

Matthew – The King And His Kingdom
The Great Adventure
Notes For Session 10 – Chapter 9: New Wine, New Wineskins

We as Christians are members of the Kingdom of God and as members of the Kingdom of God, we have responsibility, but we have also been given responsibility and power in the Kingdom. The power to do the works of Jesus.

Jesus is teaching us that we can do things in the power of the Kingdom – He has sent us on a mission.

T1. First Healing- The Healing of the Paraplegic (Verse 1 – 8)

He entered a boat, made the crossing, and came into his own town. And there people brought to him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Courage, child, your sins are forgiven." At that, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." Jesus knew what they were thinking, and said, "Why do you harbor evil thoughts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" --he then said to the paralytic, "Rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home." He rose and went home. When the crowds saw this they were struck with awe and glorified God who had given such authority to human beings.

A. Demonstrates the cooperation of the Kingdom of God and the family of God.

- 1) Faith is demonstrated by someone other than the paraplegic- "they". Who are "they"? We do not know.
- 2) We can play that role (of "they") by bringing people to Christ that cannot help themselves. – People who may be blinded to the fact that God wants to do something in their life.

In the second verse, Jesus is imaging the Father – "Take heart my son, your sins are forgiven".

B. In the first century, it was believed that only God could forgive sin. So when Jesus forgave the paraplegic his sins, the Scribes said he was blaspheming.

- 1) In the Old Testament, the issue of sickness was oftentimes associated with sin. See Isaiah 33:24. Psalms 107:17
- 2) Just as often, however, sickness is not associated with sin (for example, the person born blind) but rather is used to demonstrate the power of God.

C. God's Power is demonstrated not only through the healing of sickness but through the weak things of this world. God uses the weakness of our lives to demonstrate His faithfulness and His strength.

- 1) Sickness (our weakness, our sufferings) can be offered up in union with Christ and He changes it. He makes it redemptive and we participate in the redemption of the world by offering up our sickness, weakness and suffering with Jesus.
- 2) Physical sickness is bad, but does not even compare to the illness of sin. Mortal sin kills the life of the Trinity in the soul. Paralysis, blindness are the outward signs of a deeper reality that is the problem – a spiritual paralysis, or spiritual blindness, which is really the problem.

D. Many of the early Church Fathers teach that when Jesus heals a paralysis or blindness, it is a sign of a deeper work that He wants to do. He wants to free them so they are not spiritually paralyzed and/or have spiritual blindness.

- 1) Jesus talks about people who have eyes to see, but do not see. They have ears to hear, but they do not hear.
- 2) We cannot move ourselves to heaven and we cannot see because we are spiritually blind. Jesus sometimes heals the lame, opens blind eyes, but His goal is release everyone from sin.

E. Verse 6- “Rise” (get up) is a common Theme – Resurrection used in Chapter 9.

F. In verse 8, they are amazed that God has given authority to a Man to forgive sins. Authority to do what only we know He (God) can do.

- 1) This is the basis for our understanding of Reconciliation (going to Confession). The first time that God the Father has given the authority and the power to a human being to release someone from their sin.
 - a) How many times have you heard someone say, “I do not need to go to Confession, I do not need to go to a Man (Priest) to say my sins and have him forgive my sins. I do not have to go to a Priest – No; you get to go to a Priest.
- 2) Jesus has given that authority to the Church.
 - a) John 20:22-23; “And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.”
When we go to Confession with a Priest, we hear the voice of Christ.
 - b) Mathew 18:18: Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.
He is giving to the Church the power to bind and the power to loose. The Church can forgive or the Church can make the decision - no, you are not released from sin.
 - c) Catechism 1441: Only God forgives sins. Since he is the Son of God, Jesus says of himself, “The Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins” and exercises this divine power: “Your sins are forgiven.” Further, by virtue of his divine authority he gives this power to men to exercise in his name.
 - d) And 1444: In imparting to his apostles his own power to forgive sins the Lord also gives them the authority to reconcile sinners with the Church. This ecclesial dimension of their task is expressed most notably in Christ’s solemn words to Simon Peter: “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” “The office of binding and loosing which was given to Peter was also assigned to the college of the apostles united to its head.”
- 3) Later we see Jesus take on the sin of the world, and in a sense, He becomes paralyzed on the Cross and then He will “Rise”. He will take upon Himself the sin of the world.

T2. Calling of Matthew (Verses 9-13)

As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post. He said to him, “Follow me.” And he got up and followed him. While he was at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat with Jesus and his disciples. The Pharisees saw this and said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” He heard this and said, “Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. Go and learn the meaning of the words, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ I did not come to call the righteous but sinners.”

This Reading is a little biography of how Matthew came into relationship with Christ.

- A.** Matthew was a tax collector who was considered unclean because they dealt with Gentiles. Christ told him to come follow me and he (Matthew) rose and follows Jesus.
- B.** Pharisees saw themselves as the physicians of the day. They were the ones who made people well. They were the ones that taught, who brought people into right relationship with God.
- C.** Jesus casts Himself in the role of the physician, the role the Pharisees saw in themselves.
 - 1) Pharisees are ineffective physicians because they are not allowed to touch the patient. In a sense, they are paralyzed themselves.
 - 2) Jesus goes, eats, touches the patient, and makes them whole.
 - 3) Jesus quotes Hosea 6:6 when He says 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' Context of Hosea 6 is Restoration of Israel (10 tribes of North), Judah (10 tribes to the South) and the Gentiles.
 - 4) This is real holiness. The word for Holy in Hebrew is Kadosh, Holy, Holy, Holy to be distinct to be different.
- D.** Pharisees' idea of holiness is separateness. Pharisee comes from the word "pharush" which means to be separate. So they define themselves as being holy because they are separate.
 - 1) It like saying, I am a phenomenal physician because I have never seen a patient.
- E.** Jesus' is saying holiness is not separation, holiness is mercy. Jesus turns the idea of holiness around and says I desire Mercy not sacrifice.
 - 1) Not this class distinction, not this separateness. Why are you separate because of your own sin. Your level of righteousness in the OT was not strong enough to deal with the level of unrighteousness in the world. I had to separate you then to ground you, but now I have come to change everything.
 - 2) Separating yourself or your children from bad influence is not called holiness, it is called prudence, it is called wisdom.
 - 3) You are not holy because you do not associate with others. You are holy because you are merciful – you are like Christ.

T3.Fasting (Verses 14-17)

Then the disciples of John approached him and said, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast (much), but your disciples do not fast?" Jesus answered them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast. No one patches an old cloak with a piece of unshrunk cloth, for its fullness pulls away from the cloak and the tear gets worse. People do not put new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise the skins burst, the wine spills out, and the skins are ruined. Rather, they pour new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."

- A.** Jesus is asked why His disciples do not fast. Jesus argues that when the bridegroom is present you do not fast.
 - 1) Israel understands that the bridegroom is God. See Isaiah 54:5, Jeremiah 3:20; Hosea 2:16-19.
 - 2) Jesus takes upon Himself the title of bridegroom.

- B. Moral sense-** how does this relate to us? Can be found in the Mass. We fast before the Eucharist for one hour. When do we break the fast, when the bridegroom comes.
- 1) When we hear the words "This is my Body, This is my Blood". The bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ - the Bridegroom is Present.
 - 2) At Communion when the Bridegroom comes inside of us, we have broken the fast – the Bridegroom is here.
 - 3) Every week we go through a fast anticipating Christ. We break the fast at Mass when the Bridegroom comes.
- C. The old wineskins represent the Old Covenant; the new wineskins represent the New Covenant.**
- 1) The truth of Jesus Christ cannot fit into the Old Covenant so a New Covenant is needed.
 - 2) Allegorical Sense – How does it relate to Christ? Christ is the New Covenant (the new wineskin). The old temple is falling down and the new temple is rising and it is only in the new temple that the entire new covenant family can dwell.
 - 3) Moral Sense – How does it relate to us? We are new. We are born again. We now contain the spirit of God in our very beings. See Jeremiah 31:33; Psalm 102:26

T4. Woman Hemorrhaging (Verses 18 – 22)

While he was saying these things to them, an official came forward, knelt down before him, and said, "My daughter has just died. But come, lay your hand on her, and she will live." Jesus rose and followed him, and so did his disciples. A woman suffering hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the tassel on his cloak. She said to herself, "If only I can touch his cloak, I shall be cured." Jesus turned around and saw her, and said, "Courage, daughter! Your faith has saved you." And from that hour the woman was cured."

- A. Jesus is on His way going to the daughter who just died; and a woman suffering hemorrhages intercepts Him.**
- 1) According to the Law this woman is unclean because of her hemorrhages.
 - 2) She is breaking through the crowd and reaches out to touch the cloak ("Fringe") of Jesus' garment.
 - 3) Jesus as a Jew was wearing traditional Jewish clothing.
- B. Prayer Shawl (a Tallit) – a sign of the covering of God's word. When they would pray they would wrap the Prayer Shawl around them and cover the top of their heads.**
- 1) Tallit Catan- was smaller undergarment with four corners with tassels (Tzit Tzit) (wings), one on each corner which was used to remind them of the commandments of God.
 - 2) The tassels are tied in a series of knots and wrappings. Each knot and wrapping has a numerical number and when added up equals the number of 613 – the number of commandments in the Torah. See Numbers 15:38, Duet 22:11-12.
 - 3) The Israelites believed that the wings (four corners with tassels) (Tzit Tizyot) of the Messiah would have healing powers.
 - a) They also believed that the spittle of the Messiah would have healing powers.

- b) So when Jesus spit in His hands and healed the blind man, He is showing the Israelites that according to the tradition of the day he is the Messiah. See Malachi 4:2 in the RSV (Malachi 3 in the New American Bible).
- 4) This why the women touches the “fringe of His garment.” Jesus heals her, but tells her not to tell anyone – showing us what it means to walk with piety.

T5. Raising of the Dead Girl (Verses 23–26)

“When Jesus arrived at the official's house and saw the flute players and the crowd who were making a commotion, he said, "Go away! The girl is not dead but sleeping." And they ridiculed him. When the crowd was put out, he came and took her by the hand, and the little girl arose. And news of this spread throughout all that land.”

The defiled changes not Christ. She arises – dramatically continuing the theme of resurrection.

T6. Healing of the Blind Men (Verses 27 – 31)

And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed (him), crying out, "Son of David, have pity on us!" When he entered the house, the blind men approached him and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I can do this?" "Yes, Lord," they said to him. Then he touched their eyes and said, "Let it be done for you according to your faith." And their eyes were opened. Jesus warned them sternly, "See that no one knows about this." But they went out and spread word of him through all that land.”

- A. Jesus healed them according to their faith and again tells them not to tell anyone.
- B. Jesus does not heal everyone – not then and not now. The good news is that we are victorious and we demonstrate the faithfulness and power of God in our lives.
- C. Why did Jesus not want anyone to know He had healed them? Because it is consistent with what He taught in the Sermon on the Mount – do it for the Father and not to make a show. Secondly, He knows that people will try to make him an earthly king.

T7. Casting out Demons (Verses 32-34)

As they were going out, a demoniac who could not speak was brought to him, and when the demon was driven out the mute person spoke. The crowds were amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel." But the Pharisees said, "He drives out demons by the prince of demons."

- A. The leadership criticizes Him and insinuates that the Prince of Demons possesses Jesus.
- B. Verses 32-34 are the turning point of the Gospel of Matthew, where the leadership comes out against Jesus. We will see in Chapter 13 that Jesus will begin to speak in parables, which is done when there is wicked, unruly, unfaithful leadership.

T8. The Compassion of Jesus (Verse 35-38)

Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest."

- A. He sees the people like sheep without a shepherd. He is directing this toward the Pharisees.
 - 1) The Pharisees have failed as shepherds and thus He has come as the Chief Shepherd to do what they have failed to do.

B. Jesus employed a number of Rabbinic methods of teaching. One was called Hekesh, which in Hebrew means to click or bang two things together.

- 1) Jesus uses this method to bang two texts from Old Testament together in front of His audience. For example:
- 2) Luke 19:10: "For the Son of the Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost." He is saying two things about Himself:
 - a) He is calling Himself the Son of Man (Daniel 7:13-14). Son of Man will come and He will have a Kingdom, which will last forever and ever.
 - b) (Ezekiel 34) speaks of how the shepherds have failed to feed the people, they have exploited the people, and they have ignored the people. I Myself will come to see and save the lost.

T9. CONCLUSION

Everything He is talking about in this Chapter is a replacement of the Old; it is not supersessionism in that the Church does not take the place of Israel, but rather the New Covenant fulfills the Old and everything is raised to a new level that is centered around Jesus Christ.

Jesus in his ministry is bringing new life to the ten tribes who went into exile by the hands of the Assyrians. He is healing them. He is restoring them. He is also restoring Judah and restoring the Gentiles.

The destiny for all of us is to do the Work of the Father.