

Better Way Apostolic Church- Bible Class

Subject: No Patch Up, Spiritual Wholeness: Matthew 8:23-9:7

In our lesson texts we find that Jesus is trying to get His disciples to step out of mediocrity and move into greatness. And tonight I want to remind you that He has that same plan for you. Now the focus has been on giving them peace.

It's about how discipline alone can be the difference between winning and losing, between greatness and mediocrity.

Discipline- In its, natural sense discipline is systematic instruction intended to train a person sometime in a craft, or trade or other activities.

To think good thoughts requires effort. This is one of the things that discipline training is about.

The power of discipline to seven critical areas of your life:

- Goals
- Character
- Time management
- Personal health
- Finances
- Courage
- Responsibility

“Self-discipline is the key to personal greatness. It is the magic quality that opens all doors for you, and makes everything else possible. With self-discipline, the average person can rise as far and as fast as his talents and intelligence can take him. But without self-discipline, a person with every blessing of background, education and opportunity will seldom rise above mediocrity.” ~ Brian Tracy

Example - Reproducing

When Peter speaks of Jesus having left us an "example" (1 Peter 2:21), he chose for "example" the Greek word signifying "the headline of a copybook." Jesus is for our imitation; he is our "copy." And a test of discipleship is the progress we make in the reproduction of the copy he has set.

Matthew 8:1-22

First "discipleship" interlude (vv. 18-22). Because great crowds followed Jesus, and opposition had not yet begun, many would-be disciples wanted to follow Him. However, they would not pay the price. This is the first use of "Son of man" in Matthew as a name for Jesus. It comes from Daniel 7:13 and is definitely a messianic title and a claim to kingship. Matthew 8:22 might be expressed, "Let the spiritually dead bury the physically dead." Jesus was not asking the man to be disrespectful to his father (who was not yet dead), but to have the right priorities in life. It is better to preach the Gospel and give life to the spiritually dead than to wait for your father to die and bury him.

The Power of Discipline

The power of discipline was not long ago illustrated at the House of Refuge on Randall's Island. But for it, 600 young boys would have been thrown into a panic and many lives lost. Although they were aroused out of slumber at two o'clock in the morning, the signal for fire drill was given and the well-disciplined lads fell to their places and were marched out of the building in safety. If we are to do good work for humanity, we must discipline ourselves to regular effort. It is the steady onward push of the disciplined purpose that counts in the struggle of life.

Matthew 8:1-22

Peace to the Disturbed (Matt. 8:23-9:17)

The persons involved in these three miracles all had a need for peace, and Jesus provided that peace.

Peace in the storm (vv. 23-27). The Sea of Galilee is about thirteen miles long and eight miles wide. It was not unusual for violent storms suddenly to sweep across the water. Jesus undoubtedly knew the storm was coming, and certainly could have prevented it. But He permitted it that He might teach His disciples some lessons.

The storm came because they obeyed the Lord, and not because (like Jonah) they disobeyed Him. Jesus was asleep because He rested confidently in the will of His Father; and this is what the disciples should have done. Instead, they became frightened and accused Jesus of not caring! Matthew wanted his readers to contrast the "little faith" of the disciples with the "great faith" of the Gentile centurion.

Peace in a community (vv. 28-34). This dramatic incident is most revealing. It shows what Satan does for a man: robs him of sanity and self-control; fills him with fears; robs him of the joys of home and friends; and (if possible) condemns him to an eternity of judgment. It also reveals what society does for a man in need: restrains him, isolates him, threatens him, but society is unable to change him. See, then, what Jesus Christ can do for a man whose whole life - within and without - is bondage and battle. What Jesus did for these two demoniacs, He Will do for anyone else who needs Him.

Christ came to them, and even braved a storm to do it. This is the grace of God! He delivered them by the power of His Word. He restored them to sanity, society, and service. The account in Mark 5:1-21 shows that one of the men asked to become a disciple of the Lord. But instead of granting his request Jesus sent him home to be a witness. Christian service must begin at home.

There are three prayers in this event: (1) the demons besought Jesus to send them into the swine;

(2) the citizens besought Him to leave; and

(3) the one man besought Him to let him follow (see Mark 5:18-20). Jesus answered the prayers of the demons and the citizens, but not the prayer of the healed man!

We can construct a "statement of faith" from the words of the demons. (Demons do have faith, see James 2:19.) They believed in the existence of God and the deity of Christ, as well as the reality of future judgment. They also believed in prayer. They knew Christ had the power to send them into the swine.

The fact that the demons destroyed 2,000 pigs is nothing compared with the fact that Jesus delivered two men from the powers of Satan. God owns everything (Psalms 50:10-11) and can do with it as He pleases. Jesus values men more than pigs or sheep (Matthew 12:12). He brought peace to these men's lives and to the community where, for a long time, they had been causing trouble.

Peace in the conscience (vv. 1-8). The Lord had shown Himself powerful over sickness and storms, but what could He do about sin? Palsy was a gradual paralysis. This man was unable to help himself, but fortunately he had four friends with love, faith, and hope. They brought him to Jesus and permitted nothing to stand in their way. Was the man's physical condition the result of his sin? We do not know. But we do know that Jesus dealt with the sin problem first, for this is always the greatest need.

We must not conclude from this miracle that all sickness is caused by sin, or that forgiveness automatically means physical healing. A pastor of mine often says, "God can heal every sickness except the last one." More important than the healing of this man's body was the cleansing of his heart. He went home with both a sound body and a heart at peace with God. "'There is no peace,' with my God, 'to the wicked'" (Isaiah 57:21).

Second "discipleship" interlude (vv. 9-17). We have covered the call of Matthew in the first chapter of this study. We need only to comment on the four pictures of His ministry that Jesus gave in this message. **As the Physician, He came to bring spiritual health to sick sinners.**

As the bridegroom, He came to give spiritual joy.

The Christian life is a feast, not a funeral. The illustration of the cloth reminds us that He came to bring spiritual wholeness;

He did not come to "Patch us up" and then let us fall apart.

The image of the wineskins teaches that He gives spiritual fullness.

Jewish religion was a worn-out wineskin that would burst if filled with the new wine of the Gospel.

Jesus did not come to renovate Moses or even mix Law and grace. He came with new life!