And his kingdom will NEVER be destroyed!
    - d. Just think about the hearts of the people of Israel in those days
      - i. These were not the glory days of King David or King Solomon
      - ii. These were not even the days of restoration Israel experienced after their return from exile
        - 1. Israel was an occupied nation
        - 2. Fully under the rule and reign of Tiberius Caesar, hundreds of miles away in Rome
          - a. Israel had been longing for their Kingdom to be restored
          - b. They had been longing for a Davidic King who would come and establish their nation once again
          - c. Surely they were longing for an earthly representation of the one like a son of man that Daniel had foreseen centuries earlier
    - e. And now Jesus is here
      - i. He has come proclaiming the forgiveness of sins
      - ii. He has come preaching that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand
      - iii. He has come with the power to heal
        - 1. And he has come, constantly referring to HIMSELF as “The Son of Man”
        - 2. Jesus KNEW that HE was the one in Daniel’s vision
          - a. And he laid claim to that title in front of everyone in the house on that day
          - b. HE was the Son of Man
            - i. And ALL authority had been given to him!
    - ii. And to prove his point without a shadow of a doubt, he says to the man who was paralyzed, *“I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home.”*
      - 1. And verse 25 says...
8. <sup>25</sup>And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God.
- a. My friends, how has Jesus healed YOU in YOUR lifetime?
    - i. Has he healed you from some sort of physical sickness or ailment?
      - 1. Then be like this man, and spend your days glorifying God

- ii. Has Jesus brought healing to your heart and to your emotions, healing the wounds of emotional trauma in your life?
    - 1. Then be like the healed paralytic, and spend your days glorifying God
  - iii. Most importantly, has Jesus healed you from your disease of sin, as we talked about last week?
    - 1. Has he purchased you by his very own blood?
    - 2. Has he secured your pardon by his own sacrifice upon the cross?
    - 3. Has he torn down the veil in your own heart, that you might be one with your Father in heaven?
      - a. Then be like the man who no longer needed his friends to carry him around on a mat
      - b. Be like the man who no longer needed to be lowered through the ceiling tiles of Peter's home
      - c. Be like this man who not only was able to walk, but whose sins had been forgiven
        - i. And go on your way, GLORIFYING GOD
          - 1. For it was GOD's plan from the foundation of the world to bless YOU in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places
          - 2. It is GOD's love that sent His Son into this world to pay the price that YOU could never pay, to purchase the forgiveness that you would never deserve
          - 3. And it is GOD's grace that has enabled YOU to be saved
            - a. HE is the One who made ALL of this possible
            - b. HE is the One who determined that it be so
            - c. HE is the One who has forgiven YOU from your sin
        - d. Christians, we must remind ourselves of these things every single day
          - i. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 10:31,
            - 1. <sup>31</sup>So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do ALL to the glory of God.
              - a. EVERYTHING
                - i. Everything you do...
                - ii. Everything you say...
                - iii. Everything you think...
              - b. Do ALL things to the glory of God
                - i. For HE has healed your soul
                - ii. HE has forgiven your sin!
  - iv. The healed man got up... he grabbed his bed...
    - 1. And he went home, glorifying God
      - a. And Luke writes in the next verse,
9. <sup>26</sup>And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."
- a. How amazing would it have been if the "all" in verse 26 included the Scribes and the Pharisees?
    - i. Luke says that amazement "seized" them all...
      - 1. Wouldn't that have been incredible if the Pharisees had been seized with amazement?
      - 2. Wouldn't that have been wonderful if the religious leaders were filled with awe?
      - 3. Wouldn't that have been astonishing if THEY were the ones glorifying God for all that they had just seen and heard?



- a. Unfortunately, as we'll see next week, these Scribes and Pharisees were not seized with amazement
  - i. In spite of everything they had just witnessed, we'll see in verse 30 that they are still grumbling against Jesus
    - 1. Isn't that strikingly similar to what we read back in the Old Testament, in the story of the Exodus?
      - a. God was RIGHT THERE in the midst of His people
      - b. He was RIGHT THERE, performing signs and wonders for all to see
      - c. He was RIGHT THERE, dwelling among them, and saying to them, "I will be your God, and you will be my people"
    - 2. And what was their response?
      - a. They grumbled against him with every unexpected turn in their journey
- b. Brothers and sisters in Christ, what do people see when they look at YOUR life?
  - i. Do they see one who is SEIZED with amazement at all that Christ has done on their behalf?
  - ii. Do they see one who glorifies God for graciously rescuing them out of the slavery of their sin?
  - iii. Do they see one who is filled with awe, as they contemplate how extraordinary their Savior truly is?
    - 1. Or do they see someone who grumbles at every unexpected turn?
      - a. Do they see someone who grumbles because they don't have any steaks on their table, even though God daily blesses them with manna from heaven?
      - b. Do they see someone who grumbles because life in the wilderness is hard, even though God daily blesses them with the waters of eternal life?
      - c. Do they see someone who grumbles about the light and momentary afflictions of this world, even though it is THROUGH these afflictions that God has blessed us with an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison?
- c. The people in that house who WERE NOT cold and lifeless like the religious leaders realized that something EXTRAORDINARY was happening in their midst
  - i. But they had no idea what was to come!
    - 1. For the One like a Son of Man had arrived
      - a. With his coming into this world came the very Kingdom of God
        - i. Through his perfect and sinless life, Jesus became the ONLY spotless lamb who could atone for our sin
        - ii. Through his willing obedience to his Father, Jesus purchased our forgiveness upon the cross
        - iii. Through his death and resurrection, as he now sits on the throne placed for him at the right hand of God, Jesus reigns victorious over Satan, the god of this age
          - 1. He has bound the strongman
          - 2. He has brought the Kingdom of God to earth
            - a. And this Kingdom advances to every corner of the world, as the Gospel is taken to the nations
- d. Friends, do you realize what an extraordinary story this is that you have been caught up into?
- e. Do you realize what an extraordinary plan this is that God is fulfilling before our very eyes?
- f. Do you realize how extraordinary your Savior is?

- i. When we begin to grasp the weight of these eternal realities, THEN we will be seized with amazement
- ii. THEN we will live out our days glorifying God, filled with awe of all the things we have witnessed
- iii. THEN we will exclaim with all of our hearts, “We have seen EXTRAORDINARY things today!!”