

We're looking at the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, seeking to see what was going on inside Him, rather than what this story has to do with us, to understand the experience He had internally and with His Father. We're using a book called *The Life of Christ in Stereo*, and we're on page 50; this is in Matthew, chapter 8, and Luke, chapter 7. Now here's the story. I want you to see a God who has His life in other realms. It doesn't matter how much Jesus Christ was on this earth, how much He was human, or how much He knew us. The larger part of his memory, of His life, is lived in eternity. That's where the larger part of his memory is. The larger part of my memory is in Texas. The larger part of His memory is in the heavens.

Now in the heavens, He has a throne, and that throne was His authority. He had at least 10,000 times 10,000 angels who obeyed Him. At this point, I have to say what I have said so many times: never before the New Testament, never after the New Testament, have there been so many people who had a sense of time and space and things other than time and space, and this incident in the Lord's life is a perfect example of this. The Lord's memories are of His own authority instructing angels, who are often depicted as military figures! Don't know if you've ever thought about it, but there's a sword, and there are fiery chariots, and there are battles, legions, angels. They all had names, at least some of them did. Yeah, all sorts of warlike elements here.

He gives orders, and they're made more instantly than you and I can ever understand. Again, they are commands carried out outside of time and space. And sometimes ordered outside of time and space and carried out in time and space. The angels are very free from the thoughts of geography and temporal things. They can shoot about everywhere. They can be in eternity, where there is no dimension, where there is no time, no matter. They can burst into time, obey the Lord's orders, do what He tells them to do, and step out again.

Now, this is what the Lord is so used to that it's commonplace to Him. I want you to understand that. But He has come to earth, and He is in a temporal situation where everything is physical. Everything is seen. Everything is solid. Everything is hard. There are walls around, skies above, earth below, air around—everything you see is it. You can't see yesterday, and you can't see tomorrow. Yet, as he deals with authority, he remembers authority as something not confined to time and space.

I'll go a little further and say, not only confined, not confined to it, but free from it. There is no past, there is no present, and there is no future in His experience with authority. There's no such thing as measurable geography. To Him, there's just no such thing. To us on the earth, there is. Therefore, as we think of time and space all around us, we think in terms of having to be bound by it and having to deal with our problems in relationship to

geography—to that which is solid, and that which is walled, and floors and skies, and locations.

Now the Lord is coming into the town, Capernaum. At the same moment, there is a man who has a hundred soldiers under him. He's a Roman. He's a legionnaire. He has a boy who is a slave, whom he really loves. The child seems to have spinal meningitis or something like that. He's having convulsions, and at the same time, he is paralyzed. He is obviously dying. This Legionnaire...this man in charge of a hundred soldiers doing a little police keeping. It's a police action. He represents the role of making sure the zealots stay in their place—a little trouble down in Galilee.

He hears that the Lord is coming in, and for the first time, he starts drawing on some debts that are owed to him. This is a very religious man and has been deeply taken with the Jewish faith, so much so that he has donated the money that built the synagogue in Capernaum. He has protected the Jewish people. He has been a true friend to them. The elders of the city—probably if you ever give any money to anybody for anything, they'll be back for more. And obviously, the Jewish leaders of the community have been to him for many, many favors, and now he's out to collect. He goes to these men and implores them, “When you see this man, I have a slave who is desperately ill, would you plead with him to do something?”

I'm fascinated that the Lord Jesus Christ is moved by class and political one-upmanship. He is arrested by the fact that the Jewish leaders have come to Him. Here is a man responding to class, to caste: he'll help one person get well, but won't help someone else because they're in a high position, because they built the synagogue. This doesn't seem like the Lord, does it? Does that strike you as the Lord? It doesn't to me. I feel the Lord is impressed that this Gentile respects the Jewish faith. He is a seeking man. He is a man who protects God's people, and I think that is what arrests the Lord.

Now, we don't know whether Luke is correct or Matthew is correct, but in one of them it seems the centurion, the overlord of a hundred men, met him, and in the other it seems he did not. I'm going to tell it the way Luke told it. We have a most interesting experience here. I have a feeling this centurion is on the verge of a revelation at his house. He can see the Jews pleading with the Lord. He hears that the Lord is coming his way, and he begins to recognize that time and space are not a paramount issue. He gives orders to people he never sees. He knows they get carried out without ever finding out. He has soldiers under him, too. And those are his own words. “I also have soldiers under me.”

“I also, Lord, I'm like you. I have soldiers at my command, and I give orders, and I say go, and they go, and I say come, and they come, and I say to them get out of here, and they get out.” Away with you. He turns to someone in his household and says, “Go and deliver this message.” He must have repeated it clearly, because it is a very complex

message. He said, "Now you make sure, you tell the Lord exactly what I said." The servant goes to the Lord, and the servant says, "My master has sent me. Someone from the Centurion's home. He comes to Jesus, and he says, "You don't have to bother with coming to my master's house. "My master says he's not worthy of having you in his house."

This opens a whole world here. I have authority on the earth. You have authority outside the earth. That makes you above me. People look at me and respect me because they see my authority. Your authority is high above mine because it deals with the unseen. This man has recognized that healing is not something that has to do with this realm. Breaking into the order of the universe and breaking the laws of this universe has to do with another universe. If this man can heal, he can heal anywhere because healing in itself is free of physical things. It is a divine thing. It is an out-of-this-world thing. It's another realm thing.

Incredible insight this centurion has. It really is awesome. This man has touched the unseen realm in his understanding. He is a Gentile who can see the unseen. He sits in his home, waits, knowing that if that man out there can heal, he can heal my son anywhere, because when I give an order about Nazareth, I don't see Nazareth, I don't go to Nazareth, but my will is done in Nazareth. I am a man of authority, and I understand that.

This one has unseen soldiers, and He does not have to give orders He sees, or go there to get it done. He can give commands, and those commands are obeyed on the earth, and they are obeyed in the heavens. This is what the Gentile sees, and this is what the Jews don't see. The Jews are escorting Him to a house and to a little boy, and the Lord is going to go there because of their lack of seeing, because of their lack of understanding. I can really appreciate why the Lord won't go there. I mean, when the Lord is told to go somewhere, He goes. Because if He just says He's healed, if they don't see it, they will-yeah, they will ascribe it to something else. They are only helped in their faith if they see. They have to watch Him and the response, but this man doesn't mean that. This man is sitting there with faith growing.

If Jesus Christ can do this, it means He has authority over illness. If He has authority over illness, He has an authority greater than mine. My authority is an unseen authority. I give orders that I never see carried out. I sit right here in this home and take care of a hundred square miles, and never do any of it. So the servant says this; all of this is what the servant says to the Lord. And the Lord is really astonished. This man knows my history; this man has tapped my memories; this man has understood where I come from; this man has understood spiritual authority. Anything that has the word spirit or spiritual in it is something that transcends physical matter, and it really does not belong to this realm.

The Lord marvels, and He said, "I have not seen anything like this among all of the chosen people." He seems to be both overjoyed and relieved at the opportunity to heal on this basis. But I love His words; I find His words fascinating. He does not take responsibility for healing that child. That's not exactly what I mean. It's almost like the Lord said to an angel, "You go to that house, and the amount of faith you see is the amount of healing you give."

He said to the servant, "Go to your home, and according to the centurion's faith, according to the amount of faith that centurion has, shall that child be healed." And what is faith? What is faith? It is the evidence of things not seen. I can't land that and make it real clear. All I can tell you is...both the Lord and the centurion had evidence. The Lord knew that man had looked into His world, the Lord's world. That meant he had faith, a lot of it; when you can see the unseen, it doesn't make you special so much as it makes you one who has a lot of faith.

What is the key to opening the realm that is not seen? Faith makes unseen things seen. Invisible things visible. Things that do not have material...material. Things that do not exist...existing. Faith is the key that unlocks the door to another realm. The Lord knew the man had faith because the man had seen the unseen, and He turned it around and said, however much faith that man has, so shall the servant be healed, and He knew how much faith that was. It was faith enough to see and have evidence of what has no evidence whatsoever. I'm arrested! I am really, really arrested. It makes us ask: what is authority, and how do we deal with authority? I think our immediate response would be to have a lot of faith, but I think I would have to stand with the centurion and not the Lord. I think it's seeing how much of what we are as Christians has nothing to do with this world.

Brothers and sisters, as we go through this, and you folks out there, as we go through this, there is one thing that keeps coming back to me. How much of the life of Jesus Christ is free from time and space? We don't ever look at this. You can't find a book on it. You can't find a paragraph on it. But the Lord was going to go heal that man with nothing that He had on that child, with nothing that He had on this earth, but something He had in another world, but He didn't think anybody knew that. Then He meets the centurion who does know it. The Lord was about to break the laws of physics. Everybody believed He could do that. The synagogue leaders knew He could do it, but they saw it as something generated in this world, because they said, "Go to the man's home."

The Lord knew it had nothing to do with going to the man's home. It had to do with the realm He had lived in throughout all His eternal past. It had to do with angels. It had to do with authority, spiritual authority. I think the more we see the unseen, the more we see, even looking through the Lord's life; keep looking for that which wasn't bound by time and space. If the scripture says the Lord knew, He perceived, He understood, He

understood men, He knew what was happening. This isn't about somebody who's clairvoyant. This is somebody who can break time and space and know what's going on two miles from here. What's going to go on in Jerusalem, 50 miles from here. What happened yesterday, and what will happen tomorrow. I would encourage you to open your eyes to see as much as you can of the unseen. That is faith.

I've never liked the word faith and I never will. I don't particularly want to. It's not that I'm against faith. It's not that I need another vision. It's just that it's such a...it's out in the ectoplasm. "Have faith, brother." Don't tell me to have faith. Tell me how to have faith. Tell me where faith comes from. For the centurion, it was taking everything he knew, well, and realizing if you turn the coin around, the same principles existed in heaven. When he saw that, then he saw a whole world he had never seen before. He's the only person that I can think of right off, other than Nathaniel, who really impressed the Lord. I'm glad he was a Gentile, because I'm a Gentile.

Now the Lord doesn't end His comments here about time and space. He says that the chosen will come from the east and the west, and do what? You tell me. Eat supper, have a feast. The word is a feast. Now then, what has He just done? He has just blown soot out of time and space once more. He makes this statement so casually; we pass it up so casually, that there will be those who come from the east and west. What is that? That's geography. That's this earth. This is this planet. And they will sit down with who? The Jew will sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Well, there will be others other than the Jews? I'm sorry, you're right; other than the Jews, who will come from the east and the west.

My point is, are Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob part of time and space? No, they are not. They have to be somewhere else, unless they are going to sit down on top of somebody's casket and eat a meal. I'm just arrested one more time: that at some point in time, a bunch of Gentiles are going to sit down in the heavens, who come from the east and the west, and they're going to sit down in the heavens and eat with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Well, you say, Gene, it says the kingdom of the heavens. Maybe that's going to happen on earth. Maybe it is? But I'm telling you, either Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have got to come through that door and bring heavenly realms with them, or those men from the east and west have got to go through that door into the heavens and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. One of the two has got to take place. Something that's not now has to take place.

By the way, I do not see heaven with its harps here. I really don't. This may be speaking of the time when we're all together in the interface. That place that is both of the heavens and of the earth, sometimes called the New Jerusalem. Last spotted out of heaven, but

having come from heaven, on its way to the earth. A kingdom that is totally spiritual, shared with those who were once very physical.

Please try to sense with me the freedom the Lord knew...unshackled by the heavens. He was not shackled by the heavens. He's not shackled by the earth. He is a child of both realms. He moves. His mind moves back and forth between them. He can say east and west, kingdom of heaven. You people here on earth, dining with people who died several thousand years ago. He cuts through it all. I would encourage you to be able to shift from realm to realm with such ease. I encourage you to be free of all things, all realms. You'll get to know your Lord better.

Well, that's all I have to say. Now I'm going to change the subject and get off on something terribly theological. You're all going to be surprised about what I'm about to say. As we go through the Lord's life, I've tried to introduce you to the first time something's mentioned. We have our first reference to what we would generally call "hell." One of you has just said you don't understand this. I'm going to challenge this passage as being a reference to hell. Don't come to the scripture with preconceived notions. Here's the first one, and I'm just telling you that you and I don't have the foggiest idea what this means.

What this story says is there is going to be a feast, and feasts are generally, we think of them as given in the evening. Do we not? I guess we do. It's an after-work affair. These people come from the east and the west, and they sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but some of the Hebrews are thrown outside where it's dark. But Gene, it says outer darkness. What does that mean? I don't know. The Greek here says "outer darkness," referring to being over against the light that's inside where the feast is being held. I don't know what that means, but it does not have to mean eternal damnation. Now, maybe it does. I haven't any idea, frankly. There's so much I don't understand, but in my not understanding, at least I'm free to not be bound.

I don't question the teaching of eternal destruction, but I say to you, don't go quote this as a passage that says that's what it's referring to. It may. It's a frightening term. I know that I have seen passages of Scripture in the New Testament, especially the epistles, where it looks like Paul, especially, is really threatening folks. I mean, he's got them. He's threatening them, and you can tell he's just consigning them to eternal perdition, and he will use a strong word, but it is not necessarily a word of destruction. "You will go into judgment." Okay, that simply means that some of us won't and some of us will. Frankly, I'd prefer not to be judged. I don't ever go to court. I've been to one once. I don't ever want to go back again. I won...but I might not win that one.

Let's take the passages that are really terrible, and let's believe them, but let's be a little careful to just consign everybody to everything dark and terrible, just because we've been

told. Outer darkness is a term we don't know what he meant when he said it, but I want you to know something. I don't know how dark outer darkness is. I don't know how horrible it is, but you have a hard time reconciling darkness with fire. Do you understand? Just be a little careful. That's all. I got off the subject, but I'm still on the subject. Alright, that's the end.

Now, concerning page 51, a widow's dead son is restored. I do not have to comment on that passage at all. If you will turn to page 113, you'll find all the truth about this chapter that begins on page 113. Alright, there's one thing I want to say about the healing of the boy in the town of Nain. We are in the period of what is called by scholars "the time of the Lord's popularity." I don't know if you recognize this fact, but the record of this miracle...I would call it *the miracle that cost Jesus Christ His life*. It will become very clear to you that up until this time, despite all that we've heard, He is not well known. It seems He is well known, but truly, He is not. Let's say someone in this city was doing a lot of wonderful things, and folks were coming from all over this end of the state to hear him. He is still not well-known.

One day, He does something that causes Him to hit the...I think in the news media it is called the pipeline. That means that you get in the pipeline, and suddenly everybody knows. You become part of the big news. This is where He got national attention from the raising of this little boy from the dead. It was not until He did this that there was news that there was somebody around, news that a prophet, news that reached all the way to Jerusalem. You're always in trouble when news reaches Jerusalem. That story was getting told in the barbershops. That story was getting told now by the spit-and-whittle club out on the courthouse lawn. Now, everybody is talking about it.

Some people are laughing, but everybody's curious. What's the guy's name, did you say? Joshua? Where's He from? Nazareth. You mean He's not from Jerusalem? This is the kind of story now that is being spread by word of mouth from towns and villages. This is making people walk into their bedroom and say, "Mama? Mama, if we put you on a horse, do you think you can get to Capernaum? Mama, there's a man down in Capernaum who might be able to heal you. We don't know, but could you go?" This is the mother who takes the little child with a twisted foot and grabs him up in her arms and starts walking 15 miles to the nearest rumor. This is where the big crowds will come from. It is the beginning, and beginnings always predict the end. When there's a beginning, then there's an end.

Throughout history, mankind has always enjoyed killing their heroes. It's almost a compulsion. I do want to say one other thing here that touched me. Two things in this touch me. Sometimes we pass over a scripture, a passage, without seeing things. When Jesus healed that little boy, what did the people who saw it do? There was fear, and there

was praise. Okay, that's good. That's really wonderful. That's good. That's all healthy. Fear is a wonderful thing to have when you stand in the presence, know you've stood in the presence of God, and you're afraid of...you cease being a practical atheist, and you remember again there is a God.

But I want to remind all of you that the Jews knew how to praise God. It was part of their custom and tradition, and they did it, and they knew how. Now, that might not seem very important to you until you sit down with a Presbyterian. A Presbyterian will say, "Why does he want to do that? Why can't he just go home and praise the Lord or give his thanks in a closet?" These people made a big noise. And praise is...if the Jews can praise God, a Christian ought to be able to make a little racket from time to time.

The other thing I'm impressed with is that these people were praising God in a dry spell. They were also praising God that a dry spell looked like it was ending. You cannot appreciate this little hidden passage here if you're not a Jew, but the Jews knew that they had gone into Egypt with God's blessing on them, had been greatly blessed there by Joseph. They also knew they had been forsaken for 400 years. Finally, after 400 years, God heard their prayers.

The Jews had now lived - the people living in this day, in the day of Herod the Great, Augustus Caesar, and Jesus Christ, whom they had never heard of - these people had been living in a dry spell. Nothing noteworthy had happened since the Maccabees, and very little for 400 years. 400 years - the same amount of time that God's people had been in Egypt. There hadn't been anybody raised from the dead since Elisha. There hadn't been many miracles around for centuries, and suddenly, these people recognized that God had taken note of His people. They recognized that a revival was coming, that God had come back.

For the first time in centuries, there's a prophet in the land. A great prophet, not a prophet, but a great prophet, a great prophet in the land. There have been guys standing in the street corners denouncing that had stirred up; John in the wilderness, denouncing and doing a great job of it. No miracles, but he was a prophet who could preach, teach, and heal. He was different, and God had not forgotten His people. They were praising God for Him, and I am impressed and grateful.

I would say that Christians need to take a little lesson. One of them is, you praise God in or out of a dry spell; you don't ever forget how to praise God, and you're really grateful on the day that He remembers His people. I think one of the saddest things that I've known in my lifetime is how God's people treat a visitation cheaply. Once you have it, and you're in it, and you're surrounded by it, people think it's happening everywhere, always has, and always will, and they can choose. Oh, I like this one. No, this one doesn't suit me too well. I'll go over and have it there.

I think I get more phone calls and more letters on this subject from people I know. I got one yesterday. Someone said, "Gene, we didn't know what we had. We thought this was just something commonplace. We've never found it again. We can't find anything like it. We had no idea." It's rare. God's visitations are always rare. If you ever have the privilege of one, hold it as a holy thing. If you ever get a second chance, consider yourself one of the most blessed people in church history and in all of spiritual history. Don't treat it lightly, and don't blow on it. It might go out. Don't go crucify the great prophet. It may go away.

Well, if I would conclude here with anything, it would be: it has not been until my generation and yours that the people of God have had a chance to understand, as well as the first-century people, being free from - I mean liberated from - time and space, because it has only been since Einstein and this new development in physics that many have realized that there are things that are not time and space; that are not matter, and are not physical. This was Einstein's fourth dimension. It's a place where nothing physical exists.

That is the dominion of God. That's Jesus Christ's greatest single memory, and it is the place that He walked even while He was here. If you will try to immerse yourself in His sense of that realm; not your sense of it, but His sense of it, it will have a great deal of meaning to you.

You have often heard me quote the statement from the *History of Christian Mysticism* by Evelyn Underwood, who said the one outstanding thing, one thing common to all the Christians of all the ages who had a deep walk with Jesus Christ:

*Every one of them had a sense of another realm.*

Try to develop a little bit...just a little bit...don't work too hard at it... *A sense of that realm.*