

A Deeper Look at Healing Matthew 10:1-16

I am truly excited about this new series we are beginning together. We spend a lot of time studying passages about how to live life and how to deal with life. But now, we are going to spend time looking at Jesus' greatest plea both now and then. His plea was the call to a mission. This mission being the labor of the harvest field, just as we read and studied last Sunday, Matthew 9:37-38 (NIV), "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

After time spent with Jesus, the disciples leave their state of observation and begin putting into practice what they had learned so far from Jesus. Think of it as moving from student to intern. This is one reason Jesus was often called "Rabbi" or "Teacher. His disciples followed him primarily to learn. Following a teacher gave them authority over you. While you followed the teacher, they dictated where you would go, what you would do, and how you would do it. If you agreed to follow the teacher, they agreed to teach you all they knew... on their terms. The Disciples gave up their jobs, their spouses, their families, their lives to follow Jesus. They traded all of this because they believed in the teaching of Jesus and his ways because just as much as they approved of his teaching, they also approved of his life.

Common with every teacher was the day the teacher turned the student loose to practice what they have learned under a "trial basis." They would go under the cover of the teacher's blessing. This is the case when Jesus gave the Disciples authority. It was at that point the Disciples got a taste of the Holy Spirit's power that they would fully experience on the day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit empowered Jesus' ministry, his mission to the lost and hurting. Now the Disciples are to feel the blessing that comes from helping people through some of the toughest times of life into the best, and the hardships that come from the ministry to a hurting world.

It was time to see if the Disciples were willing to continue following Jesus. From the "front side" of Jesus' ministry, things looked good with healings, miracles, powerful teachings, demons cast out, and transformed lives. And Jesus told them that with the authority of the Holy Spirit over their life, ministry, and mission, they would witness these great things for themselves, but he also levels with them and tells them that things will not always be the "glitz and glamour" it appears to be. As much as people are going to welcome them warmly

into their cities and homes, some may run you off. The Lord says those people and cities will see their own demise for their wickedness, but that should not stop them from going. Why? Because the call of Christ is far too great.

This is what we will prayerfully see in a powerful way over the next four weeks, that no matter what situations may come our way, whether extreme highs or extreme lows, whether pain or health, sorrow or joy, whether warm reception or the cold shoulder, embrace or persecution, for the sake of the call of Christ, we are to go for him, laborers in the harvest fields that are ripe for the harvest. Freely you have received, so then freely give to a lost and hurting world. Over the next few weeks we will be examining Jesus' words to his Disciples as they go forth into the world for Christ and so his words ring out to us today. As the Disciples were called to go for Christ, so too are we.

This morning, from what we have read, I want to start where Jesus starts with a deeper look at healing. Jesus gave the Disciples authority through the Holy Spirit to heal people spiritually and physically. Remember, we can do nothing apart from the presence and the power of God in our lives. That being said, the Disciples were given the authority of God to heal, but only at the willingness of God to give them that ability. Make no mistake about it, God wants his people to be prosperous and free from trouble in their lives, like what every good father desires for their children, but just as our earthly fathers realize from time to time, the world is a hard place to live in. People fall under hard times and trials both from without and within. Fathers cannot shield us from the sin we delve into willingly and the consequences of that sin as a result of the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. Sometimes they stand back in order to teach us valuable lessons, but they are always there. God is always there for a child who cries out for mercy from the torment of this world. Read Proverbs 4:20 and hear the desire of God, your Father, to speak into our lives amidst the clamoring of this world.

Today, healing is indeed found in the words of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Thought the Apostles were endowed with the gift of healing we are not collectively accustomed to today, we are still promised that a prayer offered in faith is heard by God (1 Peter 3:12). Faith is still the key for healing (Hebrews 11:1, 6). Today, for those who earnestly seek him, God has promised that his will will come to you. Read James 5:14-16 and ask "is this me?" If so, are you spiritually stricken? Are you physically stricken? Then you should pray. You should seek the Elders to come around you and offer a prayer of faith on your behalf. Don't hold back. Let God heal you today.