

Introduction

Over the past few weeks we have seen the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry. It began at His baptism, where He was anointed by the Holy Spirit.

(Luke 3:21-23) "Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, {22} and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased." {23} When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age,"

He went through a time of testing and temptation in the wilderness. Then, He read the passage in Isaiah 61 about being anointed to preach the gospel, and He concluded by saying that this had been fulfilled in their hearing.

(Luke 4:21) "And He began to say to them, 'Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'"

As He was teaching in their synagogues, people were amazed at His teaching, because He taught with authority. Jesus did not preach with just persuasive words of wisdom, but He preached with demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Consequently, when He preached, people were healed and the captives were set free. Luke also records that they were amazed because He had authority and power to command the unclean spirits to come out.

(1 Cor 2:4-5) "and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, {5} so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God."

Luke 4:36 And amazement came upon them all, and they began talking with one another saying, "What is this message? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits and they come out."

In Luke 4, Jesus went to Peter's house, which was in Capernaum. His mother-in-law had a high fever and they entreated Him to pray for her. He laid hands on her and she was healed. She immediately got up and began waiting on them. People began bringing people who were sick or had a need for healing. Jesus was healing all of them, and demons were coming out of many of them. Because people were being healed, they wanted Jesus to stay there, but He told them He had to preach the kingdom of God to other cities.

(Luke 4:42-43) "When day came, Jesus left and went to a secluded place; and the crowds were searching for Him, and came to Him and tried to keep Him from going away from them. {43} But He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, for I was sent for this purpose."

Where did Jesus get this power to heal? How was He able to stay focused and maintain His course. He went to a secluded place and prayed. He would frequently withdraw and spend time in prayer. He stayed connected to the Father. He stayed full of the Holy Spirit. Like Jesus, you and I must find a way to get out of the busy lane and spend time with the Father in prayer and in the Word.

Last week, Donald shared on how Jesus called Peter, James, and John. They were all partners in a fishing busy. Jesus tells them that from now on they would be fishing for men. In Matthew's account, He told them to follow Him and He would make them fishers of men. That is what God wants each and every one of us to be, fishers of men. God has called all of us to be preachers of the gospel. All of us are to fishers of men.

(Matt 4:19-20) "And He *said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." {20} Immediately they left their nets and followed Him."

Jesus came to seek and to save those who are lost. If we are truly following Jesus, if we are following Jesus' example, if we are arming ourselves with the same purpose as Jesus, we will be seeking those who are lost.

(Luke 19:10) "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

(1 Peter 4:1b) "arm yourselves also with the same purpose,"

(Phil 2:5) "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,"

Paul exhorted the Philippians to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel, and to stand firm in one spirit, striving together for the faith of the gospel. If we are following the example of Christ, we will become fishers of men. If we are following the example of Paul and the early church fathers, we will strive together for the gospel.

(Phil 1:27) "Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;"

In our passage today, Jesus heals two people. First, He cleanses the leper. Second, He cleanses a paralytic. The first man has leprosy and is cleansed on the outside. The second man is healed, but more importantly, he is forgiven and cleansed on the inside.

A. Jesus cleanses the leper. (Luke 5:12-16)

(Luke 5:12-16) "While He was in one of the cities, behold, there was a man covered with leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." {13} And He stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately the leprosy left him. {14} And He ordered him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." {15} But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. {16} But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray."

Let's take a quick look at leprosy. **In Leviticus 13-14 we are given instructions about leprosy.** In Leviticus 13, God gave instructions to the priests about how to determine if a man has leprosy or not. Generally speaking, if it was a surface infection that did not spread, it was not considered leprosy. However, if the spot was deeper than the skin, it was considered leprosy.

The priests were very careful about the diagnosis of leprosy. It was a very contagious and destructive disease. If the priest had questions about it, the person would be quarantined for a week for observation. If the condition did not deteriorate, the priest would quarantine the person for an additional seven days. If the condition still did not deteriorate, the priest would declare the man clean and the person would have to go through a cleansing process.

If however, the priest declared the person as leprous, the leper would have to tear his clothes. He would have to uncover his head, and he was to cover his mustache and cry, 'unclean, unclean.' If someone came near, the leper would have to identify himself as a leper and say unclean. This was to prevent someone from accidentally coming in contact with the person and catching the disease. Furthermore, the leper had to live alone and his dwelling had to be outside the camp. The lepers were outcasts. People were not to associate with them, be around them, or touch them.

(Lev 13:45-46) "As for the leper who has the infection, his clothes shall be torn, and the hair of his head shall be uncovered, and he shall cover his mustache and cry, 'Unclean! Unclean!' {46} "He shall remain unclean all the days during which he has the infection; he is unclean. He shall live alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp."

Leviticus 14 tells us how a person who was healed of leprosy was to become cleansed. First, the priest would go outside the camp to observe the person. If he determined the person no longer had leprosy, he would give orders to take two live clean birds. One bird would be slain. The other bird would have the blood of the slain bird and hyssop sprinkled on it. Hyssop was a fragrance from a hyssop plant, which is in the mint family. The priest would also sprinkle the blood and hyssop over the one being cleansed of leprosy. Then, the live bird would be set free. (Lev 14:4-7)

Next, the person being cleansed would have to wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and bathe in water. He could then enter the camp, but he had to stay outside his tent for seven days. People lived in tents, so he had to stay outside his home for seven days. At the end of seven days, he had to shave his head, beard, and even his eyebrows. He had to wash his clothes again and bathe in water. (Lev 14:8-9)

Then, he had to take two male lambs without defect, and a yearling ewe lamb without defect, three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering and one log of oil. The first lamb was for a guilt offering. The priest would take part of the blood and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed. The priest would take some of the oil and sprinkle it in the fire of the offering, put some on the right ear, and then pour the rest of the oil on the head of the one to be cleansed. Next, the priest would slaughter the other lamb as a burnt offering and also make a grain offering on the altar. Then the person would be considered clean. If a person was poor, he still had to offer two lambs and birds, but the other requirements were reduced. (Lev 14:10-32)

Now that we have some basic understanding and background, let's go back to our passage today. Jesus was in one of the cities and a man covered with leprosy approached him. The person was unclean and should have been outside the city, not in the city. The man with leprosy fell on his face and implored Jesus to make him clean.

(Luke 5:12) "While He was in one of the cities, behold, there was a man covered with leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing,

You can make me clean."

Jesus was willing to cleanse the leper. Jesus stretches out His hand and touched the man. He was not afraid of contracting leprosy. Jesus was imparting healing to the man. Jesus answers the man, "I am willing; be cleansed." Luke records that the leprosy immediately left him.

(Luke 5:13) "And He stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately the leprosy left him."

I want to talk about God's will regarding healing. Whenever someone asked Jesus to heal them, Jesus was willing. The only exception that I can think of this is when the Syrophenician woman asked Jesus to heal her daughter, and He told her that it was not right to take the children's bread and give it to the dogs. The main point of that passage was that Jesus had come to the Jews and was ministering to the Jews. It was not the time for the Gentiles. But, he healed the woman's daughter. Jesus was always healing and did not hold back.

(Matt 15:22-28) "And a Canaanite woman from that region came out and began to cry out, saying, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed." {23} But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and implored Him, saying, "Send her away, because she keeps shouting at us." {24} But He answered and said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." {25} But she came and began to bow down before Him, saying, "Lord, help me!" {26} And He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." {27} But she said, "Yes, Lord; but even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." {28} Then Jesus said to her, "O woman, your faith is great; it shall be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed at once.

Jesus came to heal the sick, set free the captive, and to proclaim the gospel to the poor. It was God's will to heal people and to set them free from whatever was binding them. Not only did Jesus heal the sick, but He sent out the disciples to heal the sick. In Matthew 10, "Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness." **It is the will of God to heal people.**

(Matt 10:1) "Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness."

We live in an age of doubt and unbelief. I confess that I am weak in my faith at times. I have prayed for the Lord to help me in my unbelief. We live in an age where people are taught in seminaries that God does not heal today. The healings were only for Jesus and the twelve apostles. The healings were for confirmation of Jesus' Messiahship and the confirmation of God's word. That is only partially true. The signs were to confirm the gospel message and the gospel message is still being preached today. Do not doubt God's general will is to heal the sick and set free the captive.

I love what Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 1:20. He said, "for as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us." God is always saying yes to His promises. There are some exceptions to the rule. We have a perishable body that is not going to die. We will live, but our flesh will die. There are sicknesses unto death. But, these are exceptions. God's will is to heal the sick, and that is how we should pray.

(2 Cor 1:20) “For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us.”

Jesus tells the cleansed leper to tell no one, but to go and show himself to the priest and make an offering for his cleansing. Jesus said that it will be a testimony to the priest. Notice that the news about Jesus spread even further and large crowds were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sickness. **When people’s lives are touched by God, they will testify to others.** One of the reasons that the news of Jesus is not spreading is because not much is happening. We need to be like the church in Jerusalem and ask God to extend His hand for signs and wonders and for healings.

(Luke 5:14-15) “And He ordered him to tell no one, "But go and show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." {15} But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses.”

Notice how Luke completes this paragraph. He said that **Jesus often slipped away to the wilderness to pray.** Last week we spoke about Jesus’ source. Jesus was always going back to the source. He went back to get filled. He went back to get direction. Jesus was always abiding with the Father. He expects you and I to abide in the vine the same way.

(Luke 5:16) “But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray.”

Take a look at a few other Scriptures about this. In Matthew 14, Jesus went up on the mountain by Himself to pray alone. We looked at Mark 1:35 last week and how Jesus got up while it was still dark and went to a secluded place and was praying. In another place in Mark, we find that after Jesus sent away a multitude, He left for the mountains to pray. His life was characterized by prayer. If we are followers of Christ, can it be said of us that our lives are characterized by prayer?

(Matt 14:23) “After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone.”

(Mark 1:35) “In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there.”

(Mark 6:46) “After bidding them farewell, He left for the mountain to pray.”

I read a statistic a few years ago that bothered me a lot. It said that the average pastor prayed only two minutes a day. It is no wonder that nothing is happening in our churches. It is no wonder that the news about Jesus is not spreading. Pastors need to be praying. But, it is not just pastors that need to slip away often and pray. All of us are called to be His ambassadors and witnesses. All of us need to be people of prayer, who often slip away and pray. Jesus said that His house shall be called a house of prayer. We, the church, need to be known as people who pray. I believe that when we begin to pray like Jesus prayed, we will begin to see things happen like Jesus did.

B. Jesus cleanses the paralytic. (Luke 5:17-26) The next account that we have is of a paralytic that is forgiven of his sins and also healed.

(Luke 5:17-26) “One day He was teaching; and there were some Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was present for Him to perform healing. {18} And some men were carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed; and they were trying to bring him in and to set him down in front of Him. {19} But not finding any way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles with his stretcher, into the middle of the crowd, in front of Jesus. {20} Seeing their faith, He said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you." {21} The scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this man who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" {22} But Jesus, aware of their reasonings, answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts? {23} "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? {24} "But, so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,"—He said to the paralytic—"I say to you, get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home." {25} Immediately he got up before them, and picked up what he had been lying on, and went home glorifying God. {26} They were all struck with astonishment and began glorifying God; and they were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen remarkable things today.”

One day, as Jesus was teaching, there were some Pharisees and teachers of the law who had come from all over to observe Jesus’ ministry. Luke records that **the power of the Lord was present for Jesus to perform healing**. This phrase has been puzzling and bothering me for quite some time. I have been asking the Lord for more revelation and understanding of it. I have been asking God for an outpouring of the power to perform healing. I have been asking God for discernment of when the power to perform healing is present. I have been crying out for years for a break through for the church. I want the church to know that God heals today. I want those that do not know Christ yet to know that God heals today. I want to see a move of God in our generation. Here are a couple interpretations of that passage.

1. Wherever Jesus went, there was power present to heal. Jesus was always preaching the kingdom of God is here.
2. There were times in Jesus’ ministry where there was power to heal and there were times that there was not power to heal. The key was to discern when the power to heal was present.

We find that some men were carrying a paralyzed man on a bed to Jesus. Because there were so many people, they were not able to set him down in front of Jesus. So, they were resourceful and desperate. They went up on the roof and let down through the tiles with his stretcher. **These men had faith to see their friend healed. These friends were willing to do whatever it took** to have their friend healed by Jesus. The question that I have to ask myself and all of us is, have we done everything we can to see our friends touched by Jesus? Have we prayed for them? Have we fasted for them? Have we shared with them? Have we done everything in our power to bring them to Jesus?

(Luke 5:18-20) “And some men were carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed; and they were trying to bring him in and to set him down in front of Him. {19} But not finding any way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles with his stretcher, into the middle of the crowd, in front of Jesus. {20} Seeing their faith, He said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you.”

These friends of the paralytic were not concerned about how they got their friend to Jesus. They just had one thing in mind, get their friend to Jesus. We need to find a way to bring our friends to Jesus.

In Mark's account, we find out something else about the incident. This took place in Jesus' own house. These men had the audacity to dig and take apart Jesus' roof to let the man through. We can learn something about Jesus' response and handling of the situation. Jesus does not get upset and take offense. Instead, Luke records that He saw their faith. In Hebrews we find that without faith it is impossible to please God. These friends had faith and Jesus is pleased at their faith. Then, Jesus forgives the man of his sins and heals him of his paralysis. There is no hint of agitation in Jesus. **Jesus was more concerned about setting people free than His home (possessions).** You and I need to be more concerned about people than possessions.

(Mark 2:1-4) "When He had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home. {2} And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, not even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them. {3} And they *came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men. {4} Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying."

The Pharisees saw what had happened and they did take offense. They said, "who is this man who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" Instead of recognizing that Jesus is the Messiah and that He could forgive and heal, they take offense. Jesus responds to their reasonings, saying, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts?" The fact that He knew what they were thinking should have been another bit of evidence pointing to His claim to be the Messiah.

(Luke 5:21-22) "The scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this man who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" {22} But Jesus, aware of their reasonings, answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts?"

Jesus continues by asking them a question. "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?" Then, Jesus spells it out for them very clearly. He tells them that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, and He tells the paralytic to get up, pick up his stretcher and go home. **Jesus had authority on earth to forgive sins.** The man immediately got up and went home glorifying God. Luke says that they all were struck with astonishment and began glorifying God. They were filled with fear and said, "we have seen remarkable things today."

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I want to talk a few minutes about forgiveness and cleansing. When John the Baptist saw Jesus, He proclaimed, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." **Jesus came to take away the sins of the world.** Jesus or Jeshua is our Savior. He is the One who came to take away the sins of the world.

(John 1:29) “The next day he *saw Jesus coming to him and *said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

In 1 John 2:2 we find that Jesus was the propitiation or satisfaction for our sins, and not only for our sins but also for those of the whole world. There is no such thing as Limited Atonement. Jesus paid the price for all of our sins to be taken away. He forgave the paralytic’s sins. He forgave my sins. He forgave your sins. He has made a payment for the sins of the whole world. Our job is to proclaim that good news to everyone. Our job is to bring the paralytics and others to Jesus.

(1 John 2:2) “and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.”

We also find in 1 John how to deal with our sins. Even though Jesus has made a one-time sacrifice for the payment of our sins, we are still required to confess or acknowledge our sins. If we deny that we have sins, we lie and do not practice the truth. But, **when we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

(1 John 1:8-9) “If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. {9} If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Conclusion

When Jesus forgives us, He cleanses us from all unrighteousness. When Jesus healed the leper, He cleansed him from his leprosy. He cleansed the physical body. When Jesus forgave the paralytic, He cleansed his soul and spirit. God is concerned about your physical health, and He is also very concerned about your spiritual condition. He wants us to be made whole and complete.

(1 Thess 5:23) “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

(3 John 1:2) “Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.”

Notice the priority that Jesus gives in Matthew 18:8-9. He says it is better to enter life crippled or lame than to be cast into the eternal fire. It is better to have one eye than to be cast into fiery hell. The priority is a cleansed heart. The good news is that **God wants us cleansed physically and spiritually.** It is not an either or proposition, but the priority is our salvation.

(Matt 18:8-9) “If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire. If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be cast into the fiery hell.

Introduction (Luke 3:21-23, 4:21, 1 Cor 2:4-5, Luke 4:36, 4:42-43, Matt 4:19-20, Luke 19:10, 1 Pet 4:1, Phil 1:27, 2:5)

A. Jesus cleanses the leper. (Luke 5:12-16)

- In Leviticus 13-14, we are given instructions about _____.
- Jesus was _____ to cleanse the leper. God's will is to _____ people. (Luke 5:12-13, Matt 15:22-28, Matt 10:1, 2 Cor 1:20)
- When people's lives are touched by God, they _____ to others. (Luke 5:14-15)
- Jesus often slipped away to the wilderness to _____. (Luke 5:16, Matt 14:23, Mk 1:35, 6:46)

B. Jesus cleanses the paralytic. (Luke 5:17-26)

- The _____ of the Lord was present for Jesus to perform healing.
- These friends had _____ to see their friend healed. (Luke 5:20)
- These friends were willing to do _____ it took. (Luke 5:18-19)
- Jesus was more concerned about setting people free than His _____ or possessions. (Mark 2:1-4)
- Jesus had authority on earth to _____ sins (Luke 5:23-26)
- Jesus came to take away the _____ of the world. (John 1:29, 2:2)
- When we _____ our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us and to _____ us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:8-10)

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- God wants us _____ physically and spiritually. (1 Thess 5:23, 3 John 1:2, Matt 18:8-9)

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