

## Beyond The Natural

These scriptures tell us about a mysterious realm of existence that is beyond this one that we live within each day, a realm, though it can't be seen with our natural eyes, forms the backdrop and influences for all of the things that take place over here, where we live and move and have our being within these natural realms.

But for those of us who have eyes to see and ears to hear, as our faith in the Lord Jesus continues to grow, we will more and more be able to “see” and to recognize the presence and the influences of that other realm.

For today, as we read and study these words of our passage, think carefully about what is being said, and you'll discover things about that other realm that you never knew before.

Turn with me to Luke chapter 5 and follow along as I read, beginning in verse 1.

<sup>1</sup>So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, <sup>2</sup>and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing *their* nets. <sup>3</sup>Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.

<sup>4</sup>When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, “Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.”

<sup>5</sup>But Simon answered and said to Him, “Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.” <sup>6</sup>And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. <sup>7</sup>So they signaled to *their* partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. <sup>8</sup>When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!”  
(Luke 5:1-8)

The “natural mind” of man struggles to comprehend and to explain such things as these . . . these people, these conditions and events that while taking place within the “natural” realm of existence, are clearly outside and beyond the borders of the “natural”. The things that we read about here in these scriptures

clearly come from a realm all their own, a spiritual realm where the limitations that restrict our “natural” realm simply do not exist.

But as “natural men” and “natural women”, we do want so very much to understand such things . . . and we are provoked to try. But try as we may, with the limits of our natural intellect, we are only able to meet with limited success because, again, it’s strange and difficult to even imagine that there is another realm different from our own. And because we can think only those thoughts that our natural mind can conceive, our efforts fail.

Some of those better-known scientists speak of those unexplainable realms of existence as being “other dimensions”. And perhaps those words do have some form of validity, but they only add to the mystery.

For most ordinary people though, the problem is more basic. Too often, we simply believe that if we are not able to see it with our eyes, touch it with our hands or perceive it with any of our other senses, it just isn’t there.

But thankfully, those struggles are not nearly as difficult for those of us who are born again Christians. As we, through faith, come to believe in Christ as our Savior and our Lord, we begin immediately to realize that there is much more beyond this natural realm that we live in. We begin to realize that all these things that we can see and touch and perceive with our senses only skirt the edge of “real” existence.

We begin to realize that the existence that we can see around us is just the surface of a much, much larger and greater realm, a realm where the risen Christ lives and moves and has his special kind of “being”, the realm of the “supernatural”. And as we, by faith, begin to see how the “supernatural realms” do freely interact with our “natural realm”, then we see wonderful things taking place that we never saw before.

Folks, that “supernatural realm” is the “Kingdom of God” that Jesus brought with Him as He came to live among us. It’s that “Kingdom of God” that Jesus spoke to Nicodemus about when He told Nicodemus that “unless you are born again from above, you cannot “see” the Kingdom of God”.

In coming to earth, Jesus bridged the gap between the “supernatural” “spiritual” realms of God, and these limited and confined “natural” realms that we live within. And as Jesus walked the earth, He demonstrated His ability to intermix the two with ease, the “natural realm” and the “supernatural realm, not

only with the miracles that He performed, but also in just His common manner of dealing with His natural surroundings.

Here in our scripture text for today, we see where Jesus was able to simply ignore the natural boundaries and do with matters and things as if the “natural realm” and the “spiritual realm” were one in the same, which of course, to Him, they are the same.

And note carefully how He very easily interwove the two realms, first, in the beginning words of verse 1 that we talked about in the message last week.

<sup>1</sup>So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God.  
(Luke 5:1)

As we said in the message last week, this irresistible need within the people's hearts to get near to Jesus, to “press against Him” and to hear His words did not come from natural curiosity, as some would insist, but rather as we learned from the words of Jesus in John 6:44,

<sup>44</sup>No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him.  
(John 6:44)

Folks, those people were not there simply because they were curious. Yes, they may have had some curiosity flowing through their minds, but that was not the real reason they were there that day, “pressing” closely to the Lord Jesus. They were drawn there by the irresistible, supernatural power of God.

The barrier between the “natural” and the “supernatural” was breached by the Holy Spirit. Though these people could not perceive it through any of their other natural senses, the “drawing”, that irresistible unction from the Holy Spirit, was taking place, and they were there, pressing close to Jesus and wanting to know Him. Again, those words of Jesus in John 6:44,

<sup>44</sup>No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him.  
(John 6:44)

Folks, logic and science will never be able to explain the “unction” of God's Holy Spirit.

Also, another way that the “supernatural” realm reached into our “natural” world and overcame its natural limitations is found in verse 3. Listen to those words!

<sup>3</sup>Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. (Luke 5:3)

Consider the circumstances of this situation for a moment. This is no small lake. It was an inlet off the Sea of Galilee.

And I have no idea how big the boat was, but it was not small. It was worked each day by several men. It held large nets and would store the day's catch of fish. So, most likely it was at least 20 to 30 feet long, which meant that as it was pushed off from shore, Jesus was probably at least 20 to 50 feet away from the nearest people in the crowd. And these words tell us that there was a "multitude" of people present.

But still we read the simple words, that Jesus sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat.

In telling us that Jesus sat down and taught the people makes a simple statement that it was a "relaxed" form of teaching, no yelling loudly so that the people in the back of the crowd could hear, just calm teaching.

Jesus had no microphone, no public address system, no "natural" means of projecting His voice, but yet, He taught the people.

Folks, this is a simple, but profound example of the way that, in Jesus, the natural realm was overcome by the power of the supernatural. The outside air does not have good acoustics. Only the power of the supernatural could intervene and make it possible for the multitude of people to hear the words of Jesus. The same Holy Spirit who drew those people to come to Jesus also enabled their ears to hear His words plainly. And I have no doubt that that same mysterious enabling took place every time Jesus spoke to people, especially great crowds of people.

Another example of the supernatural realm reaching into the natural realm and overcoming its limitations is seen here also in the miraculous catch of fish. The fish had not been there all night and they would not naturally be there now. But that did not matter.

The power of the Most High God was at work and nothing could limit His show of might and strength. Jesus said to Peter,

4 . . . "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." (Luke 5:4)

Jesus did not perform His miracles miscellaneously or for theatrical show. He had a purpose for each miracle.

When doing another miracle, Jesus said that He did His miraculous deeds so that people could know that He also had the power to forgive sins. I have no doubt that even this miracle would go towards teaching the people that Jesus has the power to forgive sins.

And note here the natural reluctance on the part of Peter, again the “natural” mind trying to understand everything using “natural” intelligence. Listen!

<sup>4</sup>When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, “Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.” <sup>5</sup>But Simon answered and said to Him, “Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing. (Luke 5:4-5)

Simon Peter was a professional fisherman with a lifelong knowledge of fishing, especially within these familiar waters. And he was trying to insert his natural intellect into what would become a very “unnatural” event. But thankfully, Peter did not hesitate very long. Listen again!

<sup>5</sup>But Simon answered and said to Him, “Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net.” <sup>6</sup>And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. (Luke 5:5-6)

This is the pathway to a “natural man” being able to do his part in bridging the gap between the “natural” and the “supernatural” realms. It is “surrender”, “simple surrender”, of our will, of our understanding, of our heart and soul, simple surrender of our natural way of thinking.

Peter surrendered his natural intellect to the Spiritual power of Jesus and a miracle took place right there in front of him.

Folks, let me ask you, do you think that it might be possible that you have prevented Jesus from doing a miraculous thing in your presence simply because you did not surrender your natural way of thinking into His supernatural power? I do believe that I probably have done that, that I might have inhibited His miracles, probably more often than I could imagine.

In another place in scripture, we can read the words, “Jesus did not do many miracles there because of the unbelief of the people.” Our lack of belief can somehow inhibit the power of Jesus to do miracles. That does not seem

possible, that meager and lowly man could inhibit the power of the Almighty God, but it is true.

God often subjects and limits Himself to the degree of faith that we have in Him. How often have you read in these gospels where Jesus said the words, "Be it according to your faith"?

Folks, let's seriously ask ourselves the question, "Do we, do you, do I limit Jesus and His supernatural power through a lack of faith on my part." Dear friends, our faith is another way that we can bridge that gap between the natural realms and the supernatural realms.

Thankfully, Peter did not limit the miraculous power of the Lord Jesus, and he was greatly blessed. Listen! Verse 5,

<sup>5</sup>But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." <sup>6</sup>And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. <sup>7</sup>So they signaled to *their* partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. (Luke 5:5-7)

Peter surrendered and he was greatly blessed.

And we find this surrender at work within Peter on many occasions within these scriptures. Recall the time when Peter looked out from the boat and saw Jesus walking on the water. Peter knew that this was not possible through "natural" means but had to be taking place through a "supernatural" power. But Peter was willing, at Jesus' command, to surrender and to step out onto the water. Unfortunately for Peter, his faith eventually waned, and he began to sink. But folks, Peter was getting a special message from God that would empower him later on to do things he would not have otherwise been able to do. Peter was beginning to learn that "surrender" to the Lord Jesus and to His commands was all that God required of Him. Yes, at times Peter would falter, and sometimes very badly, but Peter was learning.

Folks, too often we bible teachers ourselves will mistakenly try to insert the "natural" into the "supernatural" by trying to guess or insinuate what Peter or one of the other disciples might have been thinking in one situation or another. And that is sometimes important because these words of scripture were filtered through the human minds of the writers.

But listen, while all that does take place, we must always remind ourselves that even with that taking place, these words still turn out to be the pure and unsullied words of God, infallible in every way, His very breath. And with that being true, we can know with assurance that God has simply bridged the gap between the “natural” and the “supernatural” bringing about the perfect will of God. And praise the Lord for that!

So then, for you and me as we read these words . . . yes, the “supernatural” things of God are not easily believed by us. They are odd to our senses. But that must not keep us from the obedience that God is calling you and me to have. You and I must learn to obey even and especially when the things we are being urged by the Holy Spirit to think and to do just don't make sense to our natural mind. “Surrender” and “obedience” must be our response!

Finally, as we come to a close today, note here also, the great fear and trembling and humility that came to Peter's heart. Verse 8,

<sup>8</sup>When Simon Peter saw *it*, (the great catch of fish) he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!” (Luke 5:8)

When Peter witnessed this awesome miracle, he was overcome with fear and humility. He knew that he was in the presence of the Almighty God, and he gave the only response that he could give . . . great fear and great reverence.

And folks, it must be the same with you and me. When God chooses to do a supernatural work in our circumstances, we must first be able to recognize that it is God's Almighty Hand at work, and then we must do as Peter did and fall down before Him with great fear and humility, praising Him for His generous blessing.

And I urge you and me to “surrender” every circumstance of our daily lives to the Lord Jesus and to allow Him to regularly bridge that gap between the “natural” and the “supernatural” in those circumstances. And as we do, to acknowledge that it really is His hand at work. And if we will do that, I know that we will be blessed beyond measure.

I'll close with these words to that blessed hymn “I Surrender All”. Listen!

All to Jesus I surrender  
All to Him I freely give

I will ever love and trust Him  
In His presence daily live

Let's pray.