

# A MINISTRY FOR HUNGRY SAINTS

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

+ THE BOOK OF LUKE

### WHAT WE MOST ASSUREDLY BELIEVE

WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRIES, ASSOCIATED

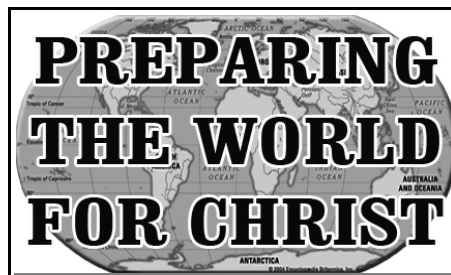
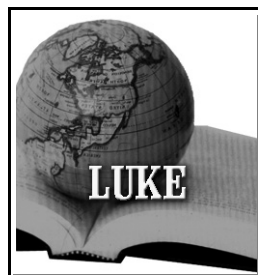
*An overview of the Gospel of Luke, by Given O. Blakely*

Lesson #18

COMMENTARY ON: 5:12-26

#### JESUS CONTINUES TO WORK AND HIS FAME CONTINUES TO SPREAD

When the Scriptures affirm that Jesus "*went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed the devil*" (Acts 10:38), they are speaking of a most aggressive ministry. In this text Jesus heals a leper, withdraws for prayer, returns to minister with the power of God being present to heal, heals a man let through the ceiling to His feet, and has a brief dialog with His critics. The seeming challenges included confronting a man "*full of leprosy*," an impotent man that had to be carried on a pallet, and the thoughts and words of skeptics. None of this distracted the Lord, or proved to be more than He could handle. He lived out before the eyes of the people the fact that with God all things are possible. There really is no condition He cannot thoroughly and satisfactorily address. His ministry also confirmed that those who were convinced of His power and authority would go to any length to get to Him. Further, those who overcame the obstacles between them and Jesus never went away disappointed or frustrated in their efforts. There is much to see in these events.



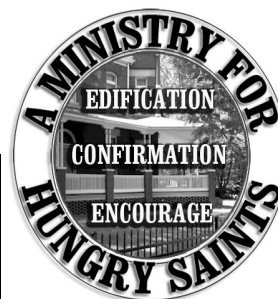
Since May, 1993, a ministry instituted for the encouragement of believers in Christ





## The Book of Luke, 6/12/2015

### Lesson Number 18



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

**TRANSLATION LEGEND:** ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEB=Common English Bible (2011); CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), EMTV=English Majority Text (2002); ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ETRV=Easy to Read (1999), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT=Goodspeed (1923), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE=International English (1973), ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), JUB=Jubilee Bible (2003); KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV=Literary Translation of the Bible (1976), LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MKJV=Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1959), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862)

#### ----- GREEK LEXICON LEGEND -----

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = Barclay-Newman, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT

PERSUADED OF THE NECESSITY OF KNOWING THE CERTAINTY OF THE THINGS WE BELIEVE, LUKE MAKES US MORE FIRM BY BUTTRESSING OUR FAITH, AND CONFIRMING WE HAVE NOT EMBRACED FABLES.

**DISCLAIMER:** The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

# JESUS CONTINUES TO WORK AND HIS FAME CONTINUES TO SPREAD

LUKE 5:12 "And it came to pass, when He was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean. <sup>13</sup> And He put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him. <sup>14</sup> And He charged him to tell no man: but go, and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. <sup>15</sup> But so much the more went there a fame abroad of Him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. <sup>16</sup> And He withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed. <sup>17</sup> And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was Teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them. <sup>18</sup> And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before Him. <sup>19</sup> And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. <sup>20</sup> And when He saw their faith, He said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. <sup>21</sup> And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? <sup>22</sup> But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? <sup>23</sup> Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? <sup>24</sup> But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (He said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. <sup>25</sup> And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. <sup>26</sup> And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day." ..... Luke 5:12-26

## INTRODUCTION

### A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

When the Scriptures affirm that Jesus "went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed of the devil" (Acts 10:38), they are speaking

of a most aggressive ministry. In this text Jesus heals a leper, withdraws for prayer, returns to minister with the power of God being present to heal, heals a man let through the ceiling to

His feet, and has a brief dialog with His critics. The seeming challenges included confronting a man "full of leprosy," an impotent man that had to be carried on a pallet, and the thoughts and words of

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skeptics. None of this distracted the Lord, or proved to be more than He could handle.

He lived out before the eyes of the

people the fact that with God all things are possible (Matt 19:26; Mk 10:27; Lk 18:27). There really is no condition He cannot thoroughly and satisfactorily address. He dealt with disease (Matt 4:23-24), demons (Matt 4:24; 8:16), storms (Mk 4:37-39), the devil himself (Matt 4:1-11), shrewd questioners (Mk 12:19-27), plots to take His life (Lk 4:29-30), hungry crowds with no food (Matt 14:15-20), the challenge of raising the dead (Mk 5:40-42; Lk 7:12-15; John 11:43-44), and much more.

His ministry also confirmed that those who were convinced of His power and authority would go to any length to get to Him. Further, those who overcame the obstacles between them and Jesus never went away disappointed or frustrated in their efforts. There is much to see in these events.

### THE AFFECTATION OF MANY PEOPLE

During the ministry of Jesus, commencing with its beginning, "multitudes" came to Him and followed Him (Matt 4:25; 8:1; 12:15; 13:2; 15:30; 19:2; 21:9). This was preceded by the ministry of John the Baptist, who also drew multitudes who came to hear him (Matt 3:5; Mk 1:5).

In the history of Israel this kind of response was very unusual. Occasionally God would move a large number of people to give attention to a matter.

⇨ THE TIME OF MOSES (1461 BC):

Gathering an offering for the building of the Tabernacle (Ex 35:21-29).

⇨ THE TIME OF DAVID (1018 BC – *FOUR HUNDRED YEARS LATER*): Gathering materials for the building of the Temple (1 Chron 29:6-9).

⇨ THE TIME OF HEZEKIAH (725 BC – *THREE HUNDRED YEARS LATER*): (2 Chron 30:12-20). A revival occurred.

⇨ THE TIME OF EZRA (539 BC – *TWO HUNDRED YEARS LATER*): People were stirred up to go and rebuild the Temple (Ezra 1:4-6).

⇨ THE TIME OF NEHEMIAH (444 BC – *ONE HUNDRED YEARS LATER*): The people had a mind to work (Neh 4:6).

It had been almost one thousand years since there had been a significant and productive stirring among the people of Israel. Yet, like waking up a valley of dry bones, interest was stirring in the land. It is true, it would wane in a little over three years – but only in order that Jesus might lay down His life, and take it up again. However, the next stirring would not have to wait a millennium, or even hundreds of years. **It would take place in a little over fifty days – on the day of Pentecost!**

It should not be difficult to believe that the earth will some day be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Isa 11:9; Hab 2:14). God is able to cause people to be willing in the day of His power (Psa 110:3).

## HE WAS IN A CERTAIN CITY

LUKE 5:12A *"And it came to pass, when He was in a certain city . . ."*

### IT CAME TO PASS

As I have indicated before, this is language that reflects Divine purpose as revealed in the activities of Jesus. It is to be seen in view of our Lord's own words: *"But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the*

*same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me"* (John 5:36). While these works ultimately involved the death and resurrection of Jesus (John 10:17-18), that does not appear to be the emphasis of his words in this text.

These were the works Jesus did among men – works of which He said, *"If I do not the works of My Father,*

*believe Me not. But if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in Me, and I in Him"* (John 10:37-38).

I understand "the works of My Father" to include **what** was done, **where** the works were done, and **when** they were done. This being true, "it came to pass" signifies those three

things being brought together.

### IN A CERTAIN CITY

In his record of this event, Mark

points out that it occurred in Galilee, as He was preaching in the synagogues (Mk 1:39-41). Matthew records that it took place after He had delivered, what

is called, *"the sermon on the mount"* (Matt 8:1). This is the first record of Jesus confronting a leper. Of course, He will have power over the disease.

## A MAN FULL OF LEPROSY

<sup>12B</sup> . . . **behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.**"

### FULL OF LEPROSY

"... behold a man full of leprosy..."

Other versions read, *"covered with leprosy,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"a leper,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"covered with a skin disease,"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"completely covered with tzara'at,"* <sup>CJB</sup> *"had a serious skin disease all over him,"* <sup>CSB</sup> *"an advanced case of leprosy,"* <sup>NLT</sup> *"a man who had leprosy,"* <sup>CEV</sup> *"suffering from a dreaded skin disease,"* <sup>GNB</sup> *"a man who was a mass of leprosy."* <sup>PHILLIPS</sup>

The word translated *"full"* [pleres] has the following lexical meaning: "FULL, I. E. FILLED UP (AS OPPOSED TO EMPTY) COVERED IN EVERY PART: THOROUGHLY PERMEATED WITH," <sup>THAYER</sup> "OF A TOTALITY OF SOMETHING OR SOMEONE WITH NOTHING LACKING, COMPLETE, IN FULL, WHOLLY FILLED," <sup>FRIBERG</sup> AND "COMPLETE, FULL, IN FULL." <sup>GINGRICH</sup>

It ought to be noted that the Law spoke specifically of this disease. The disease was to be verified by the priest (Lev 13:1-3). If leprosy was confirmed, the person had to be isolated (Lev 13:44-44). The Law directed the person who was a leper how he should conduct himself in society (Lev 13:45-46). Before Moses died, on the edge of the promised land, Moses said to the people, *"Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently, and do according to all that the priests the Levites shall teach you: as I commanded them, so ye shall observe to do"* (Deut 24:8).

Jesus, however, will not conduct any examination of the man. We assume that this had already been done

by the priest, and that the man had been given due warning about his condition, as the Law had stipulated. Yet, though ordinarily kept from the people, this man saw Jesus could heal.

The expression *"full of leprosy"* was described this way under the Law: *"if a leprosy break out abroad in the skin, and the leprosy cover all the skin of him that hath the plague from his head even to his foot"* (Lev 13:12). This condition is said to have been the opposite of *"raw flesh,"* or fresh and living flesh (Lev 13:10,14-16). In other words, the flesh would have died, and was falling off the bone.

While I was in India, I witnessed several lepers, and it was a pitiful condition to behold. The man now coming to Jesus was covered with rotting flesh, and was probably in the last stages of the miserable disease. It is described as a disease affecting "ESPECIALLY THE SKIN AND PERIPHERAL NERVES AND CHARACTERIZED BY THE FORMATION OF NODULES OR MACULES THAT ENLARGE AND SPREAD ACCOMPANIED BY LOSS OF SENSATION WITH EVENTUAL PARALYSIS, WASTING OF MUSCLE, AND PRODUCTION OF DEFORMITIES." <sup>MERRIAM-WEBSTER</sup> Portions of his hands and feet had probably fallen away.

### HE FELL ON HIS FACE AND BESOUGHT HIM

*" . . . who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought Him . . . "*

The boldness and power of faith is seen in this man. We know what the disease does to the body, but it must have had an impact upon his mind and spirit as well. He was not allowed to move freely among men, but, according to the Law of Moses, had to alert them concerning his condition (Lev 13:45). There was also the element of shame.

Yet the man *"fell on his face" before Jesus, and "besought"* Him. Other versions read, *"implored,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"Begged,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"in prayer to him,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"pleaded,"* <sup>NAB</sup> and *"beseeched."* <sup>ABP</sup>

The word translated *"besought"* [deomai] MEANS "TO ASK, BEG," <sup>THAYER</sup> "ASK URGENTLY, SEEK, BEG," <sup>FRIBERG</sup> AND "TO ASK FOR WITH URGENCY, WITH THE IMPLICATION OF PRESUMED NEED - 'TO PLEAD, TO BEG.'" <sup>LOUW-NIDA</sup>

There was certainly nothing casual, or nonchalant about his approach to Jesus. His heart was in this matter, and he was convinced of the ability of Jesus, as his request will confirm.

This is how faith conducts itself. So far as it is concerned, the only question is whether or not the Lord Jesus wants to do what is requested.

### IF THOU WILT

*"...saying, Lord, if Thou wilt..."*

Other versions read, *"if You are willing,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"if You choose,"* <sup>NSRV</sup> *"if it is Your pleasure,"* <sup>BBE</sup> and *"if You want,"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"if You wish."* <sup>NAB</sup>

**This leper knew that Jesus could do whatever He wanted to do.** So far as power or ability was concerned, Jesus could do whatever He desired. This is not the modern stance of prayer. People are being taught that God is awaiting to do **their** will, and help them realize **their** dreams. The electronic media, which teaches the entire world is like a spiritual sewage line, spewing out this corrupt teaching. In the meantime, even though the entire world is being inundated with this heresy, few American ministers and writers are addressing the subject, or establishing people in the truth.

The most effective prayer is an appeal for the Lord to do what He wants. Therefore Jesus taught His disciples to pray after this manner: *"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven"* (Matt 6:10). It is a sign of significant progress in the faith when the individual wants what God wants. This is why John, by the Holy Spirit, wrote, *"And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him"* (1 John 5:14-15). Of course, that postulates that the people do know the will of the Lord.

#### THOU CANST MAKE ME CLEAN

*"... Thou canst make me clean."*

Other versions read, *"You can make me clean,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"you have power to make me clean,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"Thou art able to cleanse me,"* <sup>DARBY</sup> *"you can clear me of every trace of my disease,"* <sup>LIVING</sup> *"you can cure me,"* <sup>WILLIAMS</sup> *"you have the power to make me well,"* <sup>CEV</sup> and *"you are able to cleanse me,"* <sup>ABP</sup>

The words *"make clean"* are translated from a single Greek word [kathariz], which lexically means, *"to MAKE CLEAN, TO CLEANSE; TO REMOVE BY CLEANSING; TO FREE FROM,"* <sup>THAYER</sup> *"THOROUGHLY CLEANSING,"* <sup>FRIBERG</sup> *"CAUSE SOMETHING TO BECOME CLEAN."* <sup>LOUW-NIDA</sup>

The expression emphasizes the means through which something was accomplished, and not the result. The stress is placed upon HOW the man was made clean. It is not the result of a natural process. It was an imposed condition – one that Jesus caused to take place.

In the Word of God, the result is not emphasized, but the means through which it was reached. This is seen in

the following phrases.

- ⇨ *"...for by grace are ye saved"* (Eph 2:8)
- ⇨ *"...yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me"* (1 Cor 15:10).
- ⇨ *"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live"* (Rom 8:13).
- ⇨ *"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit..."* (1 Pet 1:22).

This may appear to be a relatively small thing, but it is not. The sinful nature teaches us to look at results without considering their cause. Consequently, those caught in this snare, when they pray, rarely consider the will and power of the Lord. However, this leper was not in that unfortunate number. He knew that Jesus of Nazareth could do anything He desired, for with Him there was no restraint. Therefore the man phrased his request in the consideration of the unquestioned ability of the Lord. Jesus could make healing take place immediately, even in a man who was filled with deadly leprosy.

#### THE CURSE OF CASUALNESS

I feel compelled to say a word about, what I consider to be, the curse of casualness. By "casualness," I mean a frame of mind that does not include a sense of urgency, and is characterized by superficiality. Casualness lacks a high degree of interest or intention. Synonyms for "casual" include **INDIFFERENT, ALOOF, DETACHED, DISINTERESTED, UNCONCERNED, AND UNPLANNED.** <sup>MERRIAM-WEBSTER</sup>

In the average "church" setting, much, if not all, of the prayer is characterized by casualness. It is seen in the lack of participation, looking

about during the time of praying, rarely inquiring if the prayer was actually answered, etc. It is questionable whether or not a casual person is even welcome in the presence of the Lord. The very presence of carnal casualness betrays the lack of an awareness of Deity, the power of the Lord, and the unlimited ability of the Lord's Christ.

Ponder the record of People who came to Jesus with a perceived need.

- ⇨ The nobleman (John 4:46-50).
- ⇨ Simon Peter's mother (Mk 1:29-30)
- ⇨ The Centurion with a sick servant (Matt 8:5-6).
- ⇨ Jairus with a dying daughter (Matt 9:18).
- ⇨ The woman with an issue of blood (Matt 9:20-21).
- ⇨ Two blind men (Matt 9:27-28).
- ⇨ The Syrophenician woman with a child vexed with a demon (Matt 15:21-25).
- ⇨ The blind man of Bethsaida (Mk 8:22-23).
- ⇨ The man with a lunatic son (Matt 17:14-16).
- ⇨ Ten lepers (Lk 17:11-12).

You will not find a hint of casualness or indifference in any of these cases. They were characterized by a sense of urgency, and great fervency.

I do not doubt that many prayers are not answered because they are bathed in casualness, and lacking in the fervency of faith. This is a blight that is not easily resolved.

## THE POWER OF JESUS' WORD: BE THOU CLEAN

<sup>13A</sup> *And He put forth His hand, | and touched him, saying, I will: be thou | clean."*

### HE PUT FORTH HIS HAND

*"And He put forth His hand, and touched him . . ."*

While Israel was sojourning, Lepers were to dwell outside of the camp.

⇒ *"And the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean. All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: **he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.**"* (Lev 13:45-46)

⇒ *"Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper, and every one that hath an issue, and whosoever is defiled by the dead: Both male and female shall ye put out, **without the camp shall ye put them; that they defile not their camps, in the midst whereof I dwell.**"* (Num 5:2-3)

When a leper was examined by the priest, and it was confirmed that he had leprosy, the priest was to *"pronounce him unclean"* (Lev 13:3,8,11,14-15,20,22,25,27,30,44,46). Further, nothing unclean was to be touched—i.e. Lev 5:2-3; 7:24; 22:4-6).

Just As Jesus was the *"Lord even of the Sabbath"* (Matt 12:8), so was He the Lord of the ceremonial law. The

Law, with all of its various nuances, was made *"for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane"* (1 Tim 1:9) – **not for the Lord Jesus Christ.**

### I WILL

*" . . . saying, I will . . ."*

Other versions read, *"I am willing,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"I do choose,"* <sup>NRSV</sup> *"It is my pleasure,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"I do want to,"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"Of course I will,"* <sup>LIVING</sup> and *"I do want to heal you."* <sup>IE</sup>

What a glad sound those words have been to that leper! **The Lord, with all power, wanted to do what he had requested!**

It seems to me that this is something we should earnestly seek – to find Jesus willing to do what we have requested. This will be the result of knowing the will of the Lord, and being able to associate it with living in this world. It will also be the outcome of living sorely for the Lord, and abandoning every competing interest.

### "BE"

*"Be . . ."*

**Here is a condition was created by a word** – a word that called the condition into being: **"BE!"** This is the kind of word that was spoken in the creation of the heavens and the earth: *"Let there **BE!**"* (Gen 1:3,6,14). This is involved in all things being possible with the Lord (Matt 19:36). If bread does not

exist, God can create it with His word (Ex 16:14).

In this case, the Lord will summon a clean state, which will cause the old one to depart.

### BE THOU CLEAN

*" . . . be thou clean."*

He who said, *"Let there **be** light,"* said **"Be thou clean!"** Solomon wrote, *"Where the word of a king is, **there is power:** and who may say unto him, What doest thou?"* (Eccl 8:4).

People who heard Jesus speak observed, *"His word was with power"* (Lk 4:32). When He cast out demons the watchers noted, *"What a word is this! for with authority and power He commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out"* (Luke 4:36). In fact, it is said of the exalted Christ that He is now *"upholding all things by the word of His power"* (Heb 1:3).

If the church wants to experience the power of God, it must return to its assigned role of *"the pillar and ground of the truth"* (1 Tim 3:15). It must bundle all of its man-made programs and throw them in the scrap heap of refuse where they belong. It must cease assigning value – any value – to *"the wisdom of men"* (1 Cor 2:5), and *"the wisdom of this world,"* which God has said is *"foolishness"* (1 Cor 3:19). The professing church has too long been lacking of Divine power, and it has brought reproach on the name of the Lord!

## THE LEPROSY DEPARTED FROM HIM IMMEDIATELY

<sup>13B</sup> *"And immediately the leprosy departed from him."*

### IMMEDIATELY

*"And immediately . . ."*

Other versions read, *"straightway,"* <sup>ASV</sup> *"straight away,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"Instantly,"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"At once,"* <sup>NJB</sup> *"Then and there."* <sup>MESSAGE</sup> Most versions read *"immediately."*

The word from which *"immediately"* is translated [eutheos], means **"STRAIGHTWAY, IMMEDIATELY, FORTHWITH,"** <sup>THAYER</sup> **"RIGHT AWAY,"** <sup>FRIBERG</sup> and **"IMMEDIATELY, RIGHT AWAY, THEN."** <sup>LOUW-NIDA</sup>

**There are times when an immediate answer is the only acceptable one** – like when Peter was sinking beneath the stormy wave and Jesus *"immediately stretched forth His hand and caught him"*

(Matt 14:31).

It is true, we cannot guarantee immediate answers to our prayers, but God is able to answer them immediately, and we must never thrust that possibility from our thinking. Most frequently the physicians of this world institute cures that are gradual, and we are grateful for their work. **But we must not grow accustomed to thinking of God in this**

manner – of always working gradually.

#### THE LEPROSY DEPARTED FROM HIM

“ . . . the leprosy departed from him.”

Other versions read, “left him,” <sup>NKJV</sup> “went from him,” <sup>BBE</sup> “went away,” <sup>GWN</sup> “disappeared” <sup>NLT</sup> and “went forth from him.” <sup>ABP</sup>

The lexical meaning of the word translated “departed from” [aperchomai] is, “MOTION AWAY FROM A REFERENCE POINT WITH EMPHASIS UPON THE DEPARTURE, BUT WITHOUT IMPLICATIONS AS TO ANY RESULTING STATE OF SEPARATION OR RUPTURE - ‘TO GO AWAY, TO DEPART, TO LEAVE.’” <sup>LOUW-NIDA</sup>

I do not wish to make more of this than is appropriate, but the text suggests

that in dealing with disease and infirmity, **it is quite possible that more is involved than what appears.** We are in a world in which there are not only natural elements and men, but the devil, and demons, and principalities and powers. This is one reason why thoughtful believers always take matters to the Lord **first**, then proceed with their thoughts properly centered.

## HE CHARGED HIM TO TELL NO MAN

“ <sup>14</sup> And He charged him to tell no man: but go, and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.”

#### HE CHARGED HIM

“And He charged him . . .”

Other versions read, “He ordered him,” <sup>NASB</sup> “gave him orders,” <sup>BBE</sup> “enjoined him” <sup>DARBY</sup> “commanded him,” <sup>GENEVA</sup> “instructed him,” <sup>NLT</sup> “But go [saith He],” <sup>PNT</sup> and “exhorted him.” <sup>ABP</sup>

As used here, the word translated “charged” [paraggello] means, “TO COMMAND, ORDER, CHARGE,” <sup>THAYER</sup> “AN AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE COMMAND, GIVE (STRICT) ORDERS, DIRECT, INSTRUCT,” <sup>FRIBERG</sup> AND “TO ANNOUNCE WHAT MUST BE DONE,” <sup>LOUW-NIDA</sup>

Jesus, of course, has the right to tell men what to do, for He is the One through whom “all things” were created (Eph 3:9). Throughout history, there have been seasons when the professed church appears to have disrespected the commands of Christ. It seems to me as though we are living in such a time. However, until those who profess to follow Christ learn to obey Him, and prefer to do so, He will not support them. In my judgment, the failure of the modern church to have a strong moral and spiritual influence is owing to this lack of Divine support.

#### TELL NO MAN

“ . . . to tell no man . . .”

Other versions read, “Don’t tell

anyone,” <sup>NIV</sup> “Say nothing to any man,” <sup>BBE</sup> “Speak to no one,” <sup>MRD</sup> and “tell no one [that he might chance to meet].” <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

Jesus did not always instruct people in this manner. He said to the healed Gadarene demoniac, “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee” (Mark 5:19). Although the record does not say Jesus told her to do so, the unnamed woman at the well of Samaria “left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?” (John 4:28-29). The result was that Jesus stayed there two days, and a great number of those men believed on Him (John :30,39-42).

There were other times when Jesus told people not to divulge what they knew about, or had experienced from, Him. After Peter made the good confession, Jesus “charged . . . His disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ” (Matt 16:20). Another time when He had opened the ears of a deaf man, and loosed his tongue so he could speak, He “charged” the people “that they should tell no man.” Howbeit, “the more He charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it” (Mark 7:36). When Jesus came down the Mount of transfiguration with Peter, James, and John, “He charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead” (Mark 9:9). When the Lord had raised Jairus’ young daughter from the dead, He “charged” her parents “that they should

tell no man what was done.” (Luke 8:56).

⇒ Jesus did this to prevent popularity from spreading and agitating the Jewish leaders prematurely. There was an appointed hour when the tide of popularity for Jesus would be turned against Him. This must not come prematurely (Mk 14:35,41; Lk 22:14 John 12:23; 17:1).

⇒ So that confidence would not be placed in what Jesus had done, rather than in Jesus Himself. (Lev 13:6,13,17,23,28,34,37)

⇒ To wait until the work had been confirmed as having been done on a man who really did have leprosy. (Lev 13:37)

⇒ To bolster the confidence of the man by the testimony of the priest, who would confirm there had been leprosy, yet it had been eradicated.

#### SHOW THYSELF TO THE PRIEST

“ . . . but go, and show thyself to the priest . . .” (Lev 13:2).

This was in order to confirm for a testimony, that the individual had been a leper, and had been healed of that leprosy.

#### OFFER FOR THY CLEANSING

“ . . . and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded . . .” (Lev 14:4-8).

This was a ceremonial cleansing



that was required to introduce the former leper back into society. The ceremony did not cleanse the leper from the leprosy itself, but only from the social stigma that had been placed upon him because of it,

#### FOR A TESTIMONY UNTO THEM

*" . . . for a testimony unto them."*

Other versions read, *"for a proof to them,"* <sup>RSV</sup> *"for a witness,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"as evidence,"* <sup>NJB</sup> *"a public testimony,"* <sup>NLT</sup> *"This will prove to everyone that you are well,"* <sup>LIVING</sup> *"as proof to the authorities,"* <sup>ISV</sup> *"to prove it to the people,"* <sup>WILLIAMS</sup> *"everyone will know that you have been healed,"* <sup>CEV</sup> *"in proof of your cure make the offerings for your purification,"* <sup>GOODSPEED</sup> *"as evidence to the authorities,"* <sup>PHILLIPS</sup> *"Your cleansed and obedient life, not your words, will bear witness to what I have done,"* <sup>MESSAGE</sup> and *"for a testimony and proof to the people, that they may have evidence [of your healing]."* <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

#### The Cleansing Procedure

"There was a two fold offering, according to the law of Moses, on account of the cleansing of the leper; (Leviticus 14:1-14:57) the one was on the first day of his cleansing, when he first showed himself to the priest, and consisted of two birds, alive and clean, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop; the other, and which was properly the offering on the eighth day, was, if the man was able, two he lambs and one ewe lamb, with a meat offering; but if poor, one lamb, with meat offering, and two turtle doves, or two young pigeons.

#### The Procedure According to Jewish Canons – John Gill

"The Jewish canons, concerning this matter, are as follow: "when a leper is healed of his leprosy, after they have cleansed him with cedarwood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and the two birds, and have shaved all his flesh, and bathed him; after all this he enters into Jerusalem, and numbers seven days; and on the seventh day he shaves a second time, as he shaved at first, and bathes — and on the morrow, or eighth day, he bathes a second time, and after that they offer his offerings — he bathes on the eighth day in the court of the women, in the chamber of the lepers, which is there — if it is delayed, and he shaves not on the seventh day, but he shaves on the eighth, or some days after, on the day that he shaves, he bathes, and his sun sets; and on the morrow

he brings his offerings, after he hath bathed a second time, as we have declared: how do they do unto him? The leper stands without the court of Israel, over against the eastern gate, in the gate of Nicanor and his face to the west: and there stand all they that want atonement; and there they give the bitter waters to the suspected women: and the priest takes the leper's trespass offering, while it is alive, and waves it with the log of oil, towards the east, according to the way of all wave offerings; and if he waves this by itself, and this by itself, it is right: after that he brings the leper's trespass offering to the door, and he brings it in both his hands into the court, and layeth them upon it; they slay it immediately, and two priests receive its blood: the one receives it in a vessel, and sprinkles it upon the top of the altar; and the other, in his right hand, and pours it into his left hand, and sprinkles with his finger the right hand; and if he repeats it, and receives it in his left hand first, it is unlawful. The priest that receives some of the blood in a vessel, carries it, and sprinkles it upon the altar first; and after that comes the priest, who receives the blood in the palm of his hand, to the leper, the priest being within, and the leper without; and the leper puts in his head, and the priest puts of the blood that is in the palm of his hand, upon the tip of his right ear; after that he puts in his right hand, and he puts of it on the thumb of his hand; and after that he putteth in his right foot, and he puts of it upon the toe of his foot, and if he puts of it upon the left, it is not right; and after that he offers his sin offering, and his burnt offering: and after that he hath put the blood upon his thumb and toe, the priest takes of the log of oil, and pours it into the left hand of his fellow priest; and if he pours it into his own hand, it will do: and he dips the finger of his right hand into the oil, which is in his hand, and sprinkles it seven times towards the most holy place: at every sprinkling there is a dipping of the finger in the oil; and if he sprinkles, and does not intend it, over against the holy place, it is right; and after that, he comes to the leper, and puts of the oil upon the place of the blood of the trespass offering, on the tip of the ear, and on the thumb of his hand, and toe of his foot; and that which is left of the oil, that is in his hand, he puts it on the head of him that is to be cleansed; and if he puts it not, atonement is not made; and the rest of the log is divided among the priests; and what remains of the log is not eaten, but in the Court, by the males of the priests, as the rest of the holy things; and it is forbidden to eat of the log of oil, until he has sprinkled it seven times, and has put of it upon the thumb and toe; and if he eats, he is to be beaten, as he that eats holy things before sprinkling."

<sup>JOHN GILL</sup>

#### THE ROLE OF CONFIRMATION

In God's dealings with men, a process of confirmation is often present. The need for confirmation is what necessitates the trying, or testing, of the spirits, to determine whether or not they

are of God (1 John 4:1). Suffering for righteousness' sake is a means of confirming whether or not a person is a legitimate follower of Jesus (2 Thess 1:5). Jesus Christ was a Minister to the Jews to *"confirm the promises made unto the fathers"* (Rom 15:8). God enabled Paul and Barnabas (who was not an apostle) to confirm what they preached by *"enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders"* <sup>NIV</sup> (Acts 14:3). Paul wrote to the Corinthians of their conversion, saying that what was evidenced in them at that time *"confirmed"* his *"testimony about Christ"* <sup>NIV</sup> (1 Cor 1:6).

In matters pertaining to the purpose and work of the Lord, assumption and supposition are out of order. **God works through the truth itself, not through what men say about the truth.** All sectarianism – every single demonstration of it – is owing to what men have said about the truth, and not to the truth itself. Because of its very nature, the truth, when known, or comprehended, makes men free (John 8:32).

Just as surely as the Law required the priest to confirm the absence of leprosy, as well as its presence, so it is imperative that the state of those professing to be followers of Christ be confirmed, or verified. This is accomplished by the testimony of their life. **Did Jesus do in them what God said He would do?—i.e. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness"** (Rom 8:10). That is, *"the body is dead"* toward God. Of itself, it is not the vehicle of Divine communication or spiritual aptitude. For "the body" to be employed in the work of the Lord, it must be "quickened," or given the ability to serve God. Therefore the next verse reads, *"But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you"* <sup>NKJV</sup> (Rom 8:11). This is not speaking of the resurrection of the dead, for in the resurrection life is not given to our bodies. Instead, we are given a new body. The text in Romans 8:10 is speaking of godliness and approved kingdom labor being fulfilled in the body. The very same body that was used to

express sin, is now used by the Holy Spirit to exhibit godliness and Divine approval.

Where godliness is not preferred and exhibited in the body of a professed believer, there is no confirmation of the reality of their conversion. It goes without saying that “godliness” is not defined by human reasoning. Men have no right to draw up a listing of requirements.

Confirming signs include the following.

- ⇒ Crucifying the flesh (Gal 5:24).
- ⇒ Worshiping God in the Spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh (Phil 3:3).
- ⇒ Suffering persecution (2 Tim 3:12).
- ⇒ Not being “of the world” (John 15:19;

John 17:14,16).

Where qualities of this sort are not obvious, there is no confirmation of being a follower of Jesus, or being saved. It is not for us to say no such association exists, but that there is no proof of it – and the Spirit nowhere suggests that those who lack such proofs can have assurance that they are really in the fold of Christ.

SO MUCH MORE HIS FAME WENT ABROAD

“<sup>15</sup> But so much the more went there a fame abroad of Him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.”

Christ’s ministry is underway, with John the Baptist having prepared the people for Him by telling them, “The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand.” This was accompanied by the summons, “repent ye, and believe the Gospel” (Mk 1:15). Those were the requirements to gain an advantage from the Messiah. Because God was in the work, the news of Jesus spread rapidly.

SO MUCH THE MORE

“But so much the more went there a fame abroad of Him . . .”

Other versions read, “However, the report went around concerning Him all the more.”<sup>NKJV</sup> “so much the more went abroad the report concerning Him,”<sup>ERV</sup> “the news of Him kept spreading,”<sup>NJB</sup> “But despite Jesus’ instructions, the report of His power spread even faster,”<sup>NLT</sup> and “Now the report of His power spread even faster.”<sup>LIVING</sup>

Here we have the truth being lived out, “A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid” (Matt 5:14). This did not happen while Jesus was growing up in Nazareth – at least there is no record of this taking place. This commenced when His ministry got under way.

Like a city set on a hill, Jesus stood above all of His peers. His Person was

unique. His ministry was unparalleled. His words were inimitable. His works were matchless. He was truly “separate from sinners” (Heb 7:26), and His words were “spirit” and “life” (John 6:63). A Jesus that is common, and presented as though He was a Sample of the masses, will never draw the pure in heart.

It is altogether wrong, for anyone to present Jesus in a manner that does not obviously distinguish Him from all other men. The more Jesus is presented as one of us, the less likely men will have faith in Him. The thing that draws those of an honest and good heart (Lk 8:15) to Jesus is His uniqueness, not His commonness.

GREAT MULTITUDES CAME TOGETHER TO HEAR

“ . . . and great multitudes came together to hear [Him]. . .”

Other versions read, “huge crowds gathered to listen,”<sup>CEB</sup> “large crowds would come together to hear Him,”<sup>CSB</sup> “great crowds assembled to listen to him,”<sup>NAB</sup> “large crowds were gathering to hear Him,”<sup>NAU</sup> “vast crowds came to hear him preach,”<sup>NLT</sup> “Large crowds came to listen to him teach,”<sup>CEV</sup> “enormous crowds collected to hear Jesus,”<sup>PHILLIPS</sup> “much people assembled to

hear him,”<sup>MRD</sup> and “great crowds kept coming together to hear [Him].”<sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

Here is a Jesus with which multitudes of professing Christians are not familiar – a teaching and preaching Jesus! These people did not gather together because they were commanded to do so. They were in some way intrigued by the teaching Jesus, and wanted to hear what He had to say. How many people do you personally know who want to know what Jesus has to say?

The counts in the box are taken from the Greek New Testament by John Baima. I could find no other count, so this only provides a comparative view. The point is that a lot of Christ’s words are recorded, and He said that the words He spoke were “spirit” and “life” (John 6:63). Further, the indwelling of both the Father and the Son depend largely on a person’s reception and retention of Christ’s words (John 14:23). Answered prayer, Jesus said, depends on whether or not His words abide in us (John 15:7). The legitimacy of one’s discipleship depends on whether or not he continues in Christ’s word (John 8:31). When, therefore, there is little interest in what Jesus has said, no lasting benefit will be realized from Him.

I point this out because of how Jesus launched His ministry – by preaching and teaching. He did work many wonderful miracles and healings, but they accompanied His Word – His Word did not accompany His miracles.

WORDS OF JESUS IN THE GREEK TEXT

8,285 – Matthew
3,566 – Mark
6,177 – Luke
6,574 – John
72 – Acts
9,000 (estimate) – Revelation
33,674 – Estimated Total

This was not a gathering of people like that of Theudas, and Judas of Galilee, to which Gamaliel alluded. (Acts 5:36-37). **The people had a compelling interest in what Jesus had to say.**

I remember my younger years, when I first began following Jesus seriously. Whenever news of a great preacher or teacher of the things of God was known, I wanted to go and hear him. My close friends felt the same way. On one occasion, in 1954, brother Boyce Mouton and myself traveled several hundred miles to hear some men teach whom we felt were more advanced than those we were hearing. Our hearts were bent toward the Lord, and therefore we had a genuine interest in profitable words – not music, but words.

I feel I have a sense of what compelled those multitudes to gather together to hear Jesus preach and teach. However, even greater than that, this is how Jesus drew the people, and it is the means God used to attract people to Jesus – through *“the foolishness of preaching”* (1 Cor 1:21).

#### AND TO BE HEALED BY HIM

*“ . . . and to be healed by Him of their infirmities.”*

Other versions read, *“their sicknesses,”* <sup>NASB</sup> *“diseases,”* <sup>NRSV</sup> *“their illnesses,”* <sup>CEB</sup> and *“ailments.”* <sup>NAB</sup>

Jesus did not specialize in certain diseases or infirmities, but healed them all. Also, He was never nonplused by a disease or bodily handicap – including death. Concerning this aspect of His ministry, consider the following from which people were healed by Jesus.

#### GENERAL CLASSES OF ILLNESS

There are general classes of illness: diseases (Lk 6:17), vexed with unclean spirits (Lk 6:18), possessed by demons (Matt 8:16), infirmities (Lk 7:21), plagues (Lk 7:21), all that were diseased (Matt 14:35), all manner of sickness and all manner of disease (Matt 4:23), divers diseases (Mk 1:4), their sick (Matt 14:14).

#### SPECIFIC INFIRM CONDITIONS

There were specific conditions healed: Fever (Lk 4:38-39), leprosy (Lk 5:12-16), paralysis (Lk 9:1-7), impotence, invalid (John 5:6-9), withered hand (Mk 3:1-5), blind (Matt 12:22), dumb (Matt 12:22), issue of blood, or hemorrhage (Matt 9:20-22), maimed (Matt 15:30), lame (Matt 15:31), lunatic [seizures] (Matt 17:15-18), leprosy (Lk 17:12-19), spirit of infirmity [bowed over] (Lk 13:10-13), and dropsy (Lk 14:1-6).

#### HISTORICALLY DOCUMENTED DISEASES OF THAT TIME AND PLACE

Historically, there were known diseases in that area of the world: ophthalmies, or diseases of the eyes;

leprosies, inflammations of the brain, pains in the joints, the hernia, the stone in the kidneys and bladder, the phthisic, hectic, pestilential, and tertian fevers; weakness of the stomach, and obstructions in the liver and the spleen. The most prevalent diseases of the East at the present day are cutaneous diseases, malignant fevers, dysentery, and ophthalmia. Of the first of these, the most remarkable are leprosy and elephantiasis. <sup>McKNIGHT & STRONGS</sup>

**These diseases were only a faint reflection of the moral and spiritual infirmities that plagues mankind.** These conditions are covered by general terms like *“sins”* (1 Cor 15:3) *“iniquities”* (Rom 4:7), *“transgressions”* (Gal 3:19), *“without strength”* (Rom 5:6), *“come short of the glory of God”* (Rom 3:23), *“dead”* (Eph 2:1), *“alienated”* (Col 1:21), *“deceived”* (Tit 3:3), *“foolish”* (Tit 3:3), *“in bondage”* (Gal 4:3), *“walked according to the course of this world”* (Eph 2:2), *“children of disobedience”* (Eph 2:2), *“by nature the children of wrath”* (Eph 2:3) etc.

You can see from these things the complexity of the effects of sin upon the human race – both in the body, and within, in the unseen [part of man]. Jesus was, and remains, fully able to address all of these consequences. Traditionally, men have had a difficult time believing this, but it is still true.

## HE WITHDREW HIMSELF

<sup>16</sup> **And He withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.”**

#### HE WITHDREW HIMSELF

*“And He withdrew Himself into the wilderness . . .”*

Other versions read, *“slip away often,”* <sup>NASB</sup> *“would withdraw,”* <sup>NRSV</sup> *“went away by Himself,”* <sup>BEB</sup> *“made a practice of withdrawing,”* <sup>CJB</sup> *“often withdrew,”* <sup>CSB</sup> *“retired into the desert,”* <sup>DOUAY</sup> *“kept Himself apart”* <sup>GENEVA</sup> *“would go away,”* <sup>GWN</sup> *“went away,”* <sup>LIVING</sup> *“constantly*

*withdrew into the Desert,”* <sup>WEYMOUTH</sup> *“constantly withdrew into the Desert,”* <sup>ISV</sup> *“continued His habit of retiring to lonely spots”* <sup>WILLIAMS</sup> *“habitually withdrew into solitary places,”* <sup>MONTGOMERY</sup> *“was retreating in the wilderness,”* <sup>ABP</sup> *“would often go to some place where He could be alone,”* <sup>CEV</sup> *“was drawing back in a deserted place,”* <sup>LITV</sup> *“As often as possible Jesus withdrew to out-of-the-way places,”* <sup>MESSAGE</sup> *and “withdrew [in retirement] to the wilderness (desert).”* <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

In our thoughts this verse is to be

joined to the previous verse. It is not a specific time that is being described, but a lengthy span in which great crowds of people continued to come to hear His teaching and have the sick healed. This was matched by Jesus continuing to withdraw from the multitudes to solitary places where He could be alone.

This reveals that there was a certain element of distraction, dissatisfaction, and some form of depletion of His natural energies that was caused by continued exposure to masses of people.

Among other things, this confirms that Jesus did not prefer to be around low-lifers – publicans and harlots – as the unlearned allege. When He was wearied by the crowds, He did not turn to the publicans and harlots, but chose to be alone, where He could be refreshed by communion with His heavenly Father. The text indicates that these withdrawals were His manner. We also read about these withdrawals in Matthew 12:15 and Mark 3:7.

#### AND PRAYED

" . . . and prayed." "And was praying."

Other versions read, "for prayer," <sup>BEB</sup> "for prayer," <sup>GWN</sup> "gave Himself to prayer," <sup>TNT</sup> "was praying," <sup>YLT</sup> and "so that He could pray." <sup>IE</sup>

In His personal prayers, so far as the record is concerned, Jesus generally prayed alone (Matt 14:23; Mk 1:35-36; 6:45-46; Lk 6:12; John 6:15). On the mount of transfiguration, Jesus' countenance was altered as He prayed (Lk 9:26). His disciples were there, but were not themselves praying with Jesus. They were observers at that time.

Prayer is an aspect of spiritual life which, even though it is part of "the whole armor of God" (Eph 6:18), is a commonly neglected area of spiritual life. The matter of prayer itself has been confused by those who promote praying in a language that is unknown to the one who is praying. A form of Christianity is currently in place in which prayer is not a continual resort, or an area in which professed believers experience confidence. Too often, things that could be resolved by prayer and supplication are placed in the hands of men and their wisdom.

## IT CAME TO PASS AS HE WAS TEACHING

" <sup>17A</sup> **And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was Teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem . . .** "

#### ON A CERTAIN DAY

"And it came to pass on a certain day . . . "

Other versions read, "it came about one day," <sup>NASB</sup> "one day," <sup>NIV</sup> "one of those days," <sup>RSV</sup> "one of the days," <sup>DARBY</sup> and "became in one of the days." <sup>INTERLINEAR</sup>

Once again, this is more than a mere passing comment. That is not how the Spirit speaks. Revelation – all revelation – deals with truth. In the case of the Gospels, it is truth that is elsewhere referred to as "the record God has given of His Son" (1 John 5:10-11). **This is not a casual record, but one that reflects Divine intent and initiative.** What the Lord Jesus said about His activity certainly does not speak of randomness and happenstance, or coincidence. His teaching on the matter of His words and works seem to me to require the view that Jesus was carrying out a specific agenda in a specific way.

⇒ "Verily, verily, I say unto you, **The**

**Son can do nothing of Himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise**" (John 5:19). The Amplified Bible reads, "the Son is able to do nothing of Himself (of His own accord)."

⇒ **"I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me"** (John 5:30). Again, the Amplified Bible reads, "[independently, of My own accord."

⇒ **"But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent me."** (John 5:36)

⇒ **"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as my Father hath taught Me, I speak these things. And He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him"** (John 8:28-29). The Amplified Bible reads, "I do nothing of Myself (of My own accord or on My own authority), but

*I say [exactly] what My Father has taught Me."*

I take it that this account is another example of the details involved in the purpose of God. I suppose it is possible to press this matter to a level that is not intended by the Spirit, but it seems to me that more is involved here that is ordinarily seen.

#### AS HE WAS TEACHING

" . . . as he was Teaching . . . "

Other versions is read, "while He was teaching." <sup>NRSV</sup> Every version says Jesus was "teaching," or this event took place while He "taught."

The word translated "teaching" [didasko] means, "TO HOLD DISCOURSE WITH OTHERS IN ORDER TO INSTRUCT THEM, DELIVER DIDACTIC DISCOURSES." <sup>THAYER</sup> The word "didactic" means, "INTENDED TO CONVEY INSTRUCTION AND INFORMATION;" <sup>MERRIAM-WEBSTER</sup> "INTENDED TO TEACH OR GIVE MORAL INSTRUCTION." <sup>OXFORD</sup>

"Teaching" has to do with the communication of knowledge – information intended to promote thought, or cogitation – things that promote understanding, perception, discernment, and comprehension. **A person who lacks understanding has not been taught** – or he has not received what was taught. In our day, the former

seems to account for the majority of the lack of understanding among professing Christians.

I am not at all satisfied with the ordinary academic definition of teaching. As used in Scripture, it has to do with acquaintance with the things of God – the communication of knowledge that is essential to participation in the purpose of God. The Gospels contain the word “*know*” in its various forms two hundred and twenty times. Acts through Revelation contain three hundred and twenty-six such references. From Matthew thru Revelation, that is a total of five hundred and forty-six references. There are over one hundred and seven references to “*teach*” in its various forms.

The critical role of thinking in “*pure religion*” is captured in the following words: “*knowledge*” (Eph 1:17), “*understanding*” (Col 1:9), “*perceive*” (1 John 3:16), “*comprehend*” (Eph 3:18), “*meditate*” (1 Tim 4:15), “*thought*” (2 Cor 10:5), “*cogitations*” (Dan 7:2), “*ponder*” (Lk 2:19), “*muse*” (Lk 3:15), “*consider*” (Heb 3:1), and “*discern*” (Heb 5:14).

Teaching promotes all of these activities. The validity of things that fail to promote such activities is to be questioned.

#### PHARISEES AND DOCTORS OF THE LAW

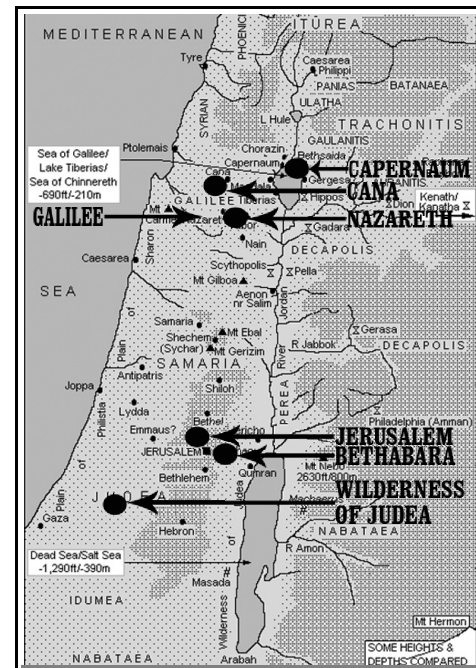
“ . . . , that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem. . . ”

A “*doctor of the Law*” was someone who could expound Jewish Law, enabling people to understand it. In our parlance, they were experts in Scripture, or could cause people to be acquainted with the text. We find from the events that follow that Jesus was in someone’s house, probably someone of considerable influence and means, considering that many had gathered there.

Even though their motives might not have been pure, it is of interest that those devoted to a rigorous manner of life (the Pharisees), and those who were scholars of Scripture (“*doctors of the Law*”) were interested in hearing what Jesus had to say. It is also written, “*the common people heard Him gladly*” (Mk 12:37).

These “*Pharisees and doctors of the Law*” “*were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem.*”

Galilee was the north-most section of Canaan, and Judaea the south-most part. Jerusalem was near the middle of Judaea. In Matthew’s account, we learn this took place in His own city, which Mark identifies as Capernaum (Mk 2:1-4). It was, then, the city where



Jesus had relocated after leaving Nazareth (Matt 4:13).

This will prove to be a significant gathering, with the Lord drawing people from the sick to the religious elite – and He was “*teaching.*”

Mark says of this occasion, “*And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and He preached the word unto them*” (Mark 2:2).

## THE POWER OF THE LORD WAS PRESENT TO HEAL THEM

<sup>17B</sup> . . . and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.”

Other versions read, “*present to perform healing,*” <sup>NASB</sup> “*for Him to heal the sick,*” <sup>NIV</sup> “*was with Him to heal,*” <sup>NRSV</sup> “*the power of the Lord was with Him, to make those who were ill free from their diseases,*” <sup>BBE</sup> “*was with Jesus to heal,*” <sup>CEB</sup> “*the Lord’s power to heal was in Him,*” <sup>CSB</sup> “*was there to heal them.*” <sup>DARBY</sup> “*Jesus had the power of the Lord to heal,*” <sup>GWN</sup> “*the power of the*

*Lord was there so that He should heal,*” <sup>NJB</sup> “*the Lord’s healing power was strongly with Jesus,*” <sup>NLT</sup> “*the Lord’s healing power was upon Him,*” <sup>LIVING</sup> “*The Lord was giving Jesus the power to heal people,*” <sup>IE</sup> “*God had given Jesus the power to heal the sick,*” <sup>CEV</sup> and “*God’s power to heal people was with Him.*” <sup>PHILLIPS</sup>

This is the only place in the King James Version where the phrase “*power of the Lord*” is mentioned. It is

mentioned twice in the New American Standard Bible, with the other verse being Numbers 14:17). In that verse, the King James reads, “*power of my Lord.*” The NIV reads “*the Lord’s strength.*” The New Revised Standard Version and Revised Standard version reads, “*power of the Lord.*”

The word translated “*power*” is “*dunamis,*” which means, as used here “*MIRACULOUS POWER,*” <sup>STRONG’S</sup> “*INHERENT POWER, POWER RESIDING IN A THING BY VIRTUE*

OF ITS NATURE, OR WHICH A PERSON OR THING EXERTS AND PUTS FORTH,” THAYER “SUPERNATURAL MANIFESTATIONS OF POWER, MIRACLE, WONDER, POWERFUL DEED,” FRIBERG “POWER, MIGHT, AUTHORITY,” LIDDELL-SCOTT “DEED OF POWER, MIRACLE.” GINGRICH

This word (dunamis) is used thirty-nine times in the Gospels. Thirty-one times it refers to Divine power – power that is resident in God.

- ⇒ Three times it is used of “*the powers of heaven*” that will ultimately be “*shaken*” (Matt 24:29; Mk 13:25; Lk 21:26).
- ⇒ One time of special ability given to God’s stewards (Matt 25:15).
- ⇒ One time to the miraculous power of the Elijah that will precede Christ’s second coming (Lk 1:17).
- ⇒ Three times to delegated miraculous power given, among other things, to the disciples: power to expel demons and to “*cure diseases*” (Lk 9:1; 10:19; Lk 24:49).

It is used ten times in the book of Acts, with one of the times referring to the supernatural works of a sorcerer named Simon (Acts 8:10). The remainder of the times it refers to

Divine power.

It is used seventy-four times from Romans through the Revelation. With the following exceptions, it always refers to Divine power. It refers to inimical powers (Rom 8:38; 2 Thess 2:9; Heb 11:34; Rev 13:2; 18:3). Twice it refers to limited human ability (2 Cor 8:3; Rev 17:13); once to servile authorities, whether devilish or godly (Eph 1:21; 1 Pet 3:22); once to delegated power for God’s servants (2 Tim 1:7); once to angelic (holy) powers (2 Pet 2:11).

In the vast majority of the cases, “*power*” refers to Divine strength. Wherever others are said to have power (strength, authority, ability, etc.), it is always delegated from heaven by God.

That necessarily means that this kind of “*power*” is discretionary, for only Deity has it by nature.

Our text suggests that men cannot control this power – even if it is delegated to them. Here we have the Son of God Himself, who had authority and power to do things that were supernatural. However, His use of that power was hinged to the will of God. That is, it could only be successfully

employed when God was willing to do so, or, to put it another way, when it was involved in the purpose of God.

These facts confirm the importance – yes, essentiality – of the saved knowing the will of God – that is, if they want access to this power. It is no wonder that Paul wrote, “*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove [what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God]*” (Rom 12:1-2). The Amplified Bible reads, “*so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].*”

It is obvious that Jesus recognized this power was “*present*,” and therefore knew this was a time to use it. While this is not an ability that we possess to any significant degree, it seems to me that it is possible to be aware Divine appointments, when an appeal can be made to this power. The saints do not have to live in a state of ignorance.

## A MAN WAS BROUGHT IN A BED

“<sup>18</sup> *And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before Him.*”

### A HELPLESS MAN

“*And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy . . .*”

Immediately you want to see the faith of these men. They brought a helpless man to Jesus – not a man with some limited ability, but one that had to be carried there. It seems to me that sometimes men think too small. They bring things to Jesus that can actually

be resolved by others – which means they are not matters relating to the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. We do not know how far they came, but, to them, distance appeared to have not been their major consideration. A disease, palsy, or paralysis, had seized this man, and he was a slave to it.

Mark also us that the man was carried “*by four men*” <sup>NKJV</sup> (Mk 2:3).

### THEY SOUGHT MEANS

“*. . . and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before Him.*”

A great crowd was in and around that house. Mark writes of this occasion, “*And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay*” (Mark 2:2-4).

Therefore, these men “*sought*

*means to bring*" the man into the house, where Jesus was. They did not look at the crowd and conclude that it would better to come some other time.

Sometimes we confront circumstances that suggest it is not the time to seek for mercy, and grace to help in the time of need (Heb 4:15-16). But such times must be met with a determined spirit – one that drives us to *"seek means"* to get close to Jesus. Blessed is the person who can see the reasoning behind such efforts, and therefore extend themselves to appropriate the blessing.

These four men did not send a messenger into the house, imploring Jesus to come out to them. Rather, they sought to get into the presence of Christ –to get in where He was.

Some people have not yet made the association of Jesus Christ with His effective ministry. There is a sense in which men must endeavor to get where Jesus is obviously working. Our text says, and I assume there were those who recognized it, *"the power of the Lord was present to heal them."* (Luke 5:17). I do not wish to limit the Lord in any way, but it is doubtful that men can

expect significant blessing where Jesus is not in some way working.

**This is why holy effort must be expended to provide an environment where Divine benefit can be realized.** This is one reason why men are exhorted, *"I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting"* (1 Tim 2:8). It is why we come together with no divisions, perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment (1 Cor 1:10). It is why we gather together for edification (1 Cor 14:26), not simply to fulfill an obligation.

## THEY COULD NOT FIND A WAY

***"<sup>19</sup> And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus."***

### THEY COULD NOT FIND A WAY

*"And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude. . ."*

They tried, and diligently so, but they could not find a way to bring the man into the house. Furthermore, the multitude did not clear a path for them. If they were going to get this man to Jesus, they would have to overcome the crowd, and throw convenience to the ground. These men had carried this man to see Jesus. They brought him to be healed, and they were not going to go home disappointed. They were more convinced to the ability of Jesus than of the hindering influence of the crowd.

I wonder if people who have a penchant for large congregations and multitudes of people have ever considered that such can be a hindrance to the weak. Alas, that is something to think about.

**When a convenient way cannot be found, unbelief goes home.** Faith, on

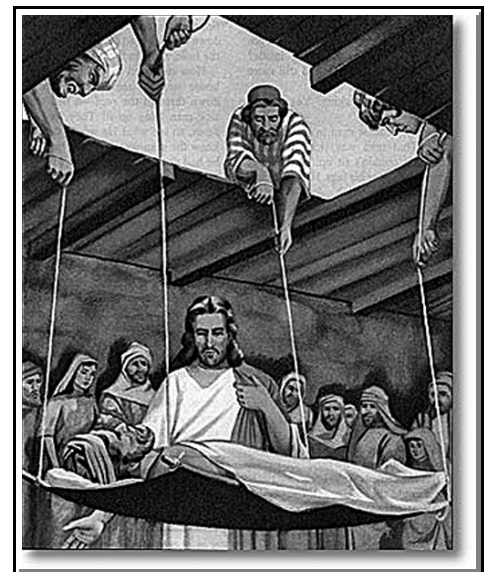
the other hand, will find a way – it will persevere. If there is a mountain to climb, it will climb it like Abraham (Gen 22). If there is a distance between where a prophet is and the mountain of the Lord, the believer will prepare himself and go there like Elijah (2 Kgs 19:4-8). **Owing to unbelief, and a lack of persuasion, many a soul has left without obtaining the benefit that was sought.** Also, timidity is a robber. Do not invite him into your life. Do not accommodate yourself to the presence of timidity, or make excuses why you think it is acceptable. Be bold, and find a way to get to Jesus!

### THEY WENT UPON THE HOusetop

*" . . . , they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus."*

Mark gives us some more information about this, showing the aggressiveness of these four *men*. *"And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay"* (Mark 2:4).

Notice how carefully they lowered the man, leaving him on his *"couch,"* or pallet. Luke calls it a *"couch,"* and Mark



a *"bed."* *"Couch"* is defined as *"A SMALL BED, A COUCH"*. <sup>THAYER</sup>



This *"bed,"* or *"couch,"* was something like a mattress we would put on a cot. It apparently had some sort of frame on which some ropes could be attached to lower the man.



Luke says they carefully positioned the man *"before Jesus."* That required a unified effort. Four men, each one apparently responsible for one of the four corners. Their efforts had to be coordinated, else the man would fall off of the pallet. Each man had to have a firm grip. And they had to work together, and in synch. They had to be agreed on **what** they were doing, **when**

they were doing it, and **where** they were doing it.

Here was an example of having *"one mind"* (2 Cor 13:11), *"striving together"* for one purpose (Phil 1:27), and with *"the same judgment"* (1 Cor 1:10). How blessed it is to have the *"unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"* (Eph 4:3). We are nowhere exhorted to

forgive such a unity, but to keep it. It is unity created by the Spirit, which is another good reason not to quench or grieve the Holy spirit of God (Eph 4:30; 1 Thess 5:19).

Divided people cannot work together, and if they attempt to do so, they will not meet with godly success.

## THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN THEE

*"<sup>20</sup> And when He saw their faith, He said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee."*

**JESUS SAW THEIR FAITH**  
*"And when He saw their faith. . ."*

The three Gospels reporting this event all say that Jesus *"saw their faith"* – "Jesus seeing their faith" (Matt 9:2), *"Jesus saw their faith"* (Mk :5), and *"He saw their faith"* (Lk 5:18).

Jesus saw their faith in at least two ways. First, He had the ability to know what was in the hearts of men (John 2:25). That is, He knew WHY these men boldly did what they did. Second, He saw their deliberate and determined action. What they did is

simply not something an unbeliever would do.

**THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN THEE**  
*" . . . , He said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee."*

Jesus saw *"their faith,"* and *"said"* to palsied man. I do not doubt that the poor man had faith in Jesus. Perhaps as the men were bringing him to Jesus they talked about the whole matter, building up one another's faith.

Notice that Jesus announced an existing situation: *"Thy sins ARE forgiven thee."* Other versions read, *"you have forgiveness for your sins,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"thy sins have been forgiven thee,"* <sup>YLT/EMTV/LITV/YLT</sup> *"I forgive your sins."* <sup>MESSAGE</sup>

All of the other versions in my possession (48 in total) read *"are forgiven."* A literal reading is, *"have been pardoned, you, sins."* <sup>INTERLINEAR</sup>

This was before Jesus took away the sins of the world in His death (John 1:29; Heb 9:26). As Jesus will explain He had the authority from heaven to forgive the sins of men prior to the sin of the world being taken away. That forgiveness was obviously in anticipation of the atonement. Jesus said the same words to the woman who anointed His feet with ointment: *"Thy sins are forgiven"* (Lk 7:47-48). Such pronouncements were exceeding, rare before Christ returned to heaven. Now they are common among those who believe, and then act accordingly.

## WHO IS THIS THAT SPEAKETH BLASPHEMIES?

*"<sup>21</sup> And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"*

**THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES BEGAN TO REASON**  
*"And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason . . ."*

These were men who came to hear Jesus, coming *"out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem"* (Luke 5:17). But they were too steeped in Jewish tradition to appreciate the teaching and words of Jesus. They

knew what the Scriptures said, but they had made the commandment of God *"of none effect"* by their traditions (Matt 15:6). In order to embrace their tradition, they had rejected the commandment of God (Mk 7:9). Now, because of their tenacious grasp on tradition they could not accept a Divine pronouncement from the Son of God.

O, the dreadful impact of religious tradition on the hearts of men!

**WHO CAN FORGIVE SINS, BUT GOD ALONE?**  
*" . . . , saying, Who is this which*

*speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"*

Part of their reasoning was correct, but by blending it with their tradition, they arrived at an erroneous conclusion. God had set Himself forth as the only One who forgives iniquity (Ex 34:7; Num 14:18).

What they did not know, is that when they confronted Jesus of Nazareth, they were dealing with God. This, however, they could not accept. On another occasion, when Jesus had healed an impotent man, the Jews



persecuted Jesus and sought to kill Him. Jesus responded to them, *"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."* (John 5:17). Then their hearts drove them to seek, *"the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the*

*Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God"* (John 5:18). This is the point on which they ultimately called for His crucifixion.

The destiny of every person

hinges on what they think about Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God. Now, Jesus will address His critics in no uncertain words. He has laid a trap for them, and they, like fools, have fallen headlong into it.

## WHAT REASON YE IN YOUR HEARTS?

*"<sup>22</sup> But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? <sup>23</sup> Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?"*

Jesus does not ignore the foolish reasoning of men.

### JESUS PERCEIVED HEIR THOUGHTS

*"But when Jesus perceived their thoughts . . ."*

Other versions read, *"aware of their reasonings,"* <sup>NASB</sup> *"knew what they were thinking,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"perceived their questionings,"* <sup>NRSV</sup> *"had knowledge of their thoughts,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"recognized what they were discussing,"* <sup>CEB</sup> *"perceived their hostile thoughts,"* <sup>NET</sup> *"knew that they were arguing,"* <sup>ISV</sup> *"saw that they were arguing,"* <sup>WILLIAMS</sup> *"Conscious of their cavilings,"* <sup>MONTGOMERY</sup> *"realized what was going on in their minds and spoke straight to them,"* <sup>PHILLIPS</sup> *"knew exactly what they were thinking,"* <sup>MESSAGE</sup> *and "knowing their thoughts and questionings."* <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

Matthew's account reads, *"Jesus, knowing their thoughts said"* (Matt 9:4). Mark reads, *"And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves"* (Mark 2:8).

Some of the versions misrepresent this verse, leaving the impression of a verbal discussion among Jesus' critics (*"discussing," "arguing"*). As I understand the text, the men were not speaking out loud, but were thinking

within themselves. They did not believe Jesus could forgive sin.

Something to note here is that the wicked think in synch – without trying to do so. There is such a thing as being *"carnally minded"* (Rom 8:6a). Such a mind reasons in a certain way that contradicts being *"spiritually minded"* (Rom 8:6b).

There are people who, without talking to one another, arrive at the same erroneous conclusion about things pertaining to life and godliness. This is so because of the way the carnal mind thinks – the logic that dictates the conclusions that are reached.

### WHAT REASON YE IN YOUR HEARTS

*" . . . He answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?..."*

Notice, Jesus' answered, or responded to, their thoughts, or reasoning. As confirmed in this text, it is serious for one's thoughts to be unlike those of the Lord. God declared to Israel, *"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts"* (Isa 55:8-9). This condition is an unrighteous and unacceptable one. God preceded the above words with this exhortation: *"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will*

*abundantly pardon. For . . ."* (Isa 55:7). See, the ways and thoughts of the wicked had separated them from God. Therefore, they now had to *"return unto the Lord,"* AFTER they had forsaken both their ways and their thoughts! I do not believe this is generally received by professing believers.

### WHAT IS EASIER?

*" . . . Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?"*

The carnal mind reasons that it is easier to say *"Thy sins be forgiven thee,"* than to say *"Rise up and walk."* It would respond, "How can we know that the sins were forgiven? We need proof that this is so. We can see if the man takes up his bed and walks. That is the more difficult thing to say.

Actually, as far as proper human perception is concerned, things wrought in the unseen realm are more difficult to cause than things in the seen realm. This is because the powers, conditions, and abilities in the unseen realm are greater in both power and significance. How would you compare *"principalities and powers in heavenly places"* (Eph 6:12), with earthly kings and governors? Which would be *"easier,"* to throw down the *"prince of Persia"* (Dan 10:20), or to dethrone the king Belshazzar (Dan 5:30)?

The church has been called to "wrestle" against unseen foes, not ones that are seen (Eph 6:12). It has been given armor and weaponry designed for this conflict.

## THAT YE MAY KNOW

*"<sup>24</sup> But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (He said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. <sup>25</sup> And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God."*

### THAT YE MAY KNOW

*"But that ye may know . . ."*

Other versions read, *"in order that ye may know,"* <sup>NASB</sup> *"so that you may see,"* <sup>BBE</sup> and *"But look! I will prove to you."* <sup>CJB</sup>

**"Flesh" in general, and "unbelief" in particular, cannot properly process a word from Deity.** This is because it cannot reason beyond the realm of the seen – and the forgiveness of sin is beyond the realm of the seen.

Mind you, knowing is not enough. If Jesus demonstrates His power convincingly, it still will not cause faith to *"come."* It will, however, leave the unbeliever without excuse.

### POWER ON EARTH TO FORGIVE SINS

*" . . . that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins . . ."*

The critics had no apparent difficulty with God being able to forgive sins. However, that a *"Man"* could do so they emphatically denied. Therefore, Jesus refers to Himself as *"the Son of man,"* an identity He assigned to Himself more than any other one – eighty-four times in the Gospels.

### The Significance of "Son of Man"

When Stephen was being stoned to death he cried out, *"Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God"* (Acts 7:56). When John, on the Isle of Patmos, saw the glorified Christ, he testified, *"And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in*

*the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man . . ."* (Rev 1:12-13). Again he wrote, *"And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle"* (Rev 14:14). This is of particular significance.

**It is Christ's manhood that enables us to comprehend Him.** His humanity moved Him close enough to us so we could ponder Him, study Him, and therefore obtain a clearer picture of Deity.

Throughout Moses and the Prophets, God said considerable about Himself – revelations like that given to Jacob (Gen 35:11-12), Moses (Ex 34:6-7), Isaiah (Isa 6:1-10), Ezekiel (Ezek 1:1), Daniel (Dan 7:9-10), Hosea (Hos 11:9), etc. Those revelations, however, with a few exceptions, were vague and parabolic in nature.

However, in Christ the nature of God became more clear. His compassion, mercy, love, and goodness were perceived throughout His ministry, as well as His indignance with religious hypocrisy, and disdain for a slow heart and unbelief.

Jesus is the chief Man. He is the perfect depiction of what man is intended to be, and is Himself the appointed means of that objective being fully realized in the glory. He is the One through whom men are redeemed, sanctified, re-created, directed, and ultimately glorified.

### ARISE!

*"...(He said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house..."*

Here, Jesus creates a circumstance with His Word, in the same way He had just remitted sins – by His Word. He tells the man to do three things, none of which were

possible as men see things.

⇒ *"Arise."* Get up. Stand up! Get on your feet.

⇒ *"Take up thy couch."* Pick up what you have been laying on. Take hold of what had taken hold of you.

⇒ *"Go into thine house."* Under your own power, return to the place from which you had to be carried.

Unless his physical traits had been noticeably altered, there was no evidence that any of these commands could actually be carried out. But the man has to do them anyway. I do not doubt that, like the woman who was healed of an issue of blood, he *"felt in his body"* that this man had been healed of impotence (Mk 5:29).

There is a certain confidence that accompanies faith. Although the individual who has received grace from God may never have done the things he is now encouraged to do, faith tells him it can be done.

### IMMEDIATELY HE AROSE

*" . . . And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God."*

In the presence of all the people, including Jesus' critics, the man did precisely what Jesus told him to do: he *"rose up before them," "took up that whereon he lay,"* and *"departed to his own house."*

One of the marks of a true believer is that they do what Jesus tells them to do, even if they have never before been able to do it. The grace of God enables a person to faithful respond to Divine directives.

No further word is addressed to the doubters. Their falseness and erroneous thinking has been publically exposed, and no further rebuke is required.

## THEY WERE ALL AMAZED AND GLORIFIED GOD

*"<sup>26</sup> And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day."*

### THEY WERE ALL AMAZED

*"And they were all amazed . . ."*

Other versions read, "seized with astonishment," <sup>NASB</sup> "Everyone was amazed," <sup>NIV</sup> "amazement seized all of them," <sup>NRSV</sup> "wonder overcame them all," <sup>BBE</sup> "All the people were beside themselves with wonder," <sup>CEB</sup> "They were all astounded," <sup>NJB</sup> "Everyone was gripped with great wonder and awe," <sup>NLT</sup> "Everyone present was gripped with awe and fear," <sup>LIVING</sup> "overwhelming wonder seized them all," <sup>WILLIAMS</sup> and "Astonishment fell upon them all." <sup>MONTGOMERY</sup>

The minds of the people could not adequately process what they had just seen. It either contradicted or expanded what they thought they knew about Divine power. Their history was filled with miraculous occurrences from the plagues of Egypt, their deliverance from Egypt, crossing the Red Sea, seeing Pharaoh and his armies washed up on the shore, being led by a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, being fed with manna every day, drinking water out of a rock, and countless military exploits. **However, it is one thing to read of miracles, and quite another to see one wrought before your very eyes.** Until Jesus came, all of the people probably reasoned like Gideon: "where be all His miracles which our fathers told us of,

saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites" (Judg 6:13).

### THEY GLORIFIED GOD

*" . . . and they glorified God . . ."*

Other versions read, "began glorifying God," <sup>NASB</sup> and "gave praise to God." <sup>NIV</sup>

In other words, they credited God with doing what they had just seen. Everything was not clear to them, but the source of such power was clear to them. It had probably been as long time since any of those people had praised God for one of His "wonderful works" (Psa 40:5; 78:4; 107:8,15,21,31; 111:4; Acts 2:11).

### THEY WERE FILLED WITH FEAR

*"...and were filled with fear . . ."*

Other versions read, "filled with awe," <sup>NIV</sup> "awestruck," <sup>CJB</sup> "struck with awe," <sup>NAB</sup> and "fear flashed through their minds." <sup>WEYMOUTH</sup>

A significant number of versions read "awe" instead of "fear." The word translated "fear" [phobos] means "TO PUT IN FEAR; ALARM OR FRIGHT, TERROR." <sup>STRONG'S</sup> It was the fear of the unknown. They had witnessed something transcendent to the natural order, and they knew it came from God, or Divine power. To knowingly be in the presence of such power does induce fear and quaking – even in holy people.

### THEY SAID

*" . . . saying, We have seen*

*strange things to day."*

Other versions read, "remarkable things," <sup>NASB</sup> "unimaginable things," <sup>CEB</sup> "extraordinary things today," <sup>CJB</sup> "incredible things," <sup>CSB</sup> "wonders," <sup>MRD</sup> "unthinkable wonders," <sup>WILLIAMS</sup> "a great miracle," <sup>CEV</sup> "marvelous things," <sup>GNB</sup> "We've seen things today we can hardly believe," <sup>GW</sup> "We've never seen anything like that!" <sup>MESSAGE</sup> and "We have seen wonderful and strange and incredible and unthinkable things today!" <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

This response was induced by fear. What they had seen was not something like a tornado, a falling star, a lunar eclipse, a devouring flood, or a wild and raging animal. All of those are natural, although they are not common. But what these people had seen was supernatural, and they know it. It had been wrought by a power present among them (Lk 5:17), and they did not know it. They were not familiar with such power, which they seemed to sense could have been destructive. **Man has been created so that he is alarmed by things he does not in any way understand.** He has been made in that way in order that he might fear God because He "is to be feared" (Psa 76:7) – yes, "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him" (Psa 89:7). When men see something they know has come from God, they will have this fear. For the godly, of course, it can be mixed with faith, thanksgiving, and praise. For others, there is quaking.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 6/26/15. We will continue our series of lessons in the Gospel of Luke. The nineteenth lesson will cover verses 27 thru 39 of chapter 5: "A CALLING, A FEAST, MURMURING, AND A RESPONSE." Having called Peter, Andrew, James, and John, Jesus now calls Matthew, doing so while he was at work – just as it was with Peter, Andrew, James, and John. Matthew prepared a great feast for Jesus in his house, and some controversy follows. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.