

Luke 5/12-26: JESUS HEALS

A: JESUS HEALS A LEPER (v12-16)

1. Why Jesus heals [*Encouraging the sick to come forward afterwards and receive prayer for healing*]

From the many featured healings in the Gospels we can accumulate a growing list of reasons why God heals? Already: because he's asked (4/38) / the sick are brought to him (4/40); so we can wait on (serve) him (4/39). In the 2 healings in this passage, we see 2 of the key answers to the question why God heals...

The goodness of God: the man wasn't even looking for Jesus – he just "came along" and then saw Jesus!
Touching and appropriate humility: "fell with his face to the ground and begged him [on his knees]" (cf. 5/8!)
"If you are willing" (v12) vs "If you can" (Mk 9/22f): expression of faith ("you can") v doubt/unbelief. Unsure if God would v unsure if he could; he believed that Jesus could but wasn't presumptuous that he would.
Jesus' willingness to be approached by – and touch – a person "covered with" leprosy! (touched before spoke) Jesus *is* willing! His response to every enquiry from (on behalf of) the sick: "I *am* willing".
But what in particular makes him willing (in this and every case)? Implicit here, explicit in Mk 1/41: "Filled with compassion..." Jesus heals because he has compassion on the sick – then and now (He 13/8)
"Compassion":

Cf. other references to Jesus' compassion: "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Mw 9/36); [prior to feeding the 5000] "When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick" (Mw 14/14) / "...on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd" (Mk 6/34); [prior to the feeding of the 4000] compassion for the 'great crowds' who had been with him for 3 days and had nothing to eat (Mw 15/32 || Mk 8/2); for the 2 blind men outside Jericho – "Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes" (Mw 20/34). See also: his compassion for Mary and her fellow mourners (Jn 11/33,35f); for Jerusalem (Lk 19/41-44). In other words, Jesus had (and has) a special compassion for the lost, the hungry, the sick and the grieving.

2. How Jesus heals [*Encouraging God's people to pray for the sick afterwards – and helping them to do so*]

Laid on hands (cf. crowds in 4/40) *and* spoke to the body (v sickness: cf. Simon's mother-in-law in 4/39)
His prayer was short, simple and authoritative – a command to the body: "Be clean!"
Don't get locked into a formula when praying for the sick: the only formula is to follow the Holy Spirit
But the healing was "immediate" and total (as it was every time with J) – that's what we want to be locked into
Many of us have prayed or been prayed for many times without seeing healing. How do we continue to pray and pray with faith? [1] "Because you say so, I will" (5/5) [2] we are all on a journey to becoming like Jesus – in praying for the sick as much as in holiness, etc [3] even for 'greats' like Elisha it required repeated prayer and a journey of discovering what to do (2 Ki 4) [4] we must focus on God and not on our past/experiences

P.S. After healing

News spreads / crowds come (v15 cf. 4/14,37)

Word gets out even though Jesus says "don't tell anyone" (v14)

Didn't want to be hampered by crowds/attention or by unnecessary opposition

Instructed him to do what Law commanded to satisfy 'system' and as testimony to them

Best kind of publicity: when God is in the house, we won't need to advertise – news spreads, crowds come!

But Jesus knows only time with his Father will sustain his ministry (v revelling in popularity)(v16 cf. 4/42)

3. What Jesus heals [*Encouraging the lost to give their lives to Jesus – and be healed in every way*]

Not as silly a question as may first seem. Body, yes, but more than that.

By healing his leprosy, Jesus also restored his self-respect/confidence and his place in society; by sending him to the temple, Jesus reconnected him with God. Jesus heals us physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually; he restores and makes us whole – in ourselves, amongst men and before God.

Rather than the leper making Jesus unclean, Jesus makes the leper clean (cf. Le v11–15)! The dominant influence is the other way! Nothing can make Him unclean; whatever (whoever) touches Jesus is made clean!

B: JESUS HEALS A PARALYTIC (v17-26)

1. Why Jesus heals [*Encouraging the sick to come forward afterwards and receive prayer for healing*]

"And the power of the Lord was present for him to heal the sick" (v17b): in addition to personal anointing, there can sometimes be a corporate anointing (for a particular thing) – cf. Jesus in Nazareth

Healing more important than rooves: what might God have to break through in our lives/churches to heal?

(e.g. cessationist theology, unbelief/doubt because of unanswered prayer, cynicism/hurts from bad experiences, rigidity in our meetings or ministry style or expectation of how God will do it)

Hear the joy in Jesus' response ("Friend...!" v20): faith pleases God (He 11/6). Jesus heals in response to faith – the sick person's or his friends' ("when Jesus saw *their* faith") or the faith of those who pray.

Cf. many other occasions: 'your faith has healed you' / 'be it according to your faith'

Our faith doesn't heal us (God's power does) but our faith releases that power (immediate v effective cause) Their faith here was a mixture of certainty and of boldness and single-mindedness born of desperation (God often has to get us to that place, where there is no other hope, to provoke us to faith)

There is more to healing than faith (or to no healing than lack of faith). We cannot reduce healing to the simplistic formula: 'have faith and you will be healed' (vs 'if you're not healed it's because you lack faith').

Healing is a mystery, sovereign ('Some of the Ways if God in Healing'). Nevertheless, faith is a key component in many (most?) cases of healing.

Jesus' compassion means that he is willing. Jesus' power means that he is able. He is both able *and* willing.

Cf. Ps 61/11f: One thing God has spoken, two things have I heard: that you, O God, are strong [able], and that you, O Lord, are loving [willing]."

2. How Jesus heals [*Encouraging God's people to pray for the sick afterwards – and helping them to do so*]

Previously: spoke to (rebuked) the fever (4/39); laid on hands (4/40); spoke to (commanded) the body *and* laid on hands (5/13).

Here: spoke to the man – didn't address sickness ('go') or body ('be clean') but told person what to do ('get up')

Was it in obedience to the command, in the act of getting up, that the man was actually healed?

Repeat from overleaf: "Don't get locked...our past/experiences"

3. What Jesus heals [*Encouraging the lost to give their lives to Jesus – and be healed in every way*]

Silly question? The body, sickness. But what is it about Jesus (who he is, what he does) that allows him to heal the body? What does the healing of the body signify? What lies behind it?

Sickness (and every other ill, including decay/death) is the result of sin (Ge 2/17, Ro 5/12, 8/20ff, 1 Co 15/21f).

Jesus (in the breaking-in of God's kingdom, and in the imminent atonement for sin on the cross which lies at its heart) deals with sin (the root) and so is able to deal with every kind of fruit (including sickness).

The healing of the body shows that sin has been dealt with – and that forgiveness is thus also available.

Jesus has the authority to heal and forgive because he's God *and* he makes atonement and ushers in the kingdom Forgiveness and healing are not two separate or even overlapping circles, but concentric circles within the all-encompassing circle of God's salvation.

Cf. Ps 103/2f, Is 53/4f cf. Mw 8/17.

Granted, in this world and age, neither forgiveness nor healing is universal, but both begin as a sign of God's kingdom breaking in (and of sin being truly atoned for). We don't reject forgiveness as part of Jesus' salvation because it's not yet universal, so why do we do that with healing?

v21 The Pharisees were right: only God can forgive sins (v21). But the Pharisees were wrong: Jesus was God, not "this fellow"; "the Son of Man [with] authority on earth to forgive sins"

v22 Jesus knew their thoughts by gift of knowledge or general discernment, not by his divinity

v23 And so, "Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? Both are equally easy to say, because both are evidences of the same thing: God's salvation (> has come > to you).

v24 "But that you may know..." The healing of the man evidences both (1) who Jesus is: the Son of Man (and thus Son of God), with the authority to forgive sins and (2) that, in what he is about to do on the cross, sin will be truly paid for and so can be justly forgiven.

v25f Result of healing: Amazement/awe => praise (v25f cf. 4/15,22,32,36) – "remarkable": never get blase re h *Come to Jesus for the full circle of God's salvation: forgiveness – plus healing of every part.*

