

Body and Soul
Matthew 9: 1 – 8
The Laurel Center
August 7, 2015

Main Idea: Jesus provides salvation and healing.

Introduction

We are beginning a new series today from the Gospel of Matthew entitled “Following Jesus.” We will be looking at Jesus’ ministry, his teachings and miracles. These are key for us to live the way Jesus wants us to. Today we are looking at a powerful representation of Jesus’ divine ability and authority. He shows us that he is God and has the power to forgive sins and to heal diseases. We suffer trials in this world because of sin. Sin and sickness caused so many problems today. Jesus is the only one who provides answers for these elements of our culture and bodies.

Text – Matthew 9:1-8

1 And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city. **2** And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven.” **3** And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, “This man is blaspheming.” **4** But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? **5** For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? **6** But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he then said to the paralytic—“Rise, pick up your bed and go home.” **7** And he rose and went home. **8** When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

I. Jesus sees the whole person (vs. 1 – 3).

A Jesus sees the real issue.

- 1 Matthew begins by telling us that Jesus and the disciples went back to Jesus’ hometown. Other Jesus grew up in Nazareth, Matthew here is referring to Capernaum where Jesus now lives in his ministry now resides.
- 2 Luke has expanded section concerning the people who brought the paralytic to Jesus. In Luke we learn that there are four friends who drop them down through the roof.
- 3 But in Matthew all we hear is that some people brought him to Jesus. We do not know exactly what about the man was paralyzed. It could’ve been from the waist down or maybe the whole body.
- 4 They bring into Jesus on a bed. This is not a biblical we think of today. It was probably only a thick blanket that he would lie on or perhaps a mat.

- 5 One of the most important sidelines here comes in the pronoun “their” faith. While many commentators suggest that this could have included the paralytic state, the grammar suggests that it is the friends’ faith.
- 6 Faith is an important ingredient in the healing process. However, there are times when Jesus will heal without the element of faith being there. Most of the time faith is in importance part of the healing process.
- 7 The interesting point to make here is that the faith of the friends who brought this man to Jesus seems to be highlighted. Different sources of faith are mentioned throughout the Gospels before feelings.
- 8 It is not always up to the person who is sick to have the faith to be healed. This is an important point to make when many people believe that they must have faith to be healed. Of course every source of faith helps.
- 9 The important thing to realize here is that Jesus sees things that the humans around him do not see. He is able to see things that we cannot. God can see the heart of a person and notes everything about us. He knows us better than we know ourselves.
- 10 Jesus sees the faith of the friends who bring the paralytic. We will see in a moment that he sees the sin of the man and he sees the obvious need for healing from paralysis. He sees it all.

B People think they see the real issue.

- 1 On the outside there are usually obvious things that we can see. But those are not always the things that matter to people. When people come for prayer we may not realize that they are not here to pray for something obvious.
- 2 We get so used to thinking we know so much from our world based on our five senses. But there are things that lie under the surface that we cannot see.
- 3 Jesus sees all things and even knows why we’re coming to him. He is not surprised with our requests. There is nothing in this passage to suggest the paralytic made any communication with Jesus.
- 4 Jesus knew without being told that one of his biggest issues seem to be sin. The question is whether or not sin and sickness are related here. It could be that Jesus knew about his sin because he knows the hearts of men. It could be that that sin had nothing to do with the sickness that was obvious to everyone else.
- 5 It could also be that the sin and sickness were connected. Perhaps the paralysis was the result of the man’s sin, penalty for rebellion against God in his life.

- 6 When Jesus sees their faith he then tells the man that his sins are forgiven. Anyone with two eyes would've expected Jesus to heal the man. But he deals with sin first.
- 7 It must be noted that God is more concerned about the soul in the body. If it came down to one or the other he would choose the soul. The soul is what must be healed first in the body is secondary in this life.
- 8 That does not mean that the body is completely unimportant to God but that he places a higher priority on the soul's health. The fact that he dealt with the soul and sin first proves this.
- 9 The scribes and Pharisees that they knew better than Jesus and responded with surprise and horror at Jesus' claim to forgive sins. This would be considered blasphemy because only God can forgive sins.
- 10 Other people think they know us and they think they can see our problems and fix them for us. But there are things that humans cannot see and cannot change. Only God can do these things. That is why we come to him.

II. Jesus heals the whole person (vs. 4 – 7).

A People question God's answers.

- 1 Amazingly, Jesus immediately responds to these Pharisees and scribes, knowing what they are thinking and what is in their hearts. Jesus knows us inside and out. He notes what we're thinking.
- 2 These religious leaders were probably speaking to one another in hushed tones so Jesus probably did not hear them charge him with blasphemy. He simply knew their hearts and knew what they were thinking because the Holy Spirit reveals it to in his ministry. He is well connected with the Holy Spirit.
- 3 Jesus does not wait to deal with their hearts as well. As quick as he is to deal with this paralytic's sole issues with sin, Jesus also raises the issue of evil in the hearts of the religious leaders.
- 4 We have a good God who cares so much about us and loves us so much that he does not wait to deal with our sin. He does not wait until tomorrow. He deals with us immediately and completely.
- 5 Jesus then addresses the issue of his authority and power. There are two words for power in Greek. The first has to do with authority and the other has to do with the ability. Jesus has ability to heal the body but also authority to forgive sins.
- 6 He asks a rhetorical question of the scribes and Pharisees pointing out that he has both types of power. For him, it does not matter which one he uses first. He can either deal with sin or sickness.

- 7 His power is so great that both will be dealt with immediately. The man's sins are forgiven and he is healed from his paralysis. It does not matter which one Jesus does first. Both will show his power.
- 8 Jesus is going to respond to the charge of blasphemy by showing that he is indeed the son of God and can do what God does. He will deal with the sin and with the sickness, the soul and the body.

B God knows what people need.

- 1 Jesus knew the man's issues and he knew what to do for each one. He not only knew the man but knew what to do for him and what was more important.
- 2 Sometimes we think we know better than God about what we need are what others need but that is not the case. As God is sovereign and all-knowing, he knows what is needed better than we know.
- 3 It is pride and arrogance to believe that we know better than God. We are only finite creatures made by God while God is infinite and our Creator. By virtue of being the creator, God knows us and how everything works in us.
- 4 Jesus shows that he forgives the man's sins by healing his body. Because we humans are limited to what we can see and observe outwardly, it required healing and seeing the man walk to understand that Jesus had also dealt with his sin.
- 5 The healing of the man and his ability to walk was confirmation that his sins were also forgiven. Jesus did a homework, not half the job. He dealt with the whole person, the soul and the body.
- 6 The people react immediately to the power of God demonstrated through Jesus. They give glory to God and then came that God's power is demonstrated in men.
- 7 This is the proper way to respond to God's power and his amazing abilities. Jesus demonstrates these and proves that he is divine. But he also proves that he has authority over sin and sickness.
- 8 Jesus' visual healing of the physical paralysis of this man proves that he also can forgive sins. To Jesus, salvation and healing are part of the same coin. Through salvation on the cross he demonstrates his total power over all the forces of evil no matter what their face.

Conclusion

We have seen the power of Jesus over sin and sickness in this section. Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. He can still heal and still save. He is still Lord over the universe in creation. We can go to him with every need that we have and he can do what no one else can. We

give him the glory because that is the proper response to his goodness to us. As we follow Jesus we can be sure that he leads by example after he teaches us. And when we need him the most for healing and salvation he is there. Let us always turn to him when we are in need of anything and see him do what no one else can.