

CALLING ALL SINNERS!

LUKE 5:17-32

DEMONSTRATION OF JESUS' AUTHORITY AND CONFRONTATION

4:31-6:11

EVIDENCE OF JESUS' AUTHORITY 4:31-5:16

Over demons 4:31-37

Over sickness and demons 4:38-41

To preach about the kingdom 4:42-44 Over nature 5:1-11

Over leprosy 5:12-16

When Jesus demonstrates His authority; crowds begin to follow Him.

The religious leaders quickly gather to find out what's going on.

The crowds provoke jealousy and opposition from Israel's leaders.

The opposition didn't take long to organize.

After healing the leper, the Pharisees are sitting in the front row

–they want to know what's going on–they want to stop Him! **5:17**

OPPOSITION TO JESUS' AUTHORITY 5:17-6:11

4 questions raised in opposition to Jesus:

1. **5:21** Who can forgive sins but God alone?

2. **5:30** Why do you eat and drink with tax-gatherers and sinners?

3. **5:33** Implied=> Why do your disciples eat and drink,
while John's and the Pharisees' fast and pray?

4. **6:2** Why do you do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?

4 challenges to Jesus' authority:

1. Jesus' authority over sin challenged **5:17-26**

Friends bring a paralyzed man to Jesus for healing.

They can't get to Him because of the crowds.

They let their friend down through the roof of the house where Jesus is.

They won't allow *anyone* to stop them from bringing their friend to Jesus.

Jesus responds to their faith–not the paralyzed man's faith.

Nobody tells Jesus what the man's problem is.

Jesus takes a look at the man and knows immediately what his need is!

But the crowd doesn't know that.

People see the obvious need as physical sickness (paralysis).

Jesus sees what men can't see–

His greatest need isn't physical–it's spiritual.

His big problem is what to do with sin in his life.

Even the guy laying there on that bed–who apparently has only one concern –is struggling with the guilt of sin.

Jesus sees what those who can't get their eyes off his illness can't:

his sin is a greater problem than his body!

CLEANSING SIN IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN HEALING THE BODY

BOTH PROBLEMS REQUIRE GOD'S TOUCH!

JESUS IS ABLE TO DEAL WITH BOTH NEEDS!

Commentators think Jesus addresses his sin because it's related to his illness.

Jesus elsewhere rejects the Jewish notion that illness is the result of personal sin of the afflicted (Lk. 13:1-5; Jn. 9:1-3; Cp. Job)

The religious leaders have a problem.– **Their problem:**

When Jesus claims to be able to forgive sins, they confront Him on the grounds that only God can forgive sin. **5:20-21**

Actually the scribes never *said* it out loud–they just *think* it!

Jesus knows what's in their hearts. **5:22**

Jesus' response:

He doesn't deny their premise. They're right! **5:23-24**

The Pharisees have come to a fork in the road.

He's about to force them to make a commitment one way or the other!

Either a) Jesus is what He claims to be (by implication) => **GOD**

Or b) Jesus blasphemes by claiming to have the prerogatives of God.

He can't be a good man and less than God!

He is either liar, lunatic, or God!

Now He gives **another evidence** to help them make the right choice.

"Which is easier to say?" 5:23

"Your sins have been forgiven?" Or, "Rise and walk!"

It's easier to say that your sins are forgiven. No one can tell if it's true!

Telling him to arise and walk proves that the first statement is true.

The visible transformation affirms the reality of the invisible.

He who has power to do one, has power to do the other. They go together!

5:24—the authority to forgive sins and His authority to heal go together.

Both acts are possible because God has given Him authority.

The Pharisees' response is wrong.

If, in fact, this is blasphemy, they must sentence him to death.

Why don't they do it? – Fear of the crowd.

They prefer acceptance by people to doing God's will!

All the witnesses realize that they've seen an unusual event. **5:25-26**

2. AUTHORITY OVER MEN (SINNERS) CHALLENGED 5:27-32

Calling Levi illustrates the purpose of Jesus' mission: to save sinners

Levi (Matthew) was a publicly recognized sinner—a tax-collector!

Tax-collectors often made extra income over-charging and cheating people.

Even if they didn't do that, they were considered defiled because they were agents of the pagan Gentiles, working at the expense of their own people.

Levi left everything behind to follow Jesus. **5:27-29**

He's excited; he invites his friends, also considered sinners, to rejoice with him.

They're inside the house having a great time together.

Self-righteous religious leaders aren't happy about his conversion! **5:30**

They're standing outside saying to one another, "Isn't this disgusting?"

Listen to those sinful people in there making all that noise and living it up!"

The self-righteous opposed Jesus' mission because they preferred to maintain the distinction and condemn sinners.

Jesus responds: the purpose of His mission is not to minister to the well, but to the sick. **5:31-32**

He didn't come to save *the righteous*. He came to save *sinners*.

Two men were introduced after becoming Christians. One was a poor man from a godless background; the other from an affluent Christian environment. After each told his story, the religious man asked: "Why do you suppose you received Christ the first time you heard the gospel, while years passed before I did?" The other responded, "Suppose a man offered to give each of us a new suit. I'd jump at the offer. My clothes are old and tattered. But your closet is full of fine suits."

You were probably satisfied with your goodness, so it took a long time to see the need for God's righteousness. I was aware of my hopeless, sinful condition; I couldn't wait to receive forgiveness and cleansing."

3. AUTHORITY OVER TRADITION CHALLENGED 5:33-39

4. AUTHORITY OVER THE SABBATH CHALLENGED 6:1-11

What lessons should we learn from this encounter between Jesus and the religious leaders?

1. Jesus has the power to meet all our needs.

2. Only God can cleanse us from sin.

That cleansing comes through Jesus Christ.

The man was just as helpless to handle his spiritual problem, as he was to handle his physical problem.

He could have joined in with the words of the poet who wrote many years ago:

I would, but cannot sing;
I would, but cannot pray;
For Satan meets me when I try,
And frights my soul away.

I would, but can't repent, Though I endeavor oft;
This stony heart can ne'er relent,
Till Jesus makes it soft.

I would, but cannot love,
Though woo'd by love divine;
No arguments have power to move A soul so base as mine.

O could I but believe!
Then all would easy be;
I would, but cannot—Lord, relieve;
My help must come from Thee.

The ability to save, comes from Jesus—NOT from ourselves; not from other people.

We must trust *Him* to heal the spiritual paralysis that keeps us from reaching God.

3. Power to minister to people's needs comes from God—even for Jesus.

How much more is it necessary for us? 5:17

4. Christ came to save sinners, NOT righteous people.

We must remember that, lest we, like Pharisees, look down our self-righteous noses at those who come to Christ in our day.

He came to save you if you're a sinner. TRUST HIM TODAY!

A dirty, poorly clothed boy walked into a London orphanage. The superintendent saw him and asked, "What are you doing here, young man?" "Why I'd like to live here," he answered. The man replied, "But I don't know you. What do you have as a recommendation?" The youngster held up his torn coat--nothing more than rags--and said, "If you please, sir, I thought this would be all I would need." The superintendent took him in his arms, fed, clothed and warmly accepted him. For his old rags the boy received new garments.

What you can offer God to be accepted into heaven?

We give Him our sins and trust Jesus to save us.

Our "rags" become our claim to the robe of His righteousness.

5. Jesus seldom ministers to those who need Him without some who help by bringing them to him—four carried the paralytic to the Savior.

He never would have found Him without their help.

Spurgeon recommended forming groups of four to band together to bring one to the Savior— "form a square about them".

Pray together, work together, enclosing the person "behind and before".

They faced an insurmountable obstacle.

Together they trusted God for a way to get around the obstacle.

They had to go through the roof.

This was no easy task, but they were determined to bring the paralytic, who couldn't help himself, to the Savior.

These folks could not preach, but they could hold a rope.

God used them to bring their friend to Jesus.