

Jesus The Adventurous One

Luke 5: 18-26

Preface

We often have the image of Jesus Christ as a meek man who went around speaking of love, forgiveness and comfort all of the time. We visualize Jesus with a lamb in his hands or a child on his knee.

Yes, Jesus was a loving and compassionate person. But there was much more to our Lord during his time on earth.

Today it is my desire to point out an often overlooked characteristic of Jesus.

Scripture - Read

¹⁸Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. ¹⁹When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

²⁰When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

²¹The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

²²Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? ²³Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? ²⁴But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." He said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." ²⁵Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. ²⁶Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today." Luke 5:18-26 NIV

Introduction

I love this account of the paralytic being healed as found in each of the synoptic gospels. I think it is so cool that these refused to give up.

I can just visualize this guy on a mat being lowered from the ceiling right in front of Jesus while he is speaking.

Illus: I can remember the first time our family went to the "Country Bear Jamboree" at Disney World. I recall my surprise when the animals on the wall started talking. But, I was really taken back when a girl bear was lowered and began swinging from the ceiling.

How odd this must have looked to Jesus and the crowd. Can't you just visualize the "what the heck" look on everyone's face?

What a bold and adventurous thing to do. I believe Jesus probably got a real kick out of this. I can just imagine the combination of humor and encouragement he must have felt because of the faith and persistence of this man and his friends.

We live in a day when men are significantly left out of church. This is tragic and it is not the will of God. Take a look at the announcements in your church bulletin today, last week or for the last several years for that matter. Other than an occasional brotherhood breakfast, church is mostly geared to appeal to women and women stuff. Most activities are oriented to the talents and interest of women. No wonder many men have little interest in church.

I have heard men say, "Well, I feel closer to God when I'm out in the woods." I know this is sometimes a cop-out for not attending church. But, I also know it is often true. I can worship God the best when I am out in the wilderness He created. Let me sit along side the ocean or a stream and experience God. Let me stand in awe of the great mountains and I can experience with amazement the work of an adventurous God.

God has given me a heart for reaching men. I have a vision of a church with many men serving God and working for him in ways we never imagined. Perhaps with tools, equipment and the sweat of their labor.

If we are to be the church God is calling us to be, we must learn to see the adventurous side; the masculine side of Jesus.

The Bible is filled with adventure and stories of heroics, achievement and great faith. This is the stuff men thrive on. Men are often uncomfortable speaking about their love. Men don't share their feelings, they guard them. When men want to tell someone else about their experience, they don't say, "let me share something with you." Men aren't big on hand holding and hugging either.

There is nothing wrong with hand holding and hugging. But, the point is that we must also allow the adventure, the anger, the action and the victory of God's Word to be a part of our teaching and our worship.

Jesus was all about authority and adventure. Today, I would like to take a look at the adventurous side of Jesus.

Content

1. Jesus Was Adventurous With His Words

Illus: When I was in college, I had a very good friend who was from Venezuela. His English was broken and he often struggled to express himself with words. When he really wanted to convey his point but could not find the right words, he would usually create a word picture. On occasion when we would argue some point, he would say, "Tucker, your tongue is a knife. Do you plan to cut me now?"

Jesus was adventurous with his words. He did not beat around the bush. He spoke with authority when he felt it was time to address someone concerning wrong doing.

In Matthew 23, when speaking to the religious leaders of his day, Jesus says such things as:

"You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred?" 23:17

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of you spices, mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law - justice, mercy and faithfulness." 23:23

"You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?" 23:33

These are just a few of the examples of how Jesus was sharp tongued when it came to standing up for God's teachings and speaking the truth.

Does this mean we are to have the freedom to say anything we feel like saying? No. This is a reminder to us that our Lord was not afraid to speak up and preach the truth. There were times when he remained silent. But, when he knew something needed to be said, he spoke with authority.

Many teachers feel that every word out of a Christian's mouth must be sweet as honey, carefully considered so that no one's feelings are bruised. But Jesus spoke with forthrightness and honesty. I have found that men appreciate forthrightness and honesty.

Even the stories - parables that Jesus told were often filled with adventure and everyday life experiences.

He spoke of a landowner going on trips only to return and find servants who poorly managed his affairs. He described a man's enemy who sows weeds among a man's crop in an attempt to destroy it. And, what about the story of an ungrateful son who demands his inheritance early and goes off to a far away land and squanders every cent. Of course, we all know the story of the Good Samaritan who was beaten and robbed. All are stories filled with adventure.

The words of Jesus are full of adventure. He spoke in terms that we can all understand, relate and find meaning.

2. Jesus Was Adventurous With His Actions

The text that we read today is actually the text of many theological lessons concerning who Jesus claimed to be and how he was received by the Jewish leaders. I am aware that I am approaching it from a much simpler / surface perspective.

However, I want you to notice how Jesus causes the Pharisees to play right into his hands.

He could have healed the man right away. Instead, he first says, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

He knows this is going to stir up the Pharisees, and it does. They begin to think among themselves, "Who does he think he is, saying he can forgive sins."

Notice what Jesus does. **He addresses their thoughts.** He doesn't wait for them to bring the subject up. He asks the question, *"Why are you thinking these things in your hearts?"*

He challenges their thoughts head on. He then turns to the man and says pick up your mat and go home. He heals him.

This is a man speaking with authority. This is adventure displayed in words.

It was Jesus who became angry and cleansed the temple of the crooks and money changers. Remember how he spent 40 days and nights in the wilderness. Think about how Jesus calmed the sea, walked on water and even persuaded Peter to do the same.

Jesus was adventurous in his actions.

3. Jesus Was Adventurous With His Life

Illus: I vividly remember the day my family went to see the Mel Gibson movie, "The Passion of the Christ." I recall sitting in the movie and during the depth of his beating that seemed to go on forever. Jesus was virtually unrecognizable and just looked like a piece of meat hanging there. I recall being so caught up in the shock that it felt like I was forgetting to breathe. At one point I stopped, took a deep breath and reminded myself I was watching a movie.

This was not fiction. It was the truth as foretold by the prophets and told in detail in the gospels.

Jesus began by being baptized. He later took his battle to the wilderness with Satan. Then he proceeded to travel around preaching and healing.

Jesus was met with all sorts of challenges and battles. He was confronted on virtually every front by religious and political leaders.

He chose to share his message with sinners of all sorts, from prostitutes to despised tax collectors.

Finally, he was beaten and crucified on the cross, only to rise up from the grave, remain on earth 40 day and then ascend into heaven.

From the time he began his ministry to this day, the life of Jesus has been an exciting adventure.

➤ Conclusion

In verse 26, we see that everyone was amazed and saw remarkable things happen. Today, we saw something remarkable happen in our church by more than doubling our Sunday School attendance in one day.

Do you want to see remarkable things happen in your life? Start having adventures with God.

Make Jesus Lord of every aspect of your life. Not for security but for the adventure of experiencing him.

Embark on life with the Son of God. Make him a part of your work, your fishing, your hunting and every other aspect of your life.

You will see remarkable things happen.