

The Ministry of Christ, Part 5

When we closed the last session, Jesus had gone to a solitary place to pray. Simon and those with him searched for the Lord and when they found Him, they said, “*Everyone is looking for You.*” Although the Lord had healed many of various diseases and cast out many demons, their need was so great they still wanted more. Nothing is said about what happened as a result of their searching for Him. From Capernaum, Jesus said He needed to go into the next towns.

Matthew 4:23-25 NKJV And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them. Great multitudes followed Him—from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

In Matthew 5:1 Jesus went up on a mountain and gave the sermon on the mount where He ministered to the multitudes who followed Him.

This sermon covers Matthew chapters five through seven. This lesson ends with Jesus coming down from the mountain.

Leper Healed – Matthew 8:2-4; Mark 1:40-42; Luke 5:12-13

Matthew 8:1–2 NKJV When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.”

Luke 5:12 in the Amplified says, “There came a man full of (covered with) leprosy...” Although he was full of leprosy, he believed that Jesus could make him clean. This is a tremendous statement of faith considering the man’s condition. Obviously, the man had heard enough to put his confidence in Christ.

Matthew 8:3–4 NKJV Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, “I am willing; be cleansed.” Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus said to him, “See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”

The Lord’s actions were astounding. He actually put out His hand and touched the unclean leper. Why is it amazing that He would touch the leper? The law of the leper in Numbers 5:2 and Leviticus 22:4-6 declared that whoever touches any unclean thing will be made unclean. Jesus’ actions superseded the law because He had the power to

cleanse the thoroughly unclean leper. Jesus commanded him to say nothing to anyone until after he first showed himself to the priest. Why did Jesus send the leper who was cleansed to the priest? (See Leviticus 14:3-4, 10). This action was a requirement of the Law of Moses. For a person to be ceremonially clean, he must go to the priest and offer the gifts Moses commanded. Second, his actions would be a testimony to them.

Mark 1:45 NKJV However, he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction.

The leper's actions became a hindrance to Jesus' preaching ministry because crowds increased in numbers and overwhelmed Him. They were more interested in what Jesus could give them or do for them than hearing the message of the Gospel. Even in the secluded places, multitudes of people came to Him from every direction. Throughout the remainder of the year of His popularity, great multitudes of people followed Him.

Luke 5:15 AMP But so much the more the news spread abroad concerning Him, and great crowds kept coming together to hear Him and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.

Take note that even though Jesus continued healing the multitude of the sick, casting out demons, and releasing the oppressed, the numbers of needy people increased. Luke also adds that Jesus retired into the wilderness and prayed, (vs 16). This appears to be the customary action of the Lord. After ministry, He would go into a solitary place to pray.

Return to Capernaum – Mark 2:1-2; Matthew 9:1; Luke 5:17

Matthew 9:1 AMP AND JESUS, getting into a boat, crossed to the other side and came to His own town [Capernaum].

Mark 2:1-2 NKJV And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. 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.

The last time Jesus was in Capernaum, the people were filled with wrath and thrust Him out of the city. This is a major shift in the atmosphere and attitude of the people from when He last visited. Since His last visit, many miracles and healings were done.

Luke 5:17 NKJV 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.

The pharisees and teachers of the law were very influential in the synagogues. These leaders were represented in every village and city. It should not go without notice that these leaders are the same scribes and Pharisees that charge Jesus with blasphemy.

The Amplified says: “And the power of the Lord was [present] with Him to heal them.”

The healing power present in Jesus manifested His glory before these religious authorities. Something special occurred during this session with them. “The power of the Lord” is the same as saying the “Spirit of the Lord.” There appears to have been a special anointing of the Spirit in this meeting for healing. It is noteworthy that Jesus always had the power to heal, but at this particular place and time there was a special power of the Lord to heal. What difference does it make when “the power of the Lord is present to heal?” We notice this when the Spirit of the Lord is present with a special anointing to heal the sick today. There are times when God’s power is present to do specific things.

Paralytic Healed – Matthew 9:2-8; Mark 2:2-12; Luke 5:18-26

Mark 2:2-3 AMP And so many people gathered together there that there was no longer room [for them], not even around the door; and He was discussing the Word. Then they came, bringing a paralytic to Him, who had been picked up and was being carried by four men.

We are not told exactly where this happened. Some think it may have been at Simon Peter and Andrew’s house, or at their synagogue or some other house. Notice the crowd was so great that there was no longer room for them, not even around the door. While the crowd was growing and pressing in, Jesus was preaching the word to them.

Mark 2:4 AMP And when they could not get him to a place in front of Jesus because of the throng, they dug through the roof above Him; and when they had scooped out an opening, they let down the thickly padded] quilt or mat upon which the paralyzed man lay.

Mark 2:5 AMP And when Jesus saw their faith [their confidence in God through Him], He said to the paralyzed man, Son, your sins are forgiven [you] and put away [that is, the penalty is remitted, the sense of guilt removed, and you are made upright and in right standing with God].

Jesus saw their faith and confidence in Him. He could tell they had faith and confidence in Him because they were determined to get to Jesus.

If we want something from God, we must demonstrate it with actions of

faith and confidence. When He saw their faith, Jesus said to the man, “Your sins are forgiven you.” Jesus’ words indicate that the man’s sin and illness were somehow connected. His healing authenticates Jesus’ claim that He not only has power to heal but also has the power to forgive sins.

Mark 2:6–7 AMP Now some of the scribes were sitting there, holding a dialogue with themselves as they questioned in their hearts, Why does this Man talk like this? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins remove guilt, remit the penalty, and bestow righteousness instead] except God alone?

Matthew 9:4–5 NKJV 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’?”

Matthew 9:6–7 NKJV But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—then He said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” And he arose and departed to his house.

Jesus was aware of the evil thoughts that were in their hearts. This is significant for everyone. The Lord knows what is going on in your heart and mind. Jesus is demonstrating the amazing transformation that takes place when sins are forgiven. Which is easier to say, “Your sins are forgiven you,” or to say, “Arise and walk”? Have you recognized the amazing healing force of having your sins forgiven? The Scribes and Pharisees began to reason, question and argue about Jesus’ actions. Is there anything wrong with asking questions about what God is doing? They were demonstrating their unbelief and doubt. They should have rejoiced that the man was healed.

Matthew 9:8 AMP When the crowds saw it, they were struck with fear and awe; and they recognized God and praised and thanked Him, Who had given such power and authority to men.

Luke 5:26 AMP And overwhelming astonishment and ecstasy seized them all, and they recognized and praised and thanked God; and they were filled with and controlled by reverential fear and kept saying, We have seen wonderful and strange and incredible and unthinkable things today!

This should be our response when any good thing happens to us.

Matthew is Called and Jesus has feast at his house –Matthew 9:9-13;

Mark 2:13-17; Luke 5:27-32

Luke 5:27–28 NKJV After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “Follow Me.” So he left all, rose up, and followed Him.

Matthew 9:9 NKJV As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “Follow Me.” So he arose and followed Him.

Tax collectors were known for being corrupt and for being in collusion with Rome. Often they would charge people more than the required tax in order to supplement their income. Notice how Levi or Matthew responded. Luke tells us he left all, rose up, and followed Him. This appears to be the usual and customary response to following Jesus. Later Jesus says: “Take up your cross and follow Me.” “Whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.” Does the Lord really mean that? If not, what does He mean? If so, what should we do? Should we respond with the same kind of devotion?

Luke 5:29 AMP And Levi (Matthew) made a great banquet for Him in his own house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others who were reclining [at the table] with them.

Luke 5:30 AMP Now the Pharisees and their scribes were grumbling against Jesus’ disciples, saying, Why are you eating and drinking with tax collectors and [preeminently] sinful people?

It is amazing to see the difference caused by faith. Faith caused those who were despised and hated to come to Jesus. All the Pharisees and scribes could see was the old sinful nature of those who were present. Watch Jesus’ response to the Pharisees complaint that He was eating with tax collectors and sinful people.

Matthew 9:12–13 NKJV When Jesus heard that, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

“I desire mercy and not sacrifice,” refers to a prophecy of Hosea.

Hosea 6:6 NKJV For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

What does the Lord require of you? This message was difficult for the Pharisees and Scribes to hear. Mercy is kindness to those who are unworthy. It is easier to offer a gift to God than to have a changed heart.

The Second Passover

John 5:1 NKJV After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

This is the second time Jesus goes up to Jerusalem for the feast of passover. He goes with healing and miracles on His mind. The first time, He cleansed the temple and chased out the money changers.