

16. Jesus Healed Many People

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn how to develop true meaning and purpose in their lives. We saw that real meaning and purpose in life comes from doing things that have eternal value. Peter and his fellow fishermen had done a certain amount of traveling with Jesus during the previous year. However, they were now ready to forsake all and follow Jesus when He said that He would help them to become fishers of men. Today, we are going to see that Jesus healed many people as these men traveled with Him.

Luke 5:12-16 says, “And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus; and he fell on *his* face and implored Him, saying, ‘Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.’ Then He put out *His* hand and touched him, saying, ‘I am willing; be cleansed.’ Immediately the leprosy left him. And He charged him to tell no one, ‘But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded.’ However, the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. So He Himself *often* withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.” Here, we see that a man came to Jesus whose body was full of leprosy. This would show that his leprosy was extremely serious.

However, this man had heard about the healing that Jesus has been doing in various cities. As a result, he came to Jesus and said, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.” This man had faith that Jesus was able to heal him. Jesus took action before He even answered. Jesus touched the man and then said that He was willing. Leprosy was considered a very contagious disease so lepers would call out, “Unclean! Unclean!” anytime someone came close to them. In contrast to most people, Jesus showed His love by touching the man. Then, he told the man to be cleansed. The leprosy immediately left the man. Here, we see that Jesus always healed a person completely when He healed.

Then, Jesus gave instructions to the man. The Old Testament law required that a leper had to be pronounced clean by a priest and then offer a sacrifice for his cleansing. Jesus told the man to carry out the instructions of the law. Jesus had a very important reason for telling the man to do what the law required. Jesus told the man to carry out the instructions of the law as a testimony to the priests. The last recorded person who had been healed of leprosy in the Old Testament was Naaman, the Syrian, in 2 Kings 5. 2 Kings 5:14 says, “So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.” Naaman had been healed about eight hundred and fifty years before Jesus was born. This would have been a very powerful testimony to the Jewish priests.

However, the word quickly spread throughout Galilee about this miracle and this caused great multitudes of people to want to hear Jesus and especially to be healed by Jesus of their various infirmities. We see that the people were focused on their physical needs rather than their spiritual needs. That was the same focus of the people after Jesus fed the five thousand in John 6. Jesus told the crowds in that chapter in John 6:26-27, “Jesus answered them and said, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and

were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.” Jesus told the crowds that they needed to seek everlasting life instead. We see that because the crowds had a wrong purpose, Jesus often went out into the wilderness and prayed to the Father.

Luke 5:17-20 says, “Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them. Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him. And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with *his* bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus. When He saw their faith, He said to him, ‘Man, your sins are forgiven you.’” One day, Jesus was teaching in a house and a large crowd gathered to hear Him. This crowd included Pharisees and teachers of the law (scribes) in addition to many other people. These people had come from towns throughout Galilee and Judea and even included people from the city of Jerusalem.

Many people had been coming to Jesus for healing so everyone knew that Jesus could heal. The Pharisees and teachers of the law were there because they were critical of the teaching of Jesus, not because they wanted to learn from Him. However, the multitudes of people knew that Jesus had the power to heal. As a result, Mark 2:2-3 says, “Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive *them*, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four *men*.” Everyone was trying to hear Jesus preach so they gathered around the doors and windows to hear what Jesus was saying inside. Then, we see that four men came carrying their paralyzed friend to Jesus.

The four men could not even get close to the door of the house. As a result, the four men carried him up on the flat roof the house. Then, they removed the tiling from the roof until they had a hole large enough to let the man down between the beams that held up the roof. Jesus saw and honored the faith of the four friends. Needless to say, all of the people in the house saw the faith of the four friends as they saw the tiles being removed until there was a hole between the beams large enough to let the paralyzed man be lowered through the roof. However, Jesus did not touch this man as He had touched the leper. Instead, Jesus recognized the faith of the four friends by saying, “Man, your sins are forgiven you.” Jesus wanted the scribes and Pharisees to see that He was God and had the power to forgive sins.

Luke 5:21-26 says, “And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, ‘Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?’ But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, ‘Why are you reasoning in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, “Your sins are forgiven you,” or to say, “Rise up and walk”? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins’--He said to the man who was paralyzed, ‘I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.’ Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, ‘We have seen strange things today!’” The scribes and Pharisees immediately began to think various thoughts.

This man had a physical problem that caused him to be paralyzed. However, that was not his greatest need. His greatest need was the forgiveness of sin. Because Jesus saw the faith of the four friends, Jesus chose to deal with the greatest need of the man first and forgive his sin. The first thought that the scribes and Pharisees had was that Jesus was guilty of speaking blasphemy. They recognized that only God can forgive sins. That meant one of two things. Either Jesus was God or He was speaking blasphemy which was punishable by death. The scribes and Pharisees had come because they were critical of Jesus and so they refused to admit that Jesus is God. However, Jesus immediately showed them in a second way that He is God.

We see that Jesus knew their thoughts. Matthew 9:4-5 tells us, “But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, ‘Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, “*Your* sins are forgiven you,” or to say, “Arise and walk?”’” The fact that Jesus knew their thoughts showed that He had the power to examine their hearts and minds. Jesus told them that the thoughts of their hearts were evil and that He had both the power to forgive sins and the power to heal. Jesus then said that He would show them that He was God and did have the power to forgive sins. Jesus spoke a second time to the paralyzed man and said, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” The man immediately got up and took the thing on which he had been carried and left to go to his own home. However, he was filled with glory to God for what the Lord had done in his life that day.

Meanwhile, there were two different reactions by the people who were in the house that day. The scribes and Pharisees had hearts that were filled with evil. This evil would continue to grow in their hearts. In the next several events mentioned in the book of Luke, we will see that the scribes and Pharisees will continue to show the evil that was in their hearts. In contrast, we see a different response from the crowds. We see that the people were all amazed. They gave glory to God because they had seen a paralyzed man healed. However, they were also filled with fear. The word translated “fear” means *to be filled with fear, dread or terror*. John 7:13 says, “However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.” The crowds recognized that God had done a miracle but they also had a fear of the scribes and Pharisees. As a result, they said that they had seen strange things that day. The word translated “strange things” means *unexpected or uncommon*.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children realize that they will also get a variety of reactions when they tell others that Jesus is able to forgive sins. Some people will be like the scribes and Pharisees and will be controlled by evil thoughts. Others will act out of fear of the people around them. Some will say they have heard unexpected things. However, some will believe and place their faith in Jesus. May the Lord richly bless you as you equip your children to tell others that Jesus is able to forgive sins.