

## “BECAUSE OF YOUR FAITH...”

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**Text: Matthew 9:27-33 NLT**

**God’s Word: James 5:13-18 NLT**

### **Matthew 9:27-33 NLT**

*<sup>27</sup> After Jesus left the girl’s home, two blind men followed along behind him, shouting, “Son of David, have mercy on us!” <sup>28</sup> They went right into the house where he was staying, and Jesus asked them, “Do you believe I can make you see?” “Yes, Lord,” they told him, “we do.” <sup>29</sup> Then he touched their eyes and said, “Because of your faith, it will happen.” <sup>30</sup> Then their eyes were opened, and they could see! Jesus sternly warned them, “Don’t tell anyone about this.” <sup>31</sup> But instead, they went out and spread his fame all over the region. <sup>32</sup> When they left, a demon-possessed man who couldn’t speak was brought to Jesus. <sup>33</sup> So Jesus cast out the demon, and then the man began to speak. The crowds were amazed. “Nothing like this has ever happened in Israel!” they exclaimed.*

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It had been a full day. Jesus had spent the morning teaching the group that followed him to the hill overlooking the Sea of Galilee, then had healed a leper on his way back to town, then there was the entire incident with the Roman Centurion that we looked at last week, that ended with the healing of the centurion’s servant.

And now he has arrived at Peter’s home in Capernaum. If you read through the various gospel accounts it seems that this was where Jesus hung his hat when he was in town. And he must have been whipped. It had been a full day. To teach all morning and then the emotional energy that would have been expended when he performed the two healings.

But his day wasn’t over yet. When they got to the house he discovered that Peter’s Mother-in-law was sick in bed with a fever. But at a touch from his hand the fever left her and she was better.

And then we read in verse 16-17 *“That evening many demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus. He cast out the evil spirits with a simple command, and he healed all the sick. This fulfilled the word of the Lord through the prophet Isaiah, who said, ‘He took our sicknesses and removed our diseases.’”*

Did you catch that, he healed all the sick. Throughout the Gospels we watch Jesus as he healed the lame, the blind, the lepers, the epileptic; he even healed one of the soldiers who came to arrest him. Over and over again in the gospels we read the words and he healed all the sick. And the thing that we discover is that Jesus really didn’t seem to care who he healed, he wasn’t all that selective over the type of disease, the geographical area, the race of the one being healed or the technique that he used.

He healed in Galilee, Nazareth and Jerusalem, and he healed Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles. Some people he touched, some he spoke to, some he made mud packs for their eyes. Some he didn’t even see but simply spoke the word from a distance and the healing took place.

The one common denominator that we see, though, is the element of faith. Time and time again we hear Jesus tell people “You are now well because of your faith.” and sometimes it didn’t even have to be the sick person who had the faith, do you remember last week in the account of the centurion’s servant? The sick person wasn’t anywhere near Jesus it was the faith of the centurion that counted. The Bible tells us in Matthew 8:10, “*When Jesus heard this, he was amazed. Turning to those who were following him, he said, ‘I tell you the truth, I haven’t seen faith like this in all Israel!’*”

But what is faith? The Bible defines faith in the book of Hebrews 11:1 when it says *Faith makes us sure of what we hope for and gives us proof of what we cannot see.*

Today’s text brings us right to the heart of a crucial question. Two blind men cry out to Jesus for mercy. Jesus then asks them a question: Do you believe that I can do this? In other words, do you believe that I can heal you? When they say “Yes” the Scripture tells us: “*Then he touched their eyes, saying, ‘According to your faith let it be to you.’*” According to their faith, they were healed.

But Jesus doesn’t quantify the faith needed. It doesn’t take *much* faith; or *more* faith, but rather, *some* faith. Faith is not the healing power, but it is the vessel through which God will work. That doesn’t mean that God can’t heal you even if you don’t believe, but it is an ingredient that make the recipe for healing all the more meaningful. It is faith that God’s Holy Spirit can work in you.

Doubt on the other hand is something that can work counter to God’s power. Liken it to a scene from a movie in which a space shuttle is trying to time its orbital re-entry. And suddenly an engine thruster fails and the vehicle moves slightly off course. Doubt is a trajectory influencer and it will work counter to the work of the Holy Spirit. No doubt it is why the father of the child who was sick in Mark 9 prayed, “*Lord I believe, help my unbelief*”.

So that brings us to the question: Do you believe that Jesus can do this? Do you believe that He can heal you? Not your neighbor; or your friend; but you? Do you believe he can heal your broken-ness? Heal your painful childhood memories? Heal your marriage? Do you believe He can heal your cancer? Restore your joy?

### **1) There is a Healing for our Spirit.**

Sometimes we view the people of the bible through rose colored glasses, never believing that they might have problems or be in the least bit down or depressed. In the book of 1 Samuel we read the story of Hannah, maybe you know the story, maybe you don’t. In the first chapter we discover that she was married to Elkanah and they loved each other very much but they couldn’t have children. And that was something she wanted very much, it’s so hard for those of us who have children to understand sometimes...the heartbreak felt by those who are childless.

But Hannah wasn’t the only person in the Bible that experienced the blues. Listen to what Moses had to say in Numbers 11:14-15 *I can’t carry all these people by myself! The load is far too heavy! If this is how you intend to treat me, just go ahead and kill me. Do me a favor and spare me this misery!* Sounds like the life of the party doesn’t he?

And listen to Elijah in 1 Kings 19:4 *Then he went on alone into the wilderness, traveling all day. He sat down under a solitary broom tree and prayed that he might die. “I have had enough, Lord,” he said. “Take my life, for I am no better than my ancestors who have already died.”*

And then there was King David, who wrote most of the Psalms, who penned these words in Psalms 22:6-8 *But I am a worm and not a man. I am scorned and despised by all! Everyone who sees me mocks me. They sneer and shake their heads, saying, “Is this the one who relies on the Lord?”*

Each of these people needed emotional healing because they had given up. And each of them eventually received the emotional healing they needed. I'm not saying that their problems weren't severe, but their problems certainly weren't unique nor were they fatal.

In 2022, our country and our churches are full of people who have fallen and can't get up. And here is the good news for the morning, we will all fall! You ever watch babies learning how to walk? They don't just get it. They try and they wobble and they fall down, and they get back up again and they try again and they wobble again and they fall down again. It's kind of a recurring theme until they finally get it right, because babies have discovered the truth of life and that is "If you walk you will fall." Sometimes we fall because of fear, or inexperience or lack of preparation or over confidence or sometimes we just fall. And the more we attempt to do, the more likely we are to fall. Like it or not, that's the facts.

Can anyone remember where they were on January 28, 1986? No. How about this... can anyone remember where they were when Christa McAuliffe died? She was the school teacher aboard the space shuttle Challenger when it exploded 73 seconds after take-off. There are those who would say that had Christa McAuliffe not gone into space, she would have survived. Yes, but the question is, would she have lived?

Life is going to be full of falls, the farther you reach, the faster you run, the longer you go...the percentages begin to pile up. The privilege of success is tempered by the risk of a fall.

The difference between success and failure is contained in our reaction to our falls. Some people center their entire experiences around one fall, they look at it, replay it, over and over again but they never get on with life. It doesn't matter how successful they had been and can be...all they see is the fall.

I've said it before and I'll say it again, you're not a failure until you quit. Never be down, either be up or getting up. And if you are down, and you don't think you can get up by yourself maybe you're right. But then again, if you are a child of God, then you don't need to get up by yourself because he's there to help you up.

When Christ started his earthly ministry he began by making an appearance in the synagogue. He read a passage of scripture that would shape his ministry. Listen to the words of Luke 4:18 quoting from Isaiah 61. *The Spirit of the...Lord is upon me, for the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted and to proclaim that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed.*

If you've fallen then God is there. If you can't get up, if you're too tired and you've called it quits, don't despair listen again to the words of Jesus, *"He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted."* Do you fit in that category? Has your heart been broken, has your spirit been crushed? But you have to be willing to be picked up.

Are you crying out to God today for an emotional healing? If so he's there. David must have discovered that as well, because he wrote in Psalm 34:18 *The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed.* And so Jesus is there to heal your broken spirit, but more than that, we read in Jeremiah 3:22 *"My wayward children," says the Lord, "come back to me, and I will heal your wayward hearts."*

## **2) There is a Healing for Our Souls.**

Sin is what separates us from God, it creates a chasm that you cannot cross, and the only thing you have to do in your spiritual healing is repent. Repentance is simply telling God that you're sorry for what you've done, not just a little sorry but so sorry you're not going to do it again. That's the message that Peter was teaching in Acts 3:19. *Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away.*

Did you catch what happens there, your sins will be wiped away...remembered no more, that's called forgiveness and that's God's part. Are you crying out to God today for a spiritual healing? If so he's there.

But the healing that Jesus offers is not just for our spirits and our souls.

### **3) There is a Healing for Our Bodies.**

I not only believe that Jesus Christ healed people when he walked through the Holy Land 2000 years ago, I also believe that he heals people today. You with me?

Probably praying for your 96 year old Granny to be healed physically may not be what God has in mind. We need to admit that some people are ready to be with God, and when I prayed for her healing, I was praying that God would give her that ultimate healing. For her, *to live is Christ and to die is gain*. Right? To lose my Granny was terribly hard and terribly painful. I had never known life without her. She was always a part of my life. I can't imagine what some of you all experience who have lost a spouse and I don't want to even think about losing a child. We know heaven is a wonderful place, but we become a bit selfish and want to keep our loved ones with us. Change is hard. Letting go is hard.

But I can also attest to the fact that the God I serve has touched and healed my child. Friends, on the day she was born, in my womb, she had no heartbeat for 8 minutes! 8 minutes! Had I not been at the doctor's office that morning and had they not discovered that there was no fluid around her, I would not have been anywhere near a hospital and would have delivered a stillborn baby. Some would say that was a coincidence that I was at the right place at the right time. NO ONE can convince me that wasn't a touch from the Master's hand. That was a God touch.

Now...some of you may be asking why God didn't save your child or loved one. I don't have the answers. Maybe the closest thing to healing that God could do was to give them that ultimate healing in heaven. I don't know why some live and some die. Why some are healed and some are not. Maybe we are looking at just a portion of God's big picture—whereas God can see so much more of what's going on. But what I do know is that God has never let us down on his promises. He told us that he would never leave us—even through the hard times--and he never has. What I do know is that God weeps with us in our struggles. Just because God didn't respond the way we wanted God to respond, doesn't mean that God was not present and working in the lives of those around us.

God has told us to *ask...and it shall be given to you; seek...and you will find; knock...and the door will be opened for you*. And so we obediently bring our loved ones to Christ. We continue to bear our souls before the One who is closer to us than even our own breath. We continue to wear out our knees praying for God's will to be done. We continue to seek God's wisdom and God's guidance and God's healing.

Leslie Weatherhead wrote a book entitled, The Will of God. The idea is that there are various levels to God's will. First, there is God's IDEAL will. Where life is perfect and we are all happy and content in the Garden of Eden and no evil ever penetrated through. But, we know that didn't last. Because of sin and the choices we made and continue to make, I believe that God's will changes and adapts. So God's CIRCUMSTANCIAL will meets us where we are, but it doesn't leave us there. And then, God's ULTIMATE will is that we would all be with Him in heaven. That's God's dream for humanity. That's God's desire for humanity.

So where are you today? Do you believe that Jesus can heal you? Not your neighbor; or your friend; but you? Do you believe he can heal your broken-ness? Heal your painful childhood memories? Heal your marriage? Do you believe He can heal your cancer? Restore your joy? Do you believe that he can give you life and help you to live it abundantly?

Amen