Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Popularity and Power of Jesus
Scripture: Luke 6:17-19
Code: 42-83

We are going week by week through the gospel of Luke. We find ourselves in a brief paragraph from verses 17 to 19 of this sixth chapter. As I was thinking about the message for this week, I first went to this text and I read the verses. And while at first they perhaps seem a bit pedantic, a bit routine, they really overwhelm me. And I grabbed pen and I just started writing what was flooding into my mind that basically sort of arose out of these verses. Let me read them to you.

"And He descended with them and stood on a level place; and there was a great multitude of His disciples, and a great throng of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were being cured. And all the multitude were trying to touch Him for power was coming from Him and healing them all."

Whenever we gather together as believers, as we do on the Lord's day, whenever we come together, it is to worship, it is to worship our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. The church is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is our solemn duty, it is our great privilege to exalt and to praise Him forever who is the worthy One to whom is given power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing and dominion forever. We worship the Lord Jesus Christ who is the lion, powerful, majestic, deadly, who is at the same time the lamb, meek, humble and dying. The Lord Jesus who is both the lion, who is the slayer of sinners and the lamb who was slain for sinners...the Lord Jesus Christ has purchased us from sin and death and hell with His sacrifice as the lamb. And then He has conquered all our enemies eternally with His power as the lion so that the souls of every tribe and tongue and people and nation who have embraced Christ have become a kingdom of priests to our God and will reign with Him forever and ever what worship belongs to Jesus Christ and that is why we are gathered here.

The Scripture is the book about Him. The Old Testament is the revelation about His coming. The New Testament is the revelation about His arrival. And the Bible closes with the book of Revelation which is pre-written history about His return. Scripture is His story. It was He Himself on the road to Emmaus who said to the disciples that He was the theme of Scripture. It says that He opened the Scripture and spoke out of it of all the things concerning Himself. He is the one prophesied as the seed of the woman who would crush the head of Satan. He is the one true sacrifice whose death

provides a covering for shameful sinners. He is the only one whose death could finally satisfy the justice of God. He is the perfect sacrifice that pleases God. He is the real ark of safety who was the true refuge for Noah's family to survive the universal judgment of the Flood. He is the lion of Judah who shall destroy His enemies and reign forever. He is the true Son of David who will establish the one kingdom of righteousness and salvation on earth and in heaven. He is the eternal Son, the eternal King spoken of in the Psalms. He is the Redeemer, the Servant, the Deliverer spoken of by the prophets. The Old Testament is about Him. It anticipates Him. It predicts His coming with detail.

And then the New Testament continues the story. The four gospels record His arrival, His birth, His life, His death, His resurrection, His ascension, His coronation. And then comes the book of Acts which extends the history of the gospel as it moves out to impact the world. The book of Acts is followed by 21 epistles in the New Testament that explain the meaning of His birth, the meaning of His life, the meaning of His teaching and His death and His resurrection and His ascension and His return. And then comes that final book of Revelation which is the record of His return to judge the ungodly and to reward the righteous, to rule the earth and to create a new heaven and a new earth. The Lord Jesus is the theme of Scripture. It is a monumental privilege for us to have the biblical record. It is the true Word of God. It is the divinely inspired account of the life and ministry of the true God in human flesh, the Lord Jesus Christ. From beginning to end He is its theme.

You know me and you know I love the Bible, I love it all the way from, as the little boy said, "Geniuses to Revolution." I love the Scripture from cover to cover. But my favorite part of Scripture are the four gospels because in them is the story of Jesus Christ. You can see the glory of God in the Old Testament. You can see the attributes of God in the Old Testament. You can understand the great acts of God in the Old Testament. You can hear the Word of God in the Old Testament. But God becomes clear, manifest, revealed in Christ in a way that is even more intimate, more clear, more profound, more comprehensible, more understandable than any Old Testament vision of God. The record of that appearance of God in human flesh is contained in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. There we see God in all His glory, all His perfection manifest in Jesus Christ. Every page, every paragraph, every line of the gospels is dominated by the incomparable Jesus Christ. And that is even true of that brief text I read you a moment ago. I want us to look with Luke in those few words at the wonder of His life. This is a brief summary, those three verses. It doesn't record any event. It doesn't record any incident. It doesn't record any statements by Jesus. It doesn't record any specific miracle. There isn't any dialogue here. It is a summary.

Now remember, Luke's gospel was written to reveal and prove that Jesus is the Messiah, God, the Lord, the Savior. Luke wrote his gospel to prove that Jesus as God came into the world to preach the forgiveness of sins to all who would repent and believe. He came to establish His eternal rule over the souls of men and women who would put their trust in Him and He would eventually extend that

rule beyond the souls of men to the whole earth, destroying the power of Satan. And then in the end He would create a new heaven and a new earth where there is no sin forever. Carefully, systematically, Luke is analyzing the life of Jesus to give us irrefutable proof that He is God, that He is Lord, that He is Savior. Luke started his gospel with the testimony of heavenly angels, to Zacharias and Elizabeth and then more testimony from heavenly angels to Joseph and Mary. And then he followed it up with the testimony of those four people as to the supernatural reality of the coming of Messiah. And then came the testimony of Simeon and Anna in the temple who affirmed that the child was indeed the promised Messiah. Then came the testimony of the astonishing virgin conception, a young girl becomes pregnant without a man cause the seed is impregnated in her by the Holy Spirit, attesting to the deity of Jesus Christ at very conception. And then Luke gives us the corporate testimony of the angels who gathered in the heavens above the field where the shepherds were and announced to them that the Son of God had been born. And then Luke gives us the confirming testimony of the shepherds who heard the angels and confirmed it when they went to see the child.

And then Luke gives us the testimony of Jesus Himself at the age of twelve who affirms in the temple to the doctors that He is doing His Father's business and He explains that to His own parents. He understood Himself to be the Son of God. Then Luke follows up with the testimony of the descending Holy Spirit who comes down upon Him at His baptism in an affirmation of His absolute holiness. And then out of heaven comes the testimony of God Himself who says, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And then Luke gives us the testimony of John the Baptist, the last and greatest prophet of the Old Testament era who declares that Jesus is in fact the Messiah, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. And then Luke gives the testimony of His genealogy, that He did have a right to be the King who sits on David's throne because He came from the royal line, He was a descendant of David and a descendant of Abraham and Shem and Noah, all the way back to Adam.

And then Luke gives us Old Testament prophecy that He fulfills, indicating that He is the One of whom the prophets spoke. And then Luke describes for us His singular divine character, the virtue of His life. And then Luke presents to us the divine nature of His teaching. And then he shows us His power over demons, the power that only God has. Then he shows us His amazing power over nature, over illness. And then Luke shows us His authority to forgive sin, something only God can do. And then Luke tells us that He acknowledged Himself to be the sovereign over the holy Sabbath. Luke has been amassing all of this evidence to build his inspired and masterful case, leaving nothing out. And he's proving to us that Jesus is God in human flesh, the promised Messiah, the Christ, the Lord, the Savior, the Redeemer. And we have been watching a video and we have been watching a movie, we have been watching an unfolding drama, a pageant moving fast before our eyes, a running story almost moving more rapidly than we can grasp.

But every once in a while Luke freezes the frame and he gives us a still photo. This is the fourth time he's done that in these first six chapters. And we need it. He stops, we catch our breath, we sit back, the frame freezes, we look at a snapshot and we breathe deeply. We regroup and grip ourselves because when we get to verse 20, we're moving again very rapidly. Three years of the life of Jesus squeezed into a few chapters that can be read in a few hours, but it is so fast and so powerful and so potent that it takes us a long time, doesn't it?, to get through it. People say, "Why do you go so slowly?" Because everything is a glimpse of Christ and I want to see all there is to know of Him, leaving nothing out. But I'm like you, once in a while I need to catch my breath. So here's a summary. There is in chapter 4 three summaries, verses 14 and 15, verses 31 and 32, verses 40 and 41, brief reviews, brief summaries...brief summaries just to kind of catch yourself. And the momentum is so great, this thing is moving so fast that we need to stop and freeze the frame and just look. We need to suck in, absorb what we're seeing.

So the film stops here and we look, and what do we see? Two things, the popularity of Jesus summarized and the power of Jesus summarized....the popularity of Jesus and the power of Jesus. That's what you're looking at in verses 17 to 19.

First of all, I want you to look at the popularity of Jesus. Luke stops with the incidents, stops with the events to gather up the big picture here. And the first thing he wants us to see is how popular Jesus had become. I mean, nobody had ever been this popular in Israel, no would-be self-styled Messiah had ever commanded this kind of attention. The popularity of Jesus is indicated in verse 17, "He descended with them and stood on a level place and there was a great multitude of His disciples and a great throng of people from all Judea, Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon."

How many people were there? Well, on one occasion the crowd was hungry, as you remember, and He needed to feed them but nobody had any food except a little boy. And the day that He multiplied the food and fed the crowd, John 6 says there were how many men? Five thousand men...and certainly that would guarantee at least that many women and probably more, and probably who knows, 20,000 children, ten thousand adults, huge crowds...huge. Every day in His ministry it was like this, every day. They didn't go away. They came, they stayed. Night came, He retreated. Came back in the morning, they're still there. Staggering popularity. Chapter 4 verse 42 says, "The multitudes were searching for Him. He went to a lonely place." I mean, He just had to get away from this crush so He went to a lonely place and the people were searching for Him and they found Him and they tried to keep Him from going away from them. I mean, this is getting...this is dangerous stuff. You've got a huge mob and here in the text that we're reading they were all trying to touch Him. This is a crush. Chapter 5 verse 15 says, "The news about Him was spreading even farther and great multitudes were gathering to hear Him and be healed of their sicknesses." This thing is just mounting, the momentum in this thing is bordering on the frightening, unequaled popularity.

And then Luke in a wonderful analytical way sorts out the crowd. First, verse 17, are the Apostles. He identifies them for us in verse 17, and he says, this is clearly the Apostles because of what came before, verse 17 says, "And He descended with them.." Them, who's that? Well that's Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas the son of James, Judas Iscariot who became a traitor. You remember that night, He had gone up into the mountain to pray, He had prayed all night and seeking the perfection of the will of God to determine who the Twelve were. In the morning He came down, identified the Twelve who out of His disciples would become the Apostles. And we went through that long study learning about the Apostles. Now it says He descended with them.

I suppose the night before we could construct the scene. It comes to be night, Jesus has to get away from the crowd. And so when it's night fall, He's not as easily spotted and He goes up the hill. His disciples go up the hill with Him and those who would be Apostles go up a little further, probably separating themselves from the big crowd, those more intimate disciples. Jesus goes beyond them for His own prayer time, comes down in the morning, picks the Twelve out of the disciples that were most closely following Him. After He picks the Twelve, He comes down to the big group. That's the picture. He comes down with them.

So understand now, in the summary of the ministry of Jesus, He's surrounded by the Twelve. That's the most intimate group. And what is an Apostle? Simple, he's a preacher. These are preachers in training...preachers in training. These are the ones who are going to have the responsibility to take the gospel to the world. These are the ones who are going to become the preachers of the gospel, the good news of forgiveness when Jesus is gone back into heaven. These are the shaliock(?????), the official representatives, the official messengers of Christ. And he's identified them now for their formal training. As we already know, they were common men, weren't they? With an uncommon calling. These are to be the preachers of the Kingdom who are to take the gospel to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth. And we saw in our study of them that they did. They were the evangelists, the messengers. It says that when He came down with them, in verse 17, He stood on a level place.

Now we all know that when Jesus taught, when the rabbis taught, they sat down. But He wasn't going to teach yet. He would teach soon and His teaching begins in verse 20 and it is the Sermon on the Mount. It's Luke version of the Sermon on the Mount. But before He sits to teach, Matthew says when He taught the Sermon on the Mount He sat down, Matthew 5, but He stands and He stands because He's not teaching yet, He's healing and He's casting out demons. And He's in a place where the people are coming to Him. He takes a posture of standing. He stands on a level place because who knows how long this went on, how long...how many hours and hours and hours this went on? So He found a level spot rather than a slope and He stood on that level spot and the people pressed in and pressed in and He stood there until...well, verse 19 says, He healed everybody...everybody. And

the people with unclean spirits were cured, verse 18 says, then He took His seat, then He taught the great Sermon on the Mount which Luke records from verse 20 down to the end of the chapter in verse 49. Luke's record of the Sermon on the Mount is briefer than Matthew's, but absolutely consistent with it.

So nearest to Jesus are the Apostles. This location, by the way, is traditionally near the town of Capernaum. I've been in this traditional location. I've actually preached the Sermon on the Mount from this mount, wonderful experience standing on a hill looking down the slope to the Sea of Galilee, the northern shore and imagining in my mind what it was like when Jesus was there doing it. But there's the intimate group, that's the first group of followers that He had.

Group two, verse 17, "And there was a great multitude of His disciples." Now we go from the messengers to the learners, the disciples. First the Apostles, then the disciples. This is a great multitude. There's not a number here, but this is a big crowd, this is a *mega*in Greek, thousands no doubt. This is an assortment of people who are regular followers of Jesus. They would say, "We are disciples, we are students of Jesus. We are learning. He is our chosen Teacher." Now there would be at all places on the spectrum, some of them would be new to learning and they don't even yet understand the message of Jesus, they're just beginning to grasp it. Some of them have just embraced the truth of Jesus and acknowledged Him as their Lord and Savior, repented of their sin and been forgiven by God. And others of them have been believers for a while. Some of them are those who are already beginning to become negative about Jesus and He's saying things they don't like to hear and they're going to be temporary disciples and they're going to disappear, as we saw in the sixth chapter of John. "Some of His disciples walked no more with Him," when they didn't hear what they wanted to hear. It's the mixed multitude. It's all the people who hang around Jesus of all kinds of levels of understanding and faith. It includes the real. It includes the weak, also includes the tares. And Jesus had them all the time around Him, people who believed in Him to some degree but weren't real believers, they weren't true believers.

In John 2, early in His ministry, He began His ministry down in Judea, and it says He was at Jerusalem in the Passover, John 2:23, "During the feast many believed in His name." That sounds good. "Beholding His signs, His miracles which He was doing. But Jesus on His part was not entrusting Himself to them for He knew all men and because He didn't need anyone to bear witness concerning man for He Himself knew what was in man." They believed but He never made a commitment to them because their faith wasn't saving faith. They believed to some degree, but not enough to be saved. John 8, Jesus said, "Here's what you have to do, you have to come with a faith like this, not just believing...but He says...whoever continues in My Word, he's My real disciple." Somebody whose life has been transformed so that there's a pattern of obedience to what Christ says. So there's this thousands of followers who would all say Jesus is our teacher, Jesus is our teacher. They had seen miracles, oh, they had seen miracles by the hundreds and they're at all

levels of belief.

And finally, there are the curious. And they're separated from the others by Luke as he says, "And...in addition to the disciples there's a great throng, another great throng, one great multitude of disciples, and another great throng of people." People...that's a technical term Luke uses for the uncommitted. You're going to find it all the way to chapter 23 about verse 35. You're going to have it ten times through the gospel of Luke, the people, the *laos*, the *laos,* the *laos*from which we get laity, the people. And he doesn't give them any label. They aren't messengers of the gospel, they aren't learners of the gospel, they're just people, they're just there. They're the curious, the uncommitted, the inquisitive, they were from everywhere. They were from Judea. Judea technically refers to the southern part of Israel, the northern part was called Galilee. But when it says all Judea it could mean all of it because technically southern part was technically Judea but in a general sense the whole land was referred to as Judea. So they were from everywhere. I got out my little map and my little short ruler and looked at the legend on the map about how many miles was covered by an inch and I tried to figure at the time of Jesus from the northernmost border of Galilee to the southernmost border of Judea how many miles and I think it's probably around 160 to 170 miles, and that's a long way to walk. The people who came from the south from Judea coming up into Galilee would walk a long way. That was the only way to get anywhere was to walk, you had to leave your family, you had to leave your business, you had to leave your life and go and walk to find Jesus and then to follow Jesus. I mean, this is amazing. He has attracted massive crowds that are just flowing to Him from all over the land. They also were coming, it says, from Jerusalem. Jerusalem...they came from the perimeter, they came from the circumference, they also came from the center. Jerusalem was the religious center. These were the most religiously literate people. And we learn from chapter 5 verse 17 that some of them were priests, some of them were Pharisees, rabbis, the religious literate, teachers, leaders.

So, I don't know how better you could say it, they came from the extremities and they came from the heart. They came from everywhere. Everybody was drawn by Jesus. They even came from the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon. This is an interesting addition because that is Phoenicia. North and west of Galilee on the border of the Mediterranean Sea in what is modern Lebanon essentially is Phoenicia and two Gentile cities, towns really. Tyre once was a great city before God pronounced judgment on it and that judgment came. Now they're a couple of fishing towns populated by pagans. The Phoenicians were...basically they were mariners. They were responsible for the colonization of the Mediterranean area but they were Gentiles, they were pagans. And these two coastal towns because they were so close were sort of epitomized Gentile paganism. Oh there were some Jewish people who lived in those towns but they were characterized as corrupt, worthless, descendants of those ancient Phoenicians and those towns were known for sordid immorality, they were known for idolatry. But people were there. I mean, the appeal of Jesus didn't have any limits, from the common

man to the religiously literate to the pagans, He drew them all.

Well, three groups: the inside group the messengers, the disciples or learners, and then the curious and what drew them? That's the second point. The popularity of Jesus was the result of the power of Jesus. And there are three things I want to emphasize here because Luke emphasizes. There were three displays of power that attracted these people. The first is mental...mental. Verse 18 says, "Who had come to...what?...what?...hear Him." This is the preeminent work of His ministry, teaching, bringing divine truth to their minds. It was really the mind that He was after, and it's always the mind...it's always the mind because it's only a knowledge of the truth that can save. A miracle can't save, a healing can't save, a casting out of a demon can't save. What can save is the truth and belief in the truth. That's why I've said to many times to you that the spiritual war is not fought against demons, it's not fought trying to get demons out of people, it's fought trying to get truth in their heads. And that was what Jesus did, He was a preacher and a teacher. Somebody said God only had one Son and He was a preacher. The feature of His ministry was His teaching, His preaching and He was preaching the good news, the good news of forgiveness, the good news of salvation, the good news of eternal life, the good news of hope, the good news of eternal peace and joy, the good news of heaven. And He preached it everywhere He went. He gave the good news that God would forgive the poor prisoners, blind and oppressed, the spiritually bankrupt, the destitute, the repentant. This was the most essential ministry Jesus had. If you want to be like Jesus, don't try to do miracles, just teach the truth. You've got people running around today who think they want to be like Jesus by doing miracles, but don't teach the truth. Priority is the truth. Jesus did the miracles to affirm that He was speaking the truth. He came to explain the truth of God and no one ever heard such a teacher, no one ever heard such a teacher...He had the most profound and perfect mind, He knew everything there was to know. He knew the truth of God, He was the truth of God incarnate, perfect control of every thought, perfect knowledge of every reality, perfect use of language, perfect use of emotion, perfect use of logic and reason so as to be nothing but clear, concise, convicting, penetrating, captivating and profound all at the same time. His teaching was unlike any other teaching ever. His mental agility, His mental clarity, His mental force, His mental depth drew the masses and true salvation came to those who heard and believed and embraced the truth. And He preached the Kingdom and forgiveness and how people could be forgiven and enter the Kingdom if they would believe in Him and cry out to God for forgiveness and salvation.

And, friends, He's still the teacher. I'm not the teacher. I'm just passing on to you what He taught. First Timothy 6:3, listen to this, "If anyone advocates a different doctrine and doesn't agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is conceited and understands nothing." Did you hear that? If anybody advocates anything that doesn't agree with the words of Jesus Christ, he is conceited because he's set himself up as a higher standard and the fact is, he doesn't know anything. So when you come here, we will endeavor to give you the words of Jesus Christ. He's still the great

teacher, we're just an echo and a feeble one at that.

And so, the first display of power that drew people was His mental power. The second was His physical. He had power over the physical realm. He not only had power over the mind, He had power over the body. It says in verse 18 that He not only taught these people who came to hear Him, but He healed them of their diseases. In fact, He healed them all, says verse 19. His power over the physical realm was absolutely staggering. As I told you before, for all intents and purposes, He banished illness from the land of Israel for the duration of His ministry. We've seen it all the way through, starting in chapter 4, these incredible miracles of healing. They were just going on in mass, healing everybody and thousands of people were coming to Him. And His healings were creative miracles. When they had an eye that didn't function, He gave them one that did. When they had an ear that didn't function, He gave them one that did. When they had a voice that didn't function, He gave them another one that did. When they had a leg that was deformed and paralyzed, He gave them a leg that functioned. When they had an arm that was withered or a hand, He gave them a whole one. This is creative. When they had muscles that were atrophied, He gave them muscles that were strong and flexible. When they had ligaments that were dried up and shriveled or severed, He gave them fresh ligaments. When they had abdominal organs that didn't function, He gave them brand new organs. When they had skin that was eaten away by leprosy, He gave them the skin of a baby and He made it out of nothing, like that. He created the universe and He created in His miracles and He showed that He had power over the physical. He had power, listen to this, to make the body whole and He had the power to make the mind whole. His display of power proved that He was God, He was the truth of God and the very power of God.

Thirdly, He demonstrated His power not only in His control over the mind, and over the body, but over the spirit, spiritual power. One of the problems then and always is satanic possession and verse 18 says those who were troubled with unclean spirits were being cured. One thing to be tormented in your body, one thing to be tormented because your arms don't work, your legs don't work, your eyes don't work, your ears don't work, your organs are diseased. It's another thing to be physically well and to have the very minions of Satan dwelling in your spirit, unclean spirits. Just a way to describe demons. They are spiritual beings who are filthy, vile and evil, they are the very demons of hell. We've already seen Jesus cast them out. We've seen in chapter 4 dramatic account step by step of how He dealt with a demon-possessed man in the synagogue. And now we see it on a wholesale level. He was just casting out demons from people who were coming to Him, curing them all, demonstrating that He could clean the soul.

Well what is this supposed to indicate to us? First of all, that He is God cause only God can do that. Secondly, follow this, this is a preview of what heaven is going to be and it proves to us that He is the Lord of heaven, that He is the God of very God, that He is the Savior and Redeemer who can and will

give us a perfect mind, a perfect body and a perfect soul. Right? Isn't that what heaven is? And we long for that, don't we? We long for the day when we have a clear, perfect, pure mind and we know the truth of God and is uncluttered with confusion and ignorance and sin. We long for the day when all of the infirmities of the body are gone. We long for the day when all the torturous problems of the soul and all the threats and temptations of Satan are forever banished. Jesus said, "Look, I can do that. I can bring the truth to your mind and give you a perfect mind. I can bring wholeness to your body and give you a glorified body with no infirmity, no sorrow, no sadness, no sickness, no dying. And I can take your soul and I can make it pure and free from any evil influence. This is what He does. This is what salvation is. And that full cleansing doesn't happen till we go to glory, but we're already in the process, aren't we?

It also shows us how compassionate God is. I...I've said this before, if Jesus wanted to prove that He was God, He could have done a lot...there are a lot of things. He could of just stood there and gone up in the air about 50 feet and spun around like a helicopter, done some magic tricks and created a tree and created an animal and boom-bang and done some pretty startling things. Why this? Why...why does He deal with people's confusion? Why does He deal with people's infirmity? Why does He deal with people's possession? Because the heart of God is compassionate. And if He's going to put His power on display, behind it is going to be the love and compassion of God. And He's saying to the sinner, "I'm not doing things for My sake, I'm here to do things for your sake." And the whole of salvation is to make you what you can be by His grace. This is our Christ. No wonder verse 19 says, "The people were trying to touch Him." There was a stampede here. Why were they trying to touch Him? "For power was coming from Him." O come on, Luke, give us at least a couple of adjectives. That's such an understatement. And Luke would say, "Oh, I'm leaving it for you preachers, throw in the adjectives." Staggering power, astonishing power, unlimited power, amazing power, indescribable power and because the power was coming out of Him for all of this, they were flooding into His presence. No wonder He was popular. And verse 19 ends, "And He was healing them all." This is an incredible display.

You want to ask who Jesus is? Here's your answer. Only God can do this. Only God the creator who created man in the first place can create a perfect man and a perfect body and a perfect soul. And that is what salvation does ultimately. That's where we're going. He proves it here.

One final thought. Since this is true, what do you think Jesus deserves? Curiosity? Is that all you want to give Him? Just want to hang around for the fascination? Or maybe you decide, "Oh, I think I'll be a disciples, I'll be a learner." And so you just take all you can get, you just take and take and take and take and take and take. What should you be? An apostle, right? A messenger. Is this good enough to tell everybody? What do you think people in America need to hear today? They need to hear this, don't they? Everything else is useless. Who's supposed to take it? We are.

The curious, that's really sad, fascinated but not faithful. And discipleship can become this very comfortable taking thing. You come to Grace Church, you go to your little class, you read a book now and then, you take and take and take and take. But what the Lord is calling for is apostles, shake the trivia out of your life, stop being a taker and become a messenger. You've had some training, time to go and be faithful.

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