

THE KINGDOM, POWER, AND THE GLORY OF THE SAVIOUR (Mk. 1:32-39)

After the Lord Jesus had healed Simon's mother-in-law the crowds began to gather around her home. From sundown that evening, v.32 they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. ³³ And all the city was gathered together at the door. ... We don't read of such a great number having been in the synagogue, but such is often the case that people 'turn to' God when they need Him, or at their own convenience. Then, when He is considered to have 'fulfilled His usefulness', He is abandoned ... and life returns to 'normal'. Now, remember the godlessness in the city of Capernaum. The people pursued their wealth and pleasures ... But, when the impossible was beyond their ability to achieve, - such as the need for their loved ones to be healed by disease and demonic possession, - they came to Jesus.

I think it would be very accurate to surmise that not a single one of those people wakened that morning with Jesus on their minds. I would also think it very probable that the majority of them had not been in the synagogue that Sabbath, or for many Sabbaths previously. In the temple in Jerusalem Simeon and Anna were waiting with great anticipation for the coming of the promised Messiah (Lk. 2:25) ... but there is no mention of any similar expectation in Capernaum. ... These people came to Jesus with the full intention of taking from Him, but not being willing or prepared to give Him anything in return.

In the synagogue the identity of Jesus was expressed by the man with the unclean demonic spirits, v.24 I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. The people in the congregation also acknowledged, v.27 What thing is this? what new doctrine [is] this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him. The Lord was demonstrating His authority. They had never seen anything like this before, and as a consequence, v.28 immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee. ... There is that word "immediately" again. The news about Jesus spread throughout the region.

But what news? Was it the news that Jesus stood up in the synagogue and how He had taught from the Scriptures? ... Were the people excited about what He had said as He addressed the congregation? No, that wasn't why people came to Jesus that evening, after the Sabbath had ended. They weren't interested in what He said, or what the Old Testament Bible said ... No, they were interested in what Jesus could do for *their* sick mother, or their mother-in-law ... or for their demon-possessed child. These people were out to use, - more correctly, to *abuse*, - Christ for their own purposes!

“Jesus, come and heal me!” “Jesus, come and rid my son/daughter of these demons that are causing havoc in his/her life” ... And then, when Jesus would do a miracle of healing they would go back to their villages and towns and resume life, just as before. Yes, Jesus healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him (v.34). Coming to Jesus was a means to an end ... and that’s all He was. These people were out to take the Saviour for granted.

Each of us has had friends come and ask us for help. Often we have spent a lot of time and effort trying to do as much as we could, in order to promote the Name of Christ ... and then when the situations of our friends have improved, we are no longer needed, and that respect for the Lord we hoped might develop proved to be nothing more than a convenience for them. ...

God is not to be used, but what kind of people would set out to use Him? ... The kind that don’t know Him. The people who came to Jesus didn’t know Him. The majority of them, - if not all of them, - would not have heard of Him before that day. The only reason they came to Him was to benefit from Him.

To come at this from a different angle ... There is a church a few streets away from us here, - it is not a Church of Scotland, a Methodist, Free Church, or an Apostolic ... it’s a Spiritualist church. It is not only a cult, it is occultic. It is built upon demonism, but it claims to be ‘Christian’. I’ve met people who tell me they go to that church. Some of the people who have told me they go to that church, from time to time, are by no stretch of the imagination religious. They have no knowledge of Scripture or of its teachings. I don’t even think they know what sets Spiritualism apart. However, they tell me they go to the Spiritualist Church. And the reason they go is not to hear a sermon ... but to hear a ‘message’ from ‘the other side’ from their loved ones. They sometimes want to hear from their dead mother or father, or they want to know how well ‘the departed’ are doing in the ‘spirit world’. That is why they go to that church. They go not to worship God, but to use the opportunity for their own purposes ... because they believe it meets their needs.

Perhaps you have seen some of the congregations in the U.S. consisting of thousands of people. On the platform is a man who is allegedly carrying out all sorts of great ‘miracles’. The crowds are in a state of euphoria. ... The most recent meeting of this kind I experienced was in Abuja, Nigeria. The church was packed. The crowds were dancing, ‘konga-style’. The music was deafening. ...

A man was carried forward and pastors at the front gathered round him to drive the demons out and make him well ... because that was their diagnosis as to why he was in that debilitating state. After much ranting and raving, it didn't work, and the man was castigated for not believing to the sufficient level required for healing. ... Such places set out to abuse God, and are of Satan himself!

... And here are these people in Capernaum who came to Jesus to take from Him, while *they* were not willing to give anything back. ... *It was wrong!*

Does God have the power to heal today? Yes, most certainly, He unquestionably has! Beyond any shadow of a doubt, God heals today! Many of us here are testimony to God's healing power. I defy anyone to say God has stopped healing miraculously! ... We haven't had to go to some 'healer' or attend some orchestrated meeting ... but through the prayers of our brothers and sisters in the Lord, ... through her own praying, ... God has heard and He has healed, in accordance with His Divine will and purpose. It is not the people who pray that heals, - it is the God to Whom we pray! He alone heals, and the glory is His!

I have my own testimony of God's miraculous healing power ... and so have a number of you. ... Some of you here have had cancer, and heart attacks, and strokes, and all kinds ... but the Lord healed you. We often hear of God's people going back to see the consultant, and when they go back, there's nothing there anymore! Why? ... because God healed you.

Since God has healed you, what difference has it made to your life? Do you love Him more? Are you following Him more faithfully, as you ought? The reason He has granted you your health is to serve Him! Is that what you are doing? Are you serving Him to the best of your ability?

Here were people coming to Jesus, being healed, and going away off again ... remembering Him for a while, and then gradually allowing Him to slip from their minds. That is because He didn't really mean anything to them in the first place. But, you see, when the Lord saves you, you meant enough to Him that He died on the cross to pay the sacrifice for your sin ... So, consider all He has done for you, and then ask, how much am I doing for Him? God has us here on this earth for a purpose, and His purpose is for us to give Him back the life we owe, and to bring Him glory. That is why He heals His people ...

Does God heal everyone though? Does He heal everyone for whom we pray? No, He doesn't, - He doesn't always bring them back to their former good health ... and He has a reason for why He doesn't. The most obvious reason is that it is not appointed for us to live forever in our present state. But, besides that most obvious observation, the reason God does not always heal is not always discernible at the time, but He has a purpose in everything He does ... and sometimes it is His purpose to heal, and sometimes it's not

Also consider this ... When God was speaking with Moses at the burning bush and Moses was raising objections as to why he would be no good speaking in front of the Pharaoh, as God was commanding him to do. Moses told God, Ex. 4:10 *I am* not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I *am* slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. ¹¹ And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD? ... God has no time for abortion, or euthanasia ... For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing to be refused (1 Tim 4:4).

Some of my greatest experiences in the ministry have been with those who have been told they only have a short time to live. Instead of being downhearted, the majority of them had smiles on their faces that were infectious. They spoke increasingly of the Lord, with an expectation in their voice that demonstrated the calm peace in their heart. They spoke about seeing Him soon. They wanted me to read the Scriptural passages that relate to Heaven ... Along with Paul, they had come to where they were longing to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord. ... I was with one woman, and as she lay in her bed, - surrounded by her husband and friends, - she had us all singing the old hymns together. And I can remember it so well ... as we were singing, as she was singing with us, her head gently fell to the one side, - she was with the Lord, and she entered Heaven singing His praise. ... She had no more cancer. She had no more pain. She was in Glory, and she was healed!

Yes, God heals ... He heals, when it is His will, here on earth ... and when it is not His will to heal that person on earth, He removes their illness just before they enter Heaven. There is no cancer in Heaven, no dementia, no tumours, or anything like that ... Rev. 21:4 *there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

The same Lord Jesus Christ who healed the illness from out of Simon and Andrew's house is the same Lord Jesus Christ who will keep all illness from His mansion in Glory!

When Jesus healed, He healed with a word or a touch, - not with great crowds screaming or whipping themselves into a frenzy ... but simply and with honour. He healed them instantly and totally, and He healed every one of those who came to Him. There was none went away disappointed. It didn't matter what the illness was, Jesus healed them from it.

Why did the people wait until the sun had set (v.32)? Well, when the sun had set, the Sabbath was over, and on the Sabbath they weren't allowed to carry anything. So it was dusk, and that was when they brought the sick and demon-possessed to Jesus, - they carried their loved ones in the dark ... and sadly a great number of them left in the dark, - spiritual darkness! Yes, there would have been such a queue to meet Jesus! *And all the city was gathered together at the door (v.33)*. They kept coming, but they weren't looking for salvation, which is eternal; they were looking for healing which is only for time!

There was never anything like this before ... this was a *torrent* of healing miracles. Throughout the whole of the Old Testament, of healings ... but nothing on this scale; in fact, there are less than twenty miraculous healings in the whole of the Old Testament. The first healing was when *Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants (Gen. 20:17)*. There were no healings recorded before that ... and there was plenty of sickness and disease. ...

- ... In Num. 12:1-15 God inflicted Miriam with leprosy, and Moses prayed for her and the Lord healed her.
- Hannah was healed from barrenness (I Sam. 1:9-20).
- King Jeroboam's hand swivelled up, and a prophet prayed and it was restored (I Kings 13:4-6).
- Elijah raised the widow's son from death (I Kgs. 17:17-24).
- Elisha did similar with the Shunamite woman's son (II Kgs. 4:18-37), - the same son she had been given after Elisha had prayed for her barrenness to be healed (II Kgs. 4:8-17).
- Naaman's leprosy was healed (II Kgs. 5:1-14).
- A dead man was thrown into Elisha's tomb and the contact with Elisha's bones raised the man to life (II Kings 13:21).
- Hezekiah contracted a terminal illness and he was healed (II Kings 20:1-7; II Chron. 32:24-26; Is. 38:1-8).
- Job was healed (42:10-17).
- Nebuchadnezzar was healed (Dan. 4:34,36).

... But that was just about it! So, when Jesus healed Simon's mother-in-law, and then went on to heal everyone that was brought to Him ... this was unheard of ... No wonder it attracted such a crowd! ... But once again, we need to emphasise how it wasn't the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ these people came for ... it was for their own temporal needs. ... They wanted to *take* from Jesus, with no intention of receiving Him as Saviour.

Isn't it an all too familiar scenario, - people taking from Jesus, but going away and leaving Him behind. And yet, look at the faithful servants of God, such as Paul's two friends whose health wasn't so good, - Timothy (I Tim. 5:23) and Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25-27), - ... and there is no mention of them being healed. Paul had an ongoing issue with his 'thorn in the flesh', and not even he was healed. Yet, how did he deal with it? As he travelled the ancient world preaching the Gospel and serving Christ, he held on to the promise of God, [II Cor. 12:9 My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.](#)

Yes, if the Lord does not heal all our illnesses just now, He has a reason for it ... and maybe it is so we shall depend on Him all the more. Besides, there is coming a day when He *will* take away all our illnesses and restore us to perfect health. ... He has proved He can do it, for He did it when He was here on earth. He is the Great Physician. ... He heals physically, but we can also testify to how He heals spiritually.

What a day that was, when the crowds met outside Simon's home, and Jesus healed the sick and cast out the demons! That is the healing power of our Saviour ... and He is the same yesterday, today, and forever! That is the power of our God ... and He has never lost any of it! He is the God Who does not change ... Time does not erode His authority, and the so-called progress of this world has not diminished one iota His capabilities.

The Son worked in accordance with the will of His Father, and He came and did everything that was expected of Him. He depended upon His Father ... Look at v.35, [And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.](#) ... You look at the four Gospels and you will see His great dependence upon prayer, He prayed before His baptism, ... before calling the Twelve, ... before feeding the multitude, ... at is transfiguration. He prayed before He taught the disciples how to pray. He prayed before He raised Lazarus. He prayed with His disciples in the Upper Room. He prayed in Gethsemane, and He prayed even hanging on the cross.

... He was subject to the will of God in all things, and in all things He was guided and directed by the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes people grumble that God doesn't heal them ... but the next time you are tempted to complain about those aches and pains, consider the afflictions Jesus suffered for you on the cross. The Father could have changed the circumstances whereby His Son would not have had to die ... The Father could have dressed His wounds and removed the scars ... but it was the Father's will that Jesus should suffer and die for you ... and there is nothing that comes upon God's people that our Heavenly Father has not planned for, Job 23:10 he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. ¹¹ My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined. ¹² Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food. ¹³ But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. ¹⁴ For he performeth the things that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him.

If you moan and complain to Him, you are not trusting Him as you ought. He has a purpose in everything He does, and in everything He allows ... and His purpose is always to His glory. ... I remember crying over and over again with the despair that overtakes you when the future looks so bleak ... and I wasn't a very good learner, but the Lord taught me nonetheless, - and He is *still* teaching me, - I Cor. 10:13 There hath no temptation [*trials, times of testing*] taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. ... Like many of you, I'm here today because of the Lord's goodness, "For all the Lord has done for me, I never will cease to praise Him". ... But these people in Capernaum saw Jesus as nothing more than a miracle-worker, and not as their Saviour from sin!

And then when you look at verse thirty-six and you see how Simon and some of the other disciples came to Jesus, and interrupted Him while He was praying, *they said, All men seek for Thee (v.36)*. To a degree, they had fallen into the same trap as the people. They saw this as fantastic! This was more than they could ever have dreamed of! They tried to keep Jesus from leaving Capernaum, - they wanted to remain 'on a high'. ... Keep on doing it, Lord! Build on Your popularity. The people are waiting again for us in Capernaum.

But no, the ultimate priority of the mission of our Saviour is not the healing of the body, - no matter how welcome that is, - ... the reason Jesus came into this world was for the saving of the souls of lost Hell-deserving sinners. ...

If He would have stayed in Capernaum, He never would have gone anywhere else, and it would have been contrary to His Father's will and purpose, regardless of how 'successful' His work there seemed to be. And so Jesus instructed His disciples, *v.38 Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.* ³⁹ And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils. ... That's what He came to do, - God had only one Son and He was a preacher, *Is. 61:2 He hath anointed me to preach the gospel.*

So He left Capernaum, as He had left Nazareth previously. Romans 10 tells us, *v.13 whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* ¹⁴ How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? ... He went from town to town, from village to village, and throughout the countryside and He proved the truthfulness of His message by miraculously delivering men and women, boys and girls from demonic possession and from illness. Everywhere He went He proclaimed salvation through faith in His Name. ... The miracles were not why He came ... He came preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel (Mk. 1:14,15).

... That is the glorious gospel of God's victory and it relates to this world and the next. Is this Gospel yours? Is it precious to you? This is the Gospel of God's saving grace that underpins everything we are and what He sets before us to do. Indeed, our work can only be successful when it is calculated in Heaven's currency. God knows what we do ... He is aware of our service for Him here. I believe the Lord is maintaining our witness because we seek to serve Him faithfully and in accordance with His will. If we were to ignore that and move away from it, I believe He would leave us and the witness would end. It is only Him that is keeping us going. And so His work is only to be carried out and continued as He leads ... and how He leads must always be commensurate and compatible to His Word, as we see here in this passage.

May we, then, be faithful to our calling, - as individuals and as a fellowship of God's people, - in the doing of His will in our service for Him! Amen.