



EXPLORE THE BIBLE®

Acts 1 – 12 Sermon Series

Supports Session 11: Healing

Sermon Title: “Jesus, Our Healer” (Matthew 9:1-8)

Connection to Session 11

As the church was being formed in the book of Acts, God gave miraculous powers to Peter to heal and restore life to some. Peter was not the first one to have such miraculous powers as He witnessed Jesus do the same thing.

Introduction/Opening

Hitting a toe on the edge of the bed is never a fun experience. When this happens, we experience internal pain that no one else can see. We merely hope that no one hears us scream out in pain. When we get up the next morning, we see the impact of the experience and share our experience with those who will listen. In both the seen and unseen, we long for someone to offer us healing. Today’s message is an encounter between Jesus and someone who needed both internal and external healing. We will see that Jesus offered him healing and did not allow the naysayers to influence the situation.

Outline

- I. He heals us from our external troubles (vv. 2,6).** The unnamed man in this story had a real problem that everyone could see—he was a paralytic. Matthew did not provide additional details as to the extent of his paralysis, but it was of such a nature that he had to rely upon others to carry him. Society would have looked down on this man because of his condition. Some may have gone so far as to actively blame either him personally or his family for his condition as a direct result of sin (John 9:2).

Jesus did not see him this way. Instead, Jesus applauded the man and his friends for their faith. Their faith was of such an extent that the friends lowered the paralyzed man down to Jesus after dismantling the roof (Luke 5:19). The story concludes with Jesus telling the man to “get up, take your stretcher, and go home” (Luke 5:24). Upon hearing this, the man got up and went home. The original language does not indicate any delay between the command and the man living in obedience.

While we may not be able to identify with this man in that we are not paralyzed, we can identify with him in another way – others can see places in us that need healing. If this is us, then we need to come to Jesus in faith. This is not about telling Jesus

what to do. Instead, it is about trusting in His goodness no matter His response. Jesus chose to heal this man in the moment.

II. He heals us from our critics (vv. 3-4). The text indicates that some were awestruck and gave glory to God over the paralytic picking up his mat. Others thought evil things in their hearts. Jesus, knowing the evil in the hearts of the Pharisees, engaged them in open conversation. The text indicates that the paralyzed man was present during the exchange between Jesus and the religious elite. How might this man have felt? He came to Jesus in faith and now a disagreement had ensued. Society would have told the paralyzed man that sin had caused his paralysis. Now, the Pharisees would turn their ire upon him to an even greater extent.

We can learn at least two things from Jesus in this exchange. First, Jesus did not allow the darkness of someone's heart to stop Him from healing someone who approached Him in faith. If we come to Jesus in faith asking Him to heal us, some may think we are not in our right mind or that we should not bother Jesus with something so trivial. If this is the case, we should be encouraged by the fact that Jesus did not allow the unneeded thoughts of the religious elite to stop Him.

Second, we can also learn that Jesus can use those who need to be restored to prove His goodness and grace. The Pharisees were accusing Jesus of blasphemy. Jesus used the paralyzed man to show that He is God. When we come to Jesus in faith, He can change us so that our critics are silenced by the power of Christ.

III. He heals us spiritually (vv. 2,6). The biggest problem that the paralyzed man experienced was not the fact that he could not function on his own; it was the fact that he was a sinner in need of forgiveness. Everyone could see his paralyzed condition, but only Jesus could see his internal nature and strife. The amazing thing is that the text has no indication of the paralyzed man saying a word. He simply came to Jesus in faith and received forgiveness.

The paralyzed man could have offered a variety of excuses as to why he could not come to Jesus, but he didn't. The paralyzed man could have given up at the end or said it was too much trouble because of the crowd, but he didn't. We too can offer various excuses as to why we should not come to Jesus today, but we shouldn't.

Conclusion

We may not be able to identify with the man in this story in that we are not paralyzed. We all, however, can identify with him in that we are in desperate need of forgiveness as we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Will we turn to Jesus and receive the forgiveness that only He can offer? This man did not let his condition or critics stop him. Let's pray that we will not let anything stop us from coming to Christ today.

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