

# ENCOUNTERS WITH JESUS

Sermon Series

## The Amazing Jesus

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 at all times. We visualize Jesus with a lamb in his arms or children on his knees.

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

**Jesus was amazing!** From his birth, through childhood and throughout his ministry on earth, Jesus was amazing.

He healed the sick, he made the lame to walk, he made the blind to see, he returned life to the dead, and he restored broken hearts. Wherever he went; everything he did people were amazed.

I have been preaching a series of sermons; “Encounters with Jesus.” With each sermon I prepare, I have been amazed.

### Scripture – Read

<sup>18</sup>Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. <sup>19</sup>When 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.

<sup>20</sup>When Jesus saw their faith, he said, “Friend, your sins are forgiven.”

<sup>21</sup>The 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?”

<sup>22</sup>Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, “Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? <sup>23</sup>Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? <sup>24</sup>But 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.”

<sup>25</sup>Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. <sup>26</sup>Everyone 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 men 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: Pam and I went on our honeymoon in 1981. Remember, this was before the age of robots, computers and even cell phones. I remember going to the “Country Bear Jamboree” at Disney World. I recall my surprise when the animals on the wall started talking. I was standing in that room completely unsuspecting when all of a sudden a buffalo began moving his head and speaking.

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.

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

We live in a day when men are significantly left out of church. This is a shame because men have much to gain from an Amazing Jesus.

I have heard men say, “I feel closer to God when I’m out in the woods.” This is sometimes a cop-out for not attending church. But, I it is often true. I too can worship God when I am out in the wilderness that He created. Let me sit along side the ocean or a stream and experience God. Let me stand in awe of the mountains and I can experience the amazing work of an awesome God.

**If we are to be the church God is calling us to be, we must learn to see and experience the amazing side of Jesus.**

### Content

## 1. Jesus Was Amazing With His Words

Illus: When I was in college, I had a 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 he would resort to a word picture. On occasion when we would argue some point, he would say, "Tucker, do you plan to cut me now?" He was insinuating that I had a sharp tongue.

Jesus was amazing with his words. He did not beat around the bush. He spoke with authority when he felt it was time to address someone he did so.

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 your 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 spoke with a sharp tongue when it came speaking God's 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. There were times he spoke words of kindness and forgiveness.

But, when he knew something needed to be said, he spoke with authority and his words were amazing.

Many feel that every word out of a Christian's mouth must be sweet as honey, carefully considered so that no one's feelings are ever bruised. But we must learn to speak the truth with authority.

Even the parables that Jesus spoke were filled with the adventurous lessons that parallel everyday life.

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. All are stories filled with adventure and lessons that are amazing to us especially when applied to our personal lives.

**The words of Jesus are amazing. If you will listen to them today, His words will amaze you.**

**If you will listen to his word today, it will reach into your heart, challenge you, comfort you and guide you.**

## 2. Jesus Was Amazing 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 not received by the Jewish leaders.

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.”

Amazingly, Jesus knows their exact thoughts. **He addresses their thoughts.** He doesn’t wait for them to bring up the subject. 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.

**Our Lord knows your thoughts and he challenges them today.**

<sup>23</sup>*Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’?*

**Our Lord can forgive you of your sins and he can guide you through all of life’s challenges.**

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 walk on water.

As we studied a few weeks ago, when a woman caught in sin was brought to him, he doodled in the sand and then said, “He that is without sin cast the first stone.”

**The actions of Jesus are amazing. If you will trust and be obedient, He will do amazing things in your life.**

## 3. Jesus Was Amazing 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 breath. 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 with a miraculous birth. He was baptized and 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. He was confronted on virtually every front by religious and political leaders.

He chose to share his message of forgiveness with sinners of all walks of life, 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. He left us with His Holy Spirit and this thought; “I go to prepare a place for you.”

Illus: On Wednesday evenings we are studying the book of Romans. We have a little question sheet that people complete. One of the questions this next week is, **“In what way was Jesus a sinful man?” The answer is when he became a “sin offering.” Jesus bore the sins of all on the cross.**

**That is amazing!**

## **Conclusion**

Video: Are You Amazed?

Today, we are seeing remarkable things happen in our church.

Do you want to see amazing things happen in your life?

Does He amaze you?

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 amazing things happen.