

Matthew 8:1-22

Jesus and the Outcasts

The Sermon on the Mount is over and Jesus is heading back to Capernaum which was His home base. – Chapter 8-9 focused there

A) Capernaum is below the Mount of Beatitudes, and on the North West side of the Sea of Galilee..... UPPER Galilee.

B) Capernaum was the largest of 17 fishing villages located there in Galilee

70% of Christ's ministry took place in UPPER GALILEE.

C) Beautiful Coastal – Jesus was smart – Would have my home base there too!

D) Capernaum was located on a trade route that ran to the sea and then South through Tiberias and on up to Jerusalem.

1) Tax office – Matthew works there

In the first 17 verses of chapter 8 Matthew presents before us our Lord's interaction with 3 individuals – Jews would consider Outcast or inferior

A) The first person is a Leper V.1-4 Focus of our study this weekend.

B) Lepers were those the Jews felt were punished by God.

C) Sin issue: Miriam, Gehazi, Uzziah – all punished by God

1) THE FINGER OF GOD

D) Horrible disease – walking dead – humanly incurable.

When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. 2 And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

3 Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

4 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."

Of the 61 defilements listed in the Talmud – Leprosy was 2nd only to death

A) Picture of sin – Starts below the surface - - starts small – one spot

Aa) Spreads, progressive, takes over – smells 100 ft away - Incurable.

B) 150 ft away for people Unclean: This man Comes – seeking Jesus

C) Are you willing: Not can you – but will you.

V.3 Jesus put out his hand and touched him - I am willing – be cleansed.

A) Jesus didn't need to touch this man to make him well – His spoken word was sufficient to cleanse the man.

B) Jesus touched him – because the touch was important for this man's heart

1) The spoken word – be cleansed – took care of his disease {WHOLE

The touch took care of HIS HEART –

C) A powerful song THAT could have been this guys song

1) You have sang this song:

D) He touched me:

Shackled by a heavy burden
Need the Lord again and shame
Then the hand of Jesus touched me
And now I am no longer the same
For He touched me, He touched me
and what wonderful joy that floods my soul
Something happened and now I know
He touched me and made me whole

4 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."

A) For years he had been yelling unclean anytime someone came within 150 feet of him. – Don't tell anyone!!!!

B) But there was a process: Fulfilling the law was important to Jesus.

C) Leviticus 13 – 59 verses: Diagnosis

1) Leviticus 14 – The remedy { Never observed – never a record of a leper being healed

D) Imagine being a priest – wondering – Why is this chapter in the Bible this has never happened.

1) Until Jesus

Jesus says: Go show yourself to the priest as a Sign to them:

A) Caiaphas – remember me? -

B) 2 Doves – earthen vessel – running water – cedar stick – scarlet cord
Hyssop

C) Dove #1 Killed, blood – Dove #2 Washed, set free

1) Stick – cord – Sprinkle {Washed – Shaved – 7 days

D) Anointed Blood – Oil

1) Priest

1st Outcast: A Leper: Believed to be punished by God

2nd Outcast: A Gentile: Believed to be rejected by God.

A) The Jewish rabbi's taught that gentiles were good for one reason – to fuel the fires of hell.

5 Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him,

B) Not only was this guy a gentile but he was also a Roman: The Jews despised the Romans – living under Roman oppression.

C) A centurion was a commander of 100 men. A centurion would sign up for a 25 year term. – Huge Commitment.

1) He was the **highest non-commissioned officer** in the Roman Army.

Cc) Poster boys – the few the Proud the Centurions

1) They were **career soldiers** who were in a very real way the **heart and soul** of the Roman legion.

D) When it comes to emotions they were men of steal - influenced by the stoic philosophy of the day. **NO EMOTIONS**

E) Mode of operation – Don't reach out to anyone - don't get attached / or involved - we are here to do a job /

1) *We are here to represent the Roman Empire.*

5 Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, {pleading also begging - extremely unusual} 6 saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented."

His SERVANT: also unusual – The Romans treated servants like property.

A) There were 60 million slaves in the Roman empire.

B) The Romans simply viewed slaves as property, if your slave became sick –

1) just put him out of his misery and get a new one.

C) The Romans killed their slaves for serious things like insubordination or running away

1) And for trivial things like dropping a platter or cooking a lousy meal

Luke's account tells us that Jewish leaders pleaded with Jesus telling him that this man was deserving, ⁵ "for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue."

A) So there is something unusual about this guy. – God is definitely doing something in his heart- as we shall see.

B) So He comes begging for Jesus to heal his servant.

1) Calls Jesus by the title: Lord – great respect

7 And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

C) **Jesus said: I will come-** Matthew no doubt loves to write that because the Jewish rabbi's would not step foot in the house of a Gentile.

D) One of the goals of Matthew in this gospel is to present Jesus in **STARK CONTRAST** to the religious leaders of the day.

Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

E) See that – See how different he is – He doesn't look down at others

But Here is where it really gets interesting:

8 The centurion answered and said, “Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

He is basically saying - “I know what authority is about..... I have bowed the Knee to Caesar – commissioned by Caesar

A) “I am here by the authority of the Roman government.”

B)“The power of Rome is behind me.”

1)“THAT is why I can say to one – ‘Go,’ to another, ‘Do.’”

C)I have authority in the physical realm but I realize that you have authority in the Spiritual realm.

You belong to a different Kingdom

A)Important truth: The authority that you walk in is directly connected to the THRONE THAT YOU BOW THE KNEE TO!

10 When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, “Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!”

Jesus is blown away by this response – Jesus Marveled at his Faith – Only two times – Jesus marveled

A)BOTH TIMES in regards to FAITH!!

B)The only other place where we are told that Jesus *MARVELED* is in Mark 6:6 as He comes to Nazareth His hometown - NO miracle

1)There we are told that He *marveled* at their *unbelief*.

C)HERE - He *marvels* at the very opposite thing..... *Faith*

D)And the FAITH at which he marvels is found in a Gentile.

11 And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

A)HEAVY

This would have been a radical idea to many of the Jewish people in Jesus’ day;

A)they assumed that this great Messianic Banquet would have no Gentiles, and that all Jews would be there.

B)Jesus corrected both mistaken ideas.

C)There are those who are Jewish descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who think they have a lock on the kingdom – They are not going to make it -

D)And there are gentiles who are going to be there

These few words of Jesus tell us a little something of what heaven is like.

A)It is a place of rest; we sit down in heaven.

B)Solomon wrote about the Lord’s Banqueting table – where his banner over us is love!

C)It is a place of good company - we enjoy the friendship of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in heaven.

It is a place with many people;

A)Jesus said that many will come into heaven.

B)It is a place with people from all over the earth; from east and west they will come to heaven.

C)Taste when we gather together – Cherish this

But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness – weeping and gnashing of teeth

A)Description of Hell – Outer darkness – weeping and Gnashing of teeth

B)So Dark can’t see hand in front of you – eerie

1)Can’t see anyone – hear the cries – the weeping –

C)I should have listened!

D)This description is consistent with other places in Scripture: 2 Peter 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and

delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment.

Jude 1:6 ⁶ And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, “Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.” **And his servant was healed that same hour.**

Outcast #1 - A Leper believed to be punished by God

Outcast #2 - A Gentile believed to be rejected by God

Outcast #3 - A Woman believed to be inferior to men

Thank God that I am not a woman, a dog or a Gentile – Many Jewish men would pray

A) No accident that the Holy Spirit inspires Matthew to put these stories side by side – saying to his Jewish audience – and us – NO OUTCAST

B) NO REJECTS IN the eyes of Jesus

14 Now when Jesus had come into Peter’s house, He saw his wife’s mother lying sick with a fever. **(Wife’s mother – Peter had a wife)** 15 So He touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she arose and served them.

C) Here is what is amazing about this: He touches her hand – the fever left immediately – she gets up and starts serving

1) That is unusual – Ever have a fever that breaks? – Usually still wiped out for a day or two right

D) This is instant: No recovery time needed

E) Seems that Peter had a good relationship with his mother-in-law too – no protesting on his part

1) The man on the trip to Israel – Mother-in-law dies - \$100 bury here or \$5,000 ship her back – ship her back – I can’t take the chance she’ll rise again like a man did 2,000 years ago.

F) Peter loved his mother-in-law

16 When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and **healed all** who

were sick, 17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: “He Himself took our infirmities And bore our sicknesses.”

This is one thing that we do not understand about the Lord but have to accept as part of His Sovereignty – Here: He healed all.

A) John 5 – Scene at the pool of Bethesda – Many sick, lame – all over this platform – He heals one man -

B) Paul he didn’t heal – He is Sovereign

C) We trust in His love –

This was done as a Fulfillment of Prophecy, verse 17 that it might be fulfilled what was spoken by Isaiah the prophet saying, “He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.”

A) Now this is a very interesting verse and I’ll tell you why.

B) Normally everybody argues over Isaiah 53:5 where it says, “*By His stripes we are healed.*”

Now there is one camp of Christians that claim that we should be healed physically.

A) The other camp says “*no that simply means that we are made whole by His stripes.*”

B) Well the interesting thing is that the argument is over the wrong verse.

1) Because the Holy Spirit, when He applies Isaiah 53, to this moment in the life of the Messiah, quotes Is. 53:4 not Is. 53:5.

C) The Holy Spirit says that the physical healing that took place at Peter’s house in Capernaum was a fulfillment of the scripture in Isaiah 53:4.

D) Literally the Hebrew in Isaiah 53:4 says, “*He lifted off of us our sicknesses and that He bore our pains.*”

E) And what the scripture is telling us is that they were experiencing the benefit of the cross *before* He was even crucified .

QUESTION: What does this mean to you and me today?

A) We are all the beneficiaries of **Isaiah 53:4** because He has also lifted off of us all of our sicknesses and all of our pain.

B) We might not experience that in this life - But we do **know for a certainty** that we will one day -

C) **Because of the Cross of Christ... be free of ALL sickness, pain, and death.**

Rev. 21:4-6 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. ⁵And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. ⁶And he said unto me, It is done.

Well at this point the Popularity of Jesus is soaring – crowds are flocking

A) V.18 tells us Jesus decided it was time to go to the other side of the sea of Galilee

B) Always His mode of operation when the crowds were showing any inkling of making Him King – Not the time – not His purpose

18 And when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side.

C) Their journey is going to get interrupted by two men who are a good representation of where many find themselves in relationship to Jesus

D) First man – is too quick to make promises – 2nd man is too slow in responding to the call.

Isn't that a good picture of us – so often: Quick to make promises – Lord I am all in – You can count on me-

A) Or we are dragging our feet and making excuses for why we can't follow Him the way that we should

B) See the first guy

19 Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go."

V.21 Another Disciple which implies that this scribe was a disciple –

A scribe was a highly educated and religious individual –

A) A guy with a PHD – trained in the art of studying the OT scriptures –

B) They were experts in the word of God.

C) So this is someone in the religious community –

1) Priest and Pastors who used to attend the Wednesday night service at CC Budapest

D) This guy is perhaps getting swept up in the emotion of the crowds following Jesus

1) Jesus I will follow you anywhere

20 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

What did Jesus mean by this response? Two things –

A) Foxes have dens - Birds have nests – that is their domain – This is their world

B) But the Son of man has nowhere to lay His head.

1) Interesting statement especially considering that Jesus' home base was in Capernaum – He no doubt had a house that He stayed in

C) But He is here talking about His Kingdom – His Kingdom is of another world

The Question He is asking is – Are you willing to live as someone who is not attached to this world

A) This world has you in its grip

B) Do you possess your possessions or do your possessions possess you? –

1) Strapped – serving them – or are they serving you?

C) How easy would it be for you to respond right now to a call from God?

The Point He is making here with this first guy is the need to count the cost – in Following Him.

A) A General going into battle – Win

A Builder starting a project - Finish

B) There is a cost to following Christ –

C) Do we say: Follow You wherever – ok – go talk to your neighbor about Me - Oh - mom is calling

D) Interesting Jesus said the son of man has no place to lay His head.

1) You know where Jesus finally found a place to lay His head? **THE CROSS -**

21 Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."

A) Luke's gospel tells us that Jesus actually said **TO THIS SECOND MAN** Jesus said - "*Follow Me.*"

THE ENTIRE CHRISTIAN LIFE is summed up in this **ONE** command - "*follow Me*"

A) Christ Follower – more than attending church
More than believing certain doctrines

B) I am going to allow you to lead my life – call the shots

1) Live by your word – your principles

C) Jesus says you follow Me

D) Notice how the Man Responds

21 Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."

22 But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

Now understand here that Jesus is not being insensitive here - Let the dead bury their own dead .

A) The man's asking for permission to bury [his] father, did not mean that his father was already dead.

B) The phrase was a common figure of speech in the Middle East.

1) that referred to a son's responsibility to help his father in the family business

2) until the father died and the inheritance was passed out.

C) So in reality the guy was saying: **Lord let me wait until I get my inheritance.**

1) Then I will come

D) Let me wait a few more years – retire and cash in my 401K

Problem with that is if Jesus is calling you – you are never really going to be happy until doing what He has CALLED YOU TO DO!

A) **THE BEST PLACE TO BE – Center of God's will**

B) Don't settle for 2nd best

C) Might call you to leave the creature comforts of home and family

1) Rewards are huge - Leaving Southern California for Oregon –

Leaving place we liked living – leaving good friends – Leaving Parents and grand parents

D) I had lots of Encouragement to stay – Thriving ministry

Clung to this verse

Matt 19:29

29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.