

### **III** – speaking with authority

My first degree was in Mathematics, and it was really hard. But there was one guy in all of my Maths classes who was about 3 years younger than everyone else. He finished high school very early. He was a lovely guy. And he was really smart. He's one of those people who would go home on the first day of Uni and read the whole text book. And the next day, he would explain it to the lecturer who had trouble understanding it.

This guy just understood it. Everything. He just grasped it completely. And so if you had a question, or if the lecturer had a question, this was the guy to talk to! And when he had something to say during lectures, everyone listened.

This guy commanded attention. He was the authority in our year for everything about Mathematics. People came to him. People listened to him.

When Jesus spoke, people listened. He spoke with authority. With wisdom. With knowledge. He spoke and people listened.

And as we travel through the gospel of Luke, this is what we'll find Jesus doing again and again. He is speaking and people are listening. In Luke 5, Jesus is standing by the lake of Gennesaret and people are crowding around him to hear the Word of God that he is teaching. It's so crowded, that he steps into a boat and goes off shore a bit to teach people from the boat.

So this is the picture we're given of Jesus at the very beginning. He is the "go to" guy/. He is the one everyone listens to. He speaks with authority. But at this stage, people don't quite understand who he is. They don't understand that he is God himself on earth. They don't yet understand that he is the Messiah. So they listen to him, but they don't recognize him at this point in time.

**III** – While I was in Kenya last year, I was speaking to someone about Christian Colleges – and he seemed to know a lot about them. We got to talking about colleges in South Africa and he was quite knowledgeable. We talked about George Whitefield College. And I asked him who the new principal was. Then I realized it was Him. He was quite knowledgeable. He drew my attention. He spoke with authority. But I didn't recognize him at the time.

And that's where we are at with Jesus at this stage. He's showing people his authority and wisdom, but has not yet fully revealed his true identity. And the way he does that is ... very slowly. First by teaching. Then by miracles. Then finally by actually telling people. If he just announced himself, no one would believe his claims! But by slowly

revealing himself, people begin to get to know him and trust him and start to accept who he is.

So, after this great teaching, drawing crowds from everywhere, teaching off shore from a boat, Jesus tells the fishermen to go out to deep water and let down the nets.

The fisherman's name was Simon. He says to Jesus: "OK. We've worked hard and caught nothing all night, but OK. So they let down the nets and they fill up so much that the nets begin to break. They even call another boat over to help them pull in the huge catch.

So Jesus has taught with authority. And now he reveals a little more of himself. He knows where the fish are! No. Much more than that. Jesus has power over fish. And Simon realizes this. And so we have this great verse – 8:

*"he fell at Jesus' knees and said: "God away from me, Lord, I am a sinful man!"*

Simon, later to be known as the chief apostle Peter, sees Jesus. He sees that Jesus is from God. He sees that this is a righteous man. And he says: I don't belong in your presence. Go away from me, Lord."

And Jesus says back to him, verse 10:

*"Don't be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.*

Here is Jesus, teaching God's Word. Then he shows his power over fish. And then men leave their whole life behind to follow him. I wonder if you can catch the significance of that action of Simon and James and John. They pulled up their boats, and left everything.

Everything.

That's what Luke 5 is about. There are no half measures in following Jesus. It's everything or nothing.

And that's what the second story is about as well. The paralytic. From verse 17. Again, Jesus is teaching. People are coming from everywhere to hear him. And Jesus is given the power of the Spirit to heal. And so he's healing people, revealing more about who he is and the power he has.

Some men come carrying their paralysed friend on a mat. They can't get in to see Jesus because of the crowd. But they do not give up. Because they KNOW that Jesus can heal him. They climb on the roof, dig a hole through the middle of it, probably greatly upsetting the owner of the house who thought Jesus was just going to be teaching! Then lower him down to Jesus on a mat.

And Jesus saw their faith – verse 19. He saw that they believed he could heal. They trusted Jesus to heal. But does he heal the man? Verse 20:

*“When he saw their faith, he said: “Friend, your sins are forgiven.”*

When he sees the paralysed man, he says Your sins are forgiven!”

Now, WE know who Jesus is. WE know that’s important. But the people there at the time had no idea what he was doing!

The paralysed guy is probably thinking: “Well, that’s nice, but I can’t walk! And I thought you could heal me!”

But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law are there. They start thinking to themselves: Who does this guy think he is? Forgiving sins! Only GOD can forgive sins! This is blasphemy! He’s claiming to be God!

And that’s EXACTLY what Jesus was doing.

First he shows himself as a teacher with authority.

Then he shows his power over nature and over healing.

He shows his power over people – that they would leave everything to follow him.

And now, he shows his power over sin. The authority, the power, to forgive. In that one sentence Jesus says: “I AM GOD.” “I can forgive sins. I have the authority. I have the power to forgive. Because I AM GOD.”

And as Jesus slowly reveals himself more and more, he knows that the Pharisees and law teachers are thinking he’s a blasphemer. So he says to them:

“OK. What’s easier? To say “Your sins are forgiven”? Or to say “Get up and walk”?

OK. Just to show you I have the power and the authority to say “Your sins are forgiven”, I’ll also say “Get up and walk” just to prove to you my power.

So he says to the man: “Get up and walk.” And he does.

Again, it’s all or nothing. These men had to completely believe in Jesus’ power to heal, to cut through someone’s roof and throw him in front of Jesus. Many of us may not even have the faith to walk out the front of a church to be healed. But there they go – they give everything.

And Jesus – he’s not prepared just to heal the man. “Get up and walk” is so clichéd! No. Jesus wants to REALLY heal the man. He wants to forgive his sins. He wants to heal his relationship with God. He wants to heal his sinful heart. Everything. All or nothing.

And this is where the gospel of Luke leads us to – to think about the power of Jesus. He’s powerful over nature. Powerful over the hearts of men. Powerful over sickness. And powerful over sin. And it’s only chapter 5 so far!

But the response to Jesus is ALL or NOTHING.

Simon doesn't catch 5 or 10 or 20 fish. His nets BURST with fish!

Simon and James and John didn't leave some of their stuff and listen to Jesus for a little while longer. They left EVERYTHING and follow him.

Jesus taught with complete authority, and he healed people from every village of Judea, Jerusalem and Galilee.

And when the paralysed man comes for healing, his friends go ALL THE WAY – NOTHING stops them. They cut a hole in a roof and chuck him down. And Jesus doesn't just heal him from an earthly illness – he heals him from SIN.

So what' in this passage for us?

1. Jesus has complete authority. Over nature. Over people. Over sickness and even over sin. And he'll show some more stuff later on in Luke.
2. Jesus calls for people to leave EVERYTHING and follow him. He wants to be number 1 in our life. He wants to be King. He wants to be above everything in our lives.
3. Jesus wants to have power over our life in EVERYTHING. Most importantly, he wants to be KING over the sin in our life. He wants to heal us from SIN so we can be right with God.

Do you know, not a day goes by when we can say that we've been in control! Not one day. We can never get to the end of a day and say: "I was completely in control today!" Because we never are!

I just think of my family tree. My grandfather was hit and killed by a learner driver. My other grandfather died of a heart attack. My grandmother died of cancer. My cousin died from Cystic Fibrosis. 2 of my uncles died of Cancer. My dad has Parkinson's Disease.

Jesus walks in and says: "And in the middle of our chaotic uncontrollable lives, I want to claim authority! I want to be the authority over your WHOLE life. EVERYTHING! Your family, your work, your money, your time. I want you to leave everything and follow me. I want to be number one in your life. And, most of all, I want to claim authority over ALL THE SIN in your life. I want to take it away and take the punishment for it and set you free.

As we work through Luke, let's keep this in mind – Following Jesus means EVERYTHING or NOTHING. Either we accept his Kingship over EVERYTHING in our life, or he is King over NOTHING in our life.

It's a new year. 2014. All or Nothing?  
(Pray)

## Outline Summary:

### KING OF THE WORD

Jesus teaches with authority

“the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God.” (1)

### KING OVER FISH

Jesus fishes with authority

“let down the nets for a catch” (4)

### KING OVER PEOPLE

People follow Jesus’ authority

“So they... left everything and followed him.” (11)

### KING OVER SICKNESS

Jesus heals with authority

“And the power of the Lord was present fro him to heal the sick” (17)

### KING OVER SIN

Jesus forgives with authority

“Your sins are forgiven” (20)

### KING OVER US?

The teaching and work of Jesus reveal his true identity, his true authority, his true Kingship over the world and the over the lives of people.