

”When Love Came Down”

Sermon for 6 July 2025

Texts: Psalm 38; Matt. 9:18-35

On the way to saving the world—which is the love of God come down from heaven, taking on human form and enacting divine love through a sacrificial life (yes, even to an atoning death on the cross to break the power of cancelled sin, to conquer the grave and to cancel death as countless, even all generations of mankind had known it up until the resurrection of our Lord Jesus!), God put boots on the ground in Capernaum. There, in that blessed particular location, where Jesus bought a house that He called His home. From that “command center” (especially the dining hall with daily evening meals) Jesus began to teach, broadcast and amplify the love of God through His selection of a team of apostles and disciples. This beginning, the calling of the twelve is recorded for us in Matthew 10:1-15. What I am focusing on is a prelude to that strategic moment: the calling and commissioning of the twelve.

He gave them power against unclean spirits to cast them out and to heal all **manner of sickness and disease.** (Matt. 10:1) And subsequently, Jesus gave them the power to **raise the dead** which power is, in effect the loving power of resurrection. The power to heal, deliver and restore fullness of life is love in action.

What Jesus had been doing was transmitted, shared, or transferred by His direct command (authority) to them, they became de facto the original twelve workers in the vineyard of this fallen world. They became the boots/sandals on the ground, the shock troops of the Kingdom, warriors trained and armed to take down Satanic strongholds.

This impulse, expression, form of divine love is firstly from heaven, a salvo made incarnate in the Son, and that redeeming love (delivering, healing and life giving power) is conveyed by the called, summoned by design by strategic command, and by direct commission. We stand in the chain of command that flows down through time, directly, face to face and hand to hand, originating from the Lord to the apostles and disciples and, as it were, unto us—from Capernaum to wherever God has placed us. We are to invade, occupy, conquer, take over and rule the redeemed world *as God takes back usurped authority and stolen goods*.

Psalm 38, by contrast, embodies the best that could be hoped for under the first covenant, or as we say, Old Testament dispensation. There we encounter the love of God through the crying out of the penitent, of the captives and slaves of Satan—those who had come to the end of themselves and were crying out to God *who alone forgives iniquity, transgressions or sins*. Those who confronted Jesus with this truth (i.e. **only God can forgive sins**) were both right and wrong at the same time—right to see forgiveness as a gift of divine love; and wrong to fail to “see” in Jesus the redeeming love of God presented to them in the flesh, in human form. That was a grave error, it was very shortsighted.

But when it comes to the amplification of that love, that redemptive forgiveness, we, too, may prove shortsighted. We may fail to accept fully that the love of God, by the command of God, has been transferred to the called, including us, entirely and that we, as a consequence of our commission by Christ’s command, are made into the chosen means for the dissemination of God’s love. Seriously, hidden in **love thy neighbor**, and **love your enemies, do good to those who hate you and spitefully use you** (Matt. 5:44) is *the identical mission* that Jesus first gave to the twelve and to his earliest disciples. They were not simply preparing the way of the Lord, they were not merely preaching **the kingdom of heaven (God) is at hand**; or, more crudely put doing promotion and advertising—they were declaring a new day, *a new dispersal of divine love*. **Believe on Jesus**

and be saved! Believe on Jesus and your sins shall be forgiven, your shame removed and your guilty soul set free—be you ever so dead in trespasses and sins, you shall be raised to life in the Name of Jesus Christ, arise.

Yes, we still have the glorious exchange to proclaim—your sin for His righteousness, your exclusion for unholiness, unrighteousness replaced by acceptance, inclusion even adoption as a child of God! Many simply do not know who they are, what they are made of! They are ignorant of the fact that **through faith in Jesus** Christ they become new creatures in Christ and that new creature is to be known now and forever as the “blood—bought, born again, child of the living God.” To come into the knowledge of who you are in Christ is life, is liberation! And it is all through what Christ has lovingly, freely and fully undertaken to do for you. Jesus paid it all and all you do, upon entering the pearly gates is show the receipts. That is just a figure of speech, all you actually do is declare that you belong to Jesus and by that declaration His righteousness fully justifies you as declared by God. Your standing has changed, your status has been bestowed.

Here’s proof by example. **And when Jesus departed thence** (still in Capernaum), **two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, “Son of David, have mercy upon us.”** Let the emphasis dwell on the last pronoun: **us**. These two **had faith in Him**, as did Jairus, the sick woman before them! Jesus had just raised Jairus’ daughter from the dead. True, she had not been dead long. But she had been dying and had expired, according to Jairus’ report, before Jesus arrived at their house. **Behold there came to him a certain ruler, and worshipped him.** This “worship” claim is troublesome for those who assert, in unbelief, that Jesus was never worshipped while on earth. I would gently suggest further, that the two blind men were extending like worship in their plea to the **Son of David**, a Messianic title (9:18 and 27). *The setting is worshipful, the language is supportive of that assertion.* The sick woman who **touching the hem of His garment**, did so reverently, I would suggest, even worshipfully which is why Jesus speaks to her faith (**in Him!**). In declaring her wholeness. She desired to be **made whole, or saved**. Her worshipful act is much more consistent with the worshipful setting than it is a disruptive occurrence! The **fame** of this resurrection/another salvation went forth widely. (v.26)

So the love of God is in Jesus in raising Jairus’ daughter, in healing the sick woman, and in dealing with the two blind men is all one; it is the love of God made manifest—in fact, in deed, and presently. The two men pressed forward, into Jesus’s home, asking for the mercy of recovering their sight. They, too, wish to be made whole/saved. **According to your faith be it unto you**, Jesus replies. It is possible to connect these incidents along the line of faith, or along the line of divine mercy/love—*they are actual miracles performed in Capernaum*. All that alters is one’s perspective. Are we noting all this . . . from God’s side, or from the human side? The outcome is the same. And, once again, the word of this home town miracle spread abroad widely.

Now we should simply note that all this is public eye, local news and that it all focuses on Jesus’ work solo, individually. The next healing is in fact a deliverance. **They brought to Him a mute (a dumb) man possessed by a devil** (a demon)—I want us to remember that Jesus is *leading by example* (originating, initiating) all this! Another suffering man is delivered, then healed and speaks—implied, I think, is for the first time in a very long time. **It was another wonder. A bonafide miracle.** Perhaps he became demon possessed at a very young age. Perhaps it was the consequence of childhood abuse which has a similar outcome even in our day—when the victims cannot describe what happened, or even speak about it. Some extreme cases are catatonic. Then we read that Jesus went abroad, with this deliverance, healing, preaching and resurrection ministry which all expressed *the love of God come down*, the divine compassionate response to the weakened, scattered, shepherd-less condition of the world’s people. And then, we are told, Jesus precipitated a change of approach; he chose to engage believers *in the love mission of God*—we are now on the

threshold of the church age, with the calling and commissioning of the twelve—undertaken to amplify the scope, increase the range and depth of Jesus’ mission.

You see, the works that I do? (Of course you do, that is why they were undertaken in public, witnessed and published! Seeing is believing ought to be operative in this realm) **Greater things than these shalt thou do**, Jesus promises us (John 14:12) . . . or, **If the works that have been performed in you, Capernaum, had been performed in Sodom and Gomorrah**, (Which they undeniably were!) **they**, (Those who perished in the storm of divine wrath over sexual perversion, cruelty, and mistreatment of the widows and orphans, the poor!) **would have repented**. (And not perished in infamy). (Matt. 11:23ff)

All this love because God was moved with compassion. Thanks be to God. And when that love came down it was embodied first in Jesus, then in His apostles and disciples, and then . . . in us.

Jesus, the evangelists testify, was also *moved with compassion* and the four following texts state so explicitly:

1. Matt. 20:31-34: **Two blind men sat by the wayside begging, and when they heard that Jesus passed by, they said, “O Lord, thou Son of David, have mercy on us.” Jesus stood still.** (This is not a reprise of the two blind men who had burst into Jesus’ home we mentioned earlier on.) **“What would you have Me do for you?” And they replied, “That our eyes may be opened. So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes, and immediately, their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.”**

2. Mark 1:40-45: **And a leper *came to Jesus, beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him, and saying, “If You are willing, You can make me clean,” 41 Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, and *said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed.” 42 Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed. 43 And He sternly warned him and immediately sent him away, 44 and He *said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.” 45 But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news around, to such an extent that [a]Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but [b]stayed out in unpopulated areas; and they were coming to Him from everywhere.**

3. Mark 5:15-20: **They *came to Jesus and *observed the man who had been demon-possessed sitting down, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the “legion”; and they became frightened. 16 Those who had seen it described to them how it had happened to the demon-possessed man, and *all* about the swine. 17 And they began to implore Him to leave their region. 18 As He was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed was imploring Him that he might [a]accompany Him. 19 And He did not let him, but He said to him, “Go home to your people and report to them [b]what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy [has shown you compassion} on you.” 20 And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis [c]what great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.**

4. Luke 7:12-15: **Now as He approached the gate of the city, [a]a dead man was being carried out, the [b]only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a sizeable crowd from the city was with her. 13 When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, “[c]Do not weep.” 14 And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, “Young man, I say to you,**

arise!” 15 The [d]ead man sat up and began to speak. And *Jesus* gave him back to his mother.

Now it is true that our Lord has departed from us in one sense; and even now He is seated at the right hand of the Father interceding for us—again—most certainly out of his enduring compassion for us—has done certain things *with foresight of compassion*:

- Because we could never preserve the truth by tradition along—He gave us the Bible.
- Because some priests and ministers would come along who refuse to hold fast to true doctrine (hirelings and ear ticklers and false teachers), we have the old Book.
- Because he knew some would not, and others could not read the Bible, He has raised up evangelists and missionaries to go and take the truth to them. And he has appointed apologists to defend the faith ably and apply it aptly.
- Because ministers will not bring souls to Christ of themselves, Christ has sent the Holy Spirit to indwell the church, our congregations and individual hearts.
- Because He knew, despite our being delivered from the damning and dominating power of sin, we would continue to have wants, desires and needs, He intercedes for us . . . healing remains, strengthening remains and protection remains for us—we are well-provided for. His promises meet every case. Even our children are covered by His grace and mercy.

We are provided for in every way by our omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, infinite and eternal Lord because of this, He loves us with an everlasting love. The wellspring of His compassion has no bottom and always issues forth living waters.

He is our security and we are secure because of who He is **the same yesterday, today and forever.**

Amen.