

## Jesus is Lord: Meditations from Luke 8 (part 1)

In my quiet times over the past few weeks I have been reading through the Book of Luke. And one particular day, as I prayed for all of you and spent time nourishing my own soul, God really helped me. As I pondered all the issues with COVID-19, especially as we are being asked to do things that we've never done before. As I spent some time at a very empty Panera Bread, with only about half the tables open for eating, wearing a mask as I refilled my coffee, texting with a good friend whose parents are sick (one in the hospital with COVID), thinking of all of you and wondering how you are doing, what you are thinking, feeling, how you are holding up as we have not seen one another for a gathering since early March, considering an article sent to me on critical race theory, which reminded me of all the unrest in our country over the issue of race and social justice, and all the inconsistencies with the plans of competing civil authorities, etc. On and on I could go. And you can do the same. And I have yet to mention all the anxieties that come from economic woes and thoughts many of you are having as you consider the financial impact on the future of your job and your family. And, I have still yet to mention other sicknesses, pressing anxieties, and the normal difficulties in our families. If there is anything we need at any given moment, it is this: Jesus is Lord. In John 16:33 he says to us: **"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."** With this in mind, what I would like to do this morning is read some of the stories from Luke 8 showing that Jesus is Lord (and not just a 'lord,' but THE LORD of ALL). This morning I have two truths (Jesus is Lord over sickness and death.)

1. Jesus is Lord over sickness. In vv. 40-56 we have two stories in one as we see that Jesus is Lord over both sickness and death. Let's begin with sickness. In vv. 40-42 the story begins as he returns home with his disciples from a trip outside Galilee. V. 40: **"Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. And there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue. And falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying."** And then all of a sudden the crowds rushed him (v. 42b) and then in vv. 43-48 we read: **"And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone. She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased. And Jesus said, 'Who was it that touched me?' When all denied it, Peter said, 'Master, the crowds surround you and are pressing in on you!' But Jesus said, 'Someone touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me.' And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. And he said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.'"**

This is just one story of many where Jesus heals the sick, those with leprosy, those with no sight, those who could not hear, those crippled from birth, those with diseases doctors could not heal. Here we see a carpenter from Galilee, an insignificant town, from a humble family, with no real estate to his name. Yet, He is Lord over sickness! As we read these stories of healings, we are reminded of the Messiah foretold by the prophets in the OT who would have great power to heal. Consider the words of Isaiah as he looked forward to his day.

Let's read together from Isaiah 35:1-6:

**Pastor:** "The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees" (vv. 1-3)

**Congregation:** "Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert." (vv. 4-6).

Brothers and sisters, Jesus is Lord over sickness. YES, in those days, we see many healings as they accompanied the coming of the Messiah. And today, Jesus still heals. But, even if He does not, He is still Lord! His ways are not our ways. And his plans are not our plans. Even during a pandemic as we do not know the exact plans of God in this world, Jesus is Lord! And even if he does not heal, He does heal our hearts. Notice in v. 48, the emphasis in his words to the woman: "**Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.**" In the midst of sickness, we look unto Christ. This is faith! And He is our peace. And we know that ALL Jesus' physical healings are a picture of the miracle of salvation and a picture of his ultimate healing of ALL creation. Jesus is Lord over sickness!

2. Jesus is Lord over death. Look at vv. 40-42. "**Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. And there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue. And falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying.**" (At this time, our previous story happened.) And then we pick back up in vv. 49-56: "**While he was still speaking, someone from the ruler's house came and said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher any more."**But Jesus on hearing this answered him, "**Do not fear; only believe, and she will be well.**" And when he came to the house, he allowed no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child. And all were weeping and mourning for her, but he said, "**Do not weep, for she is not dead but sleeping.**" And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But taking her by the hand he called, saying, "**Child, arise.**" And her spirit returned, and she got up at once. And he directed that something should be given her to eat. And her parents were amazed, but he charged them to tell no one what had happened." Here we have a story of a father and a mother who were trying to do anything they could to save their dying daughter. They heard about Jesus and his power to heal, and the Father, I can imagine hurried to find this man who was healing so many people. And as he arrived and finally got some words to Jesus, someone said, "*It's too late. She's dead. Do not trouble Jesus further.*" But, in Jesus mercy and compassion, he headed straight to the house where he took her by the hand and simply said, "**Child arise.**" And, immediately she got up and ate something. And her parents were amazed!

On numerous occasions, we see Jesus raising the dead. In Luke 7 he raises the son of a widow. In John 11 he raises Lazarus, who had been dead and buried for 4 days.

Let's read John 5:19-29 together.

**Pastor:** "So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will" (vv. 19-21).

**Congregation:** "For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life" (vv. 22-24).

**Pastor:** "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man" (vv. 25-27).

**Congregation:** "Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment" (vv. 28-29).

Brothers and sisters, the wages of sin is death! It is the ONE thing we cannot conquer. God said to Adam, "**Obey me and you will live.**" And, "**You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die**" (Gen. 2:16-17). What happened with Adam and continues today is the judgment of God upon sin. And the world does not see death in this way. As I look around, I see the world doing its best to somehow avert death. So many think, "*let me just go back to the doctor; he can fix me.*" I'm not saying we shouldn't go to the doctor. We should! But the doctor isn't the one who ultimately controls how or when someone dies. And as I look around, I see a culture that is SO fearful of death. And they should be! For it is the judgment of God upon sin. Sin is our problem! Death is God's judgment! And it isn't merely that we die physically. The judgment of God in death culminates in eternal separation from God. For God cannot and will not look upon sin.

But, for the Christian, there is hope! Jesus says to us: "**I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, though he die, yet he shall live**" (John 11:25). For those of us sitting here today, Jesus has done something that we have yet to do. He died. He laid down his life. This is why He came! He came to die! And ONLY in his death can we have life! "**He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross**" (Phil. 2:6-8). As

everyone we know in this world is trying to avert death, or at least put it off as long as possible, Jesus does the opposite. As a young man, who many would say was “in the prime of life,” at the time of his own choosing, He died. From one perspective, no one took his life. He laid it down. He gave it up. This is why He came to us!

This is a great mystery! But from all eternity Jesus, the Son has been looking toward his own death! But, it wasn't just death in the way the world thinks. Jesus' death caused him to sweat blood. And as the time drew near, he was gripped with this coming reality. Luke tells us he was in agony, and *his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground*” (Luke 22:44). Why? It was because he was preparing to lay down his life as a sacrifice. As the young boy Isaac asked his father, “*Where is the lamb for sacrifice?*” Abraham replied, “*God will provide.*” But for Isaac, Abraham withheld the knife, as GOD DID PROVIDE a ram. But for the Son of God, there was no substitute! There was no provision, only death on a criminal's cross! And there, All the wrath and judgment and punishment that our sins deserve, was laid upon HIM! This is why he came! And for Him there was no substitute. For there is ONLY ONE lamb of God who can take away our sins. The words “IT IS FINISHED” are the most beautiful words for sinners.

Brothers and sisters, your sins were laid upon Christ! For God so loved the world that He gave his only Son! He gave him to die so that we might live. And we will live because Jesus did not stay in the grave. After three days, he rose (on his own power). He conquered death. And now he sits in heaven as the most beautiful high priest, always living to interceded for his people. And now there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus! Oh, the beauty of Christ!

Therefore, now, we do not fear sickness; we do not fear death. For He has overcome. And by the Spirit of the living God, we also will live. And though our bodies will die, we will not be separated from God because of the death and resurrection of the beautiful Son of God. I never get tired of preaching the same thing! For I will never exhaust the beauties of such a message. In the OT David looked toward to the temple, to the holy of holies for the presence of God. In Psalm 63 we read:

**O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory. Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips, when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night; for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy. My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me” (vv. 1-8).**

Today, we do not look to a physical temple, we look upon Christ who has conquered sickness and death! Therefore, look unto him today.