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The Gospel According to Matthew

The Lame Walk, the Blind See

October 7, 2018

Sermon Text: Matthew 9:18-34

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 35 and
Matthew 10

Mat 9:18-34 While he was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." (19) And Jesus rose and followed him, with his disciples.

Woman with Hemorrhaging

(20) And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, (21) for she said to herself, "If I only touch

his garment, I will be made well." (22) Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly the woman was made well.

The Ruler's Daughter Raised

(23) And when Jesus came to the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, (24) he said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. (25) But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. (26) And the report of this went through all that district.

Blind Men Given Sight

(27) And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." (28) When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." (29) Then he

touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." (30) And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, "See that no one knows about it." (31) But they went away and spread his fame through all that district.

Demon Cast Out

(32) As they were going away, behold, a demon-oppressed man who was mute was brought to him. (33) And when the demon had been cast out, the mute man spoke. And the crowds marveled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." (34) But the

Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons."

This statement may seem rather odd to you, but here it is:

If you are going to understand what is happening in these verses here in chapter 9, you have to go on and read chapter 10.

And that is why we read chapter 10 as the Scripture reading this morning. For those of you who are reading this sermon or listening to it later on Sermon Audio, stop right now and read chapter 10, then resume at this point.

Summary of Matthew 10

In chapter 10 Matthew is showing us how Jesus' kingdom spread. It continues to spread today as a result. It is the leaven that spreads throughout the entire lump of dough. This is good news to us because it is nothing less than EDEN being restored.

- Jesus appoints 12 disciples.
- He gave them *authority* – kingdom authority, to do the very same things He had been doing (cast out demons, heal diseases, raise the dead)
- That there were 12 is no coincidence. This is telling us that the kingdom consists of the true Israel as its people, just as the 12 sons of Jacob were at the beginning of the earthly Israel.
- They were charged first with taking the good news of the kingdom to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel"
- They will experience the same kind of opposition and persecution that Jesus did
- Their preaching of the kingdom of heaven will not effect peace, but a sword

This, then is the big picture – the lay of the land if you will. What Jesus had begun, His Apostles continued to do. Ever since, His kingdom has been spreading. One day He will come and bring the kingdom to its eternal

finality. The New heavens and New Earth. No death. No crying. No disease. No curse. No sin. No evil people.

This then is what these healing miracles are all about in chapter 9. They demonstrate that the King has come, that the King is Jesus, what His kingdom is like, and that He does indeed have divine authority and power to fulfill God's promises to His people.

Alright then let's go back to chapter 9, verse 18ff, and look at Jesus delivering His people from the curse:

Mat 9:18-22 While he was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." (19) And Jesus rose and followed him, with his disciples.

(20) And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, (21) for she said to herself, "If I only touch his garment, I will be made well." (22) Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly the woman was made well.

Let's look first at the woman who touched Jesus' garment and was healed

and as we do this, listen to the parallel account given by Luke:

Luk 8:40-56 Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. (41) And there came a man named **Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue.** And falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his house, (42) for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying. As Jesus went, the people pressed around him.

(43) And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone. (44) She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased.

(45) And Jesus said, "Who was it that touched me?" When all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds surround you and are pressing in on you!" (46) But Jesus said, "Someone touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me." (47) And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. (48) And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in

peace."

(49) While he was still speaking, someone from the ruler's house came and said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher any more."

(50) But Jesus on hearing this answered him, "Do not fear; only believe, and she will be well." (51)

And when he came to the house, **he allowed no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child.** (52) And all were weeping and mourning for her, but he said, "Do not weep, for she is not dead but sleeping."

(53) And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. (54) But taking her by the hand he called, saying, "Child, arise." (55) And her spirit returned, and she got up at once.

And he directed that something should be given her to eat. (56) **And her parents were amazed, but he charged them to tell no one what had happened.**

Now, not only had this woman been ill (bleeding) for 12 years, she had spent everything she had trying to find a remedy but to no avail. In addition, in Jewish society such a person was *unclean*, and untouchable castaway.

Lev 15:25-27 "If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, not at the time of her menstrual impurity, or if she has a discharge beyond the

time of her impurity, all the days of the discharge she shall continue in uncleanness. As in the days of her impurity, she shall be unclean. (26) Every bed on which she lies, all the days of her discharge, shall be to her as the bed of her impurity. And everything on which she sits shall be unclean, as in the uncleanness of her menstrual impurity. (27) And whoever touches these things shall be unclean, and shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening.

I don't understand the Lord's reason for this law, but there it is. This lady could not be *touched, nor could she touch anyone*. Marriage was out.

And yet, in her we see genuine faith AND some level of understanding of God's mercy even in the Law. The Law forbade what she did, and yet does the Lord not want her well and is this Jesus not His Son come to set captives free?

The Pharisees of course misused the Law in a cruel way *so that they forbade the Son of God from healing!* You will see this over and over again as we go through Matthew. For instance:

Luk 13:11-17 And behold, there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over

and could not fully straighten herself. (12) When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your disability." (13) And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God. (14) But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day." (15) Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? (16) And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" (17) As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

Be assured that the Pharisees are with us today in large numbers in our churches. Many, many people are oppressed and yet these hypocrites use the letter of Scripture rather than the Spirit it is given to us in to keep such poor people in bondage.

After pronouncing His blessing upon this lady, a messenger comes and announces that Jairus' daughter has

died. There are some differences as is common in the account given in the 3 gospels, but the point is that when Jesus arrived at Jairus' house, the girl was dead. Jairus' faith was such that even then he believed Christ could raise her.

Mat 9:23-26 And when Jesus came to the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, (24) he said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. (25) But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. (26) And the report of this went through all that district.

Notice in these accounts the repeated emphasis *on faith*. Jairus' faith believed the impossible. The woman's faith enabled her to touch Jesus. In contrast you see the laughing crowds who see any idea of raising the girl from the dead as ridiculous. And here is a very important principle that is vital for all of us to know with certainty-

Jesus only reveals Himself and His kingdom to those who believe. He does not show Himself to all universally.

Mat 13:10-16 Then the disciples came and said to him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" (11) And he

answered them, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. (12) For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. (13) This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. (14) Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: ""You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive." (15) For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.' (16) But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.

The King and the Kingdom can only be seen through eyes of faith. People who do not believe cannot see it. They are blind and they are deaf.

Heb 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

This is why Jesus would only allow the dead girl's parents and 3 of His disciples in the room when He raised her. It also explains why He told them this:

(Luke 8:56) And her parents were amazed, but he charged them to tell no one what had happened.

And see it again as Jesus heals two blind men and casts a demon out of another man. Listen as I read it once more. In your printout I have bold-faced the phrases that emphasize this theme:

Two Blind Men

Mat 9:27-34 And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." (28) When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, "**Do you believe that I am able to do this?**" **They said to him, "Yes, Lord."** (29) Then he touched their eyes, saying, "**According to your faith be it done to you.**" (30) And their eyes were opened. **And Jesus sternly warned them, "See that no one knows about it."** (31) But they went away and spread his fame through all that district.

The Demon-Possessed Man

(32) As they were going away, behold,

a demon-oppressed man who was mute was brought to him. (33) And when the demon had been cast out, the mute man spoke. And the crowds marveled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." (34) **But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons."**

In this miracle there is no mention of the demon-possessed man's faith, though his friends did bring him to Jesus to be healed. Faith is implied. But what Matthew would have us see here is the UN-believing, hard-heartedness of the Pharisees. They not only refuse to believe in the King and His Kingdom, but they claim that He actually is a servant of Satan.

It is a very sad state of affairs when those who are charged with shepherding Christ's flock are in fact hypocrites and Pharisees. In our day this is certainly the case and Christ's true people are "distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd." Christ comes at such times and appoints His true shepherds and sends them out to preach the good news of His kingdom and set them free. We see this over and over again in the history of the church. Think for instance of George Whitefield and the Wesleys who God raised up to preach in Britain and America, preaching to people who had seen no hope under the "ministry" of the Church of

England. Luther. Calvin. Wycliffe. The persecutions they suffered were exactly what Jesus warns about in the next chapter.

Conclusion

Let's close with this challenge. Do you believe Christ? Do you see His kingdom? Are you, well, here it is in Hebrews:

Heb 11:13-16 These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. (14) For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. (15) If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. (16) But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

There it is! The New Heavens and Earth! Do you see it? Are you looking for it? Or do you only see this present world? The answer to those questions indicates whether you know Christ or not.