

Luke 4:38-41

“The Great Physician”

June 9, 2024

1. Intro

2. Luke 4:38-41

a. *³⁸And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. ³⁹And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them. ⁴⁰Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. ⁴¹And demons also came out of many, crying, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.*

b. So there are a few things that are important to note in this passage...

i. The first thing we need to see is that Jesus is still in Capernaum, a city of Galilee

1. We saw last week that it was in the synagogue in Capernaum that Jesus cast a demon out of a man

a. And the people were all amazed at his authority and his power

b. We'll see later in the sermon the importance of this location

ii. So Jesus is in Capernaum, and there he goes to Simon's house, where Simon's mother-in-law was sick with a high fever

1. A couple of things that are interesting about this...

a. Simon, who we know is also called Peter, has not “officially” accepted the calling to be one of Jesus' disciples

i. We'll see that happen in a couple of weeks when Jesus gets into Simon's boat and convinces him to go back out to fish, even though they'd caught nothing all night long

b. But according to JOHN's Gospel, Jesus had already called Peter to follow him

i. In John 1:35-42, Peter's brother, Andrew, is introduced as one of John the Baptist's disciples

1. The day after Jesus was baptized, John tells us that Andrew and another man began to follow Jesus, and then Andrew went and got Peter to come and meet Jesus

ii. But John isn't clear on whether or not Peter followed Jesus full-time from that moment on

1. During Jesus' first season of ministry in Judea, John simply says that “his disciples” were with him at the wedding at Cana

a. Or “his disciples” were with him in Jerusalem when he overturned the tables of the moneychangers

iii. When we try to put the pieces together from the different Gospels, it seems as if Peter, at some point, went back to fishing with James and John

1. This helps us to understand why, even though the disciples weren't called until Luke 5, we see that Jesus already has a friendship with Peter in Luke 4

c. The second interesting fact is that Peter was married

i. We know from 1 Corinthians 9:5 that Peter was not the ONLY Apostle who was married, as Paul writes...

1. ⁵Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?
- ii. But it's VERY important that we note PETER's marriage
 1. If you know your church history, you'll know that the Roman Catholic church derives the authority of the Pope from the claim that all the Popes throughout history come from the direct apostolic line that started with Peter
 - a. In simple terms, Peter was THE head of the church in Rome, and his authority continues on even today with Pope Francis
- iii. However, one of the main doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church is that NONE of their leaders, from the Pope all the way down to the local priests, can be married
 1. Their reasoning is that, since Christ was not married, and since the priests are the ones on the church who are called to model Christ THE MOST to their parishioners, then they should not be married either
 - a. If that is the case, then how do we explain the fact that Jesus CHOSE Peter, a married man, to be one of the 12 Apostles?
 - i. And this married man would be the "head" of the church until Christ returns?
 - b. How do we explain the fact that, in all of Jesus' teachings to his disciples, we find ZERO commands to them saying, "After I'm gone, make sure none of the rest of you get married, because THAT is how the world will see me in you..."?
 - i. In these days when it is becoming increasingly popular for people to leave the evangelical church to become Catholics, we need to see
- iv. The reality is that these teachings are not only NOT grounded in the Scriptures, but the Bible actually is pretty blunt on how GOD thinks of these things
 1. In 1 Timothy 4:1-5, Paul writes
 - a. *¹Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, ²through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, ³who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. ⁴For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, ⁵for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.*
 2. I don't bring all this up to in order to bash our friends or family who might be in the Catholic Church
 - a. But, as always, we MUST go to the Scriptures for our answers to these kinds of questions
 - i. In these days when it is becoming increasingly popular for people to leave the evangelical church to become Catholics, we need to see

that one of their primary teachings is, according to Paul, the “teachings of demons”

- iii. So Jesus entered Simon’s house, where he found his mother-in-law sick with a high fever
 1. And Luke says that Jesus REBUKED the fever
 - a. Again, as we saw last week, Jesus’ authority is undeniable
 - i. Just as he rebukes the demons, Jesus also has the power to rebuke illnesses
 1. This was a stern word of command
 2. And the healing was instantaneous
 - a. Luke lets us know that IMMEDIATELY, Simon’s mother-in-law got up and began to serve them
 - ii. And afterwards, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Jesus
 1. And Luke says that Jesus laid hands on EVERY ONE OF THEM, and healed them
 - a. This was an incredible display of Jesus’ power
 - i. We don’t know how many people Jesus healed that evening, but Mark tells us that “the whole city” was gathered together at the door of Simon’s house
 - b. There is no doubt that the people were in awe that night of the things that they witnessed!
 - iv. This wasn’t the only time that Jesus conducted mass healings
 1. Matthew 4:24-25 tells us that great crowds from Syria and from Galilee and from the Decapolis followed him, and he healed all who were afflicted by “every disease” and “every affliction”
 2. Matthew 14:35 says that when Jesus was at a place called Gennesaret, the men of the place recognized him, and they brought to him all from the entire region who were sick, and they were made well
 3. Matthew 15:30 says that while Jesus was by the Sea of Galilee,
 - a. ³⁰great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute, and many others, and they put them at his feet, and he healed them,
 4. So Jesus would be no stranger in his ministry to these VERY public displays of the healing power of God
 - v. Well, this passage gives us the opportunity to ask some questions regarding the healing ministry of Jesus...
 1. HOW did Jesus heal people?
 2. WHY did Jesus heal people?
 3. What does all of this mean for us today?
3. So first, HOW did Jesus heal people?
 - a. Well, just looking at our passage for today, Jesus healed people by the word of his command
 - i. With a firm rebuke, the fever left Simon’s mother-in-law
 - ii. In Mark 2:11, Jesus healed the paralytic by simply saying, “I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.”
 - iii. In Mark 3:5, Jesus healed a man with a withered hand by saying to him, “Stretch out your hand.”
 - iv. In Mark 5:41, Jesus brought Jairus’ daughter back to life by saying to her “Talitha cumi,” which means “Little girl, I say to you, arise!”

- v. And of course in John 11:43, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead by crying out in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”
- b. We also see from our passage in Luke that Jesus healed people by physically touching them
 - i. In verse 40, it says that he “laid hands on all of them” and they were all healed
 - ii. In Matthew 8:3, Jesus healed a leper by stretching out his hand and touching him
 - iii. In Matthew 9:29, Jesus healed two blind men by touching their eyes
 - iv. In John 9:6-7, we get the strange story of Jesus spitting into the dirt, making mud with his spit, and then anointing the eyes of a blind man to give him sight
 - v. In Mark 7:33, we get the equally strange story of Jesus healing a man who was deaf and mute by putting his fingers in the mans ears, spitting on the ground, and then touching the man’s tongue
 - vi. And in Luke 22:51, after Peter cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest with his sword, Jesus touched the man’s ear, and it was healed
- c. But we also see in the Gospels that Jesus didn’t even have to be near someone in order to heal them
 - i. In John 4:50, an official from Capernaum came to Jesus in Cana to ask Jesus to come and heal his son who was at the point of death
 - 1. And from nearly 25 miles away, Jesus INSTANTLY healed the boy from his sickness
 - ii. In Luke 7:1-10, we get the familiar story of the Roman Centurion who had a servant who was again sick and at the point of death
 - 1. This Centurion didn’t want to trouble Jesus, but instead said to him, “Just say the word, and my servant will be healed”
 - a. And Jesus, marveling at the man’s faith, healed his servant from down the road
 - iii. And in Luke 17:11-19, ten lepers are standing at a distance from Jesus, crying out to him for mercy
 - 1. Jesus tells them to go and show themselves to the priests, and as they were going, they were all made clean from their leprosy
- d. Sometimes, Jesus even seemed to heal people without even apparently intending to
 - i. In Luke 8:43-48, the woman who had suffered from bleeding for 12 years was immediately healed when she touched the fringe of Jesus’ garment, causing Jesus to say “Someone touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me”
 - ii. And in Luke 6:17-19, in another of Jesus’ mass healing events, great crowds from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, all sought to touch him
 - 1. And Luke says that power simply came out from him, and they were ALL healed!
- e. So we see from all of these examples that Jesus’ healing ministry was far from boring, wasn’t it?
 - i. Healing people by a command, sticking his fingers in peoples’ ears, healing from long distances away... even healing without even intending to
 - 1. Jesus was absolutely unpredictable when it came to the various ways in which he healed those who were sick and afflicted
 - a. The Bible doesn’t say WHY he was so intentionally random and unpredictable in his methods
 - i. Maybe this was a way that he could display the unlimited power that his Father had given to him
 - ii. Maybe he knew our tendency to want to see things done in a “normal” and “orderly” way
 - 1. And this was his way of not conforming to our nice and tidy little boxes

- b. Whatever the reason was for his eccentric methods, though, this one truth is undeniable:
 - i. Jesus can heal WHOMEVER he wishes, WHENEVER he wants to, in WHATEVER way he desires
- 4. But that leads us to our second question... WHY did he heal people?
 - a. Clearly, Jesus didn't just heal a handful of people here and there
 - i. As we just heard, Jesus healed countless THOUSANDS of people in his short three-and-a-half year ministry
 - b. So WHY did he heal people?
 - i. Well one of the main reasons why he healed people was because of their FAITH in him
 - 1. When Jesus saw the faith of the paralytic, as well as the faith of his friends who lowered him down through the roof, he enabled the man to get up and walk home as if nothing had ever been wrong
 - 2. When the Roman centurion came to Jesus on behalf of his servant, Jesus healed the servant because he was amazed by the centurion's faith
 - 3. When the woman who had been bleeding for 12 years was finally healed through the power coming from Jesus, he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well"
 - a. There are MANY more instances throughout the Gospel that speak to this reality
 - i. Jesus healed people because of their faith in him
 - ii. But there are also many examples in the Gospels where Jesus healed people simply to display God's power
 - 1. The obvious examples of this are those whom he brought back to life, like Lazarus, and Jairus' daughter, and a widow's son in the town of Nain
 - a. Dead people don't have much faith, do they?
 - i. And yet Jesus brought these three healing with great power
 - 2. In John 5:2-9, when Jesus went to the Pool at Bethesda, and encountered the man who had been an invalid for 38 years, he asked him if he wanted to be healed
 - a. And the man just gave a bunch of excuses for why he couldn't get in the pool when the water was stirred
 - i. Yet, in spite of this, Jesus healed the man, and at once he took up his bed and walked away
 - 3. And in John 9, when Jesus healed the blind man with the mud and spit, his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"
 - a. And Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him."
 - 4. Jesus healed certain individuals because of their faith
 - a. But he also healed other individuals to display the power of his Father
 - iii. We also see that there were even instances when Jesus healed someone specifically to irritate the Scribes and Pharisees
 - 1. On the Sabbath, when Jesus went into a synagogue, he INTENTIONALLY called the man with the withered hand to come and stand in front of them, to show that it was GOOD to heal on the Sabbath
 - 2. This was the same for the woman in Luke 13, who was bound with a disabling spirit
 - a. Jesus also called her over to him, on the Sabbath, in a synagogue, and healed her in front of the ruler of the synagogue

3. And it was the same for the man with dropsy in Luke 14, when Jesus pointed out the man to the lawyers and the Pharisees, and asked them, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?"
 - a. Jesus certainly wanted to show mercy to these individuals by healing them of their ailments
 - i. But it is clear that he also wanted to use these healings to expose the legalism of the religious leaders of Israel
 - b. So Jesus healed some because of their faith
 - i. He healed others to show the power given to him by the Father
 - ii. And he healed others to expose the hypocrisy that had permeated throughout the Jewish faith
4. We see all of this at the individual level
 - a. But I would argue that there is something MUCH bigger going on in the healing ministry of Jesus
5. In Matthew 10, Jesus sends out the twelve apostles, and he commissions them to "heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, and cast out demons"
 - a. And as they go out and perform these signs and wonders, Jesus tells them in verse 7 to proclaim to all of Israel, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!"
 - i. My friends, THIS is why Jesus healed the countless numbers of people that came to him with their sicknesses and diseases
 1. The very Son of God had emptied himself of all of the glories of heaven, taking on the form of a servant, and being born in the likeness of man
 2. God the Son, the Word made flesh, came to this earth to bring the very Kingdom of God into our midst
 - b. Jesus drove this point home even further in Luke 10, when he commissioned seventy-two of his disciples to go ahead of him
 - i. He sent them out, two by two, into every town to prepare them for his coming
 1. And as he sent them, he said to them in verse 9, "Heal the sick in each town and say to them, 'The Kingdom of God has come near to you.'"
 - a. The Kingdom of Heaven is HERE
 - b. And the evidence will be the healing of the people
 - c. This was the message that John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness in Judea, as he cried out in Matthew 3:2, "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand!"
 - i. And now, as Jesus ministered before the people, the evidence of the arrival of God's Kingdom was undeniable
 1. Sick people were being healed left and right
 2. Lepers were being cleansed from their diseases
 3. Demons were being cast out
 4. Even the dead were raised
 - ii. And all of this was meant as signs for the people to see: the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand!
 1. It's interesting that this was the very thing Jesus had to remind John of when John was sitting in Herod's prison
 - a. When we're going through dark times, we often lose sight of the truth, don't we?
 - i. John was in prison for preaching the righteousness of God, and so he sends a couple of his disciples to ask Jesus, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?"

- b. And in Luke 7:21, Luke tells us that at very hour that they asked Jesus this question, he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight
 - i. And Jesus said to John's disciples, *"Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."*
 - ii. It's as if Jesus is saying to John, "Don't you remember what the message was that you were called to proclaim? The Kingdom of Heaven is HERE! And the evidence that it is here, and that I am EXACTLY who you thought I was, is that people are being healed all over Israel!"
- d. Jesus had come to bring the Kingdom
 - i. And he came with healing in his wings
- e. But this didn't stop with Jesus, did it?
 - i. In Acts, chapter 2, after the Holy Spirit fell upon the believers at Pentecost, and after there were added to their number about three THOUSAND souls, verses 42-43 say,
 - 1. *⁴²And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.*
 - a. We see this with the lame beggar in Acts 3, to whom Peter says, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!"
 - i. And the man went into the Temple, walking and leaping and praising God
 - b. In Acts 5:15 we read that the people brought the sick out into the streets, hoping that just Peter's shadow would fall on them, and they would be healed
 - c. And in verse 16 we read that people from all around Jerusalem brought those who were sick and afflicted, and they were ALL healed
 - d. In Acts 9:32-35, Peter healed a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years
 - e. And in verse 40, Peter raised the woman, Dorcas, back from the dead
 - 2. But this healing power wasn't just reserved for the original Apostles
 - a. In Acts 8, Philip, one of the first deacons of the early church, took the message of Christ and his Kingdom to the people of Samaria, and verse 7 says that MANY who were paralyzed or lame were healed
 - b. In Acts 14, we read about Paul and Barnabas in the city of Iconium, where Luke writes that the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers
 - i. And in verse 3, it says, "So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands."
 - c. A few verses later, as Paul and Barnabas are now in Lystra, Paul healed a man who had been crippled from birth, causing the people to begin to worship Paul as the god Hermes, and Barnabas as Zeus

- d. In Acts 20, we get the somewhat humorous story of Paul preaching such a long sermon, that a young man named Eutychus fell asleep and fell out of the window to his death
 - i. But Paul went down to him and took him up in his arms, and Eutychus came back to life!
- e. And Acts 19 tells us in verses 11-12 that God was doing such extraordinary miracles through Paul that *“even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.”*
- f. The healing power of God was still VERY MUCH at work in the early church!
 - i. Paul would even write to the church in Corinth in those early years that the Holy Spirit would give SOME OF THEM the gifts of healings and of the working of miracles
 - 1. And he said to them in chapter 12 of 1 Corinthians that God had given ALL of these gifts through the Spirit, in order that Christ’s church might be whole and complete
- g. The Kingdom of Heaven had arrived with the coming of Jesus Christ
 - i. And it was attested to by the many signs and wonders performed by him
- h. The Kingdom of Heaven began its advancement into the nations after the Day of Pentecost
 - i. And it was attested to by the many signs and wonders performed by the Apostles, by Philip, by Paul and Barnabas, and by many others
- i. Which brings us to the question I’m sure many of you are asking now in your heads...
 - i. Well, what about today then?
 - 1. Do these gifts of healing and miracles still exist in the church today?
 - a. When we see men like Benny Hinn and Kenneth Copeland and Bill Johnson and so many others claiming that countless thousands have been healed through their ministries, are we to believe them?
 - b. Are we to look at these supposed healings and miracles as the evidence that the Kingdom of Heaven is indeed still advancing upon the earth in the same way it was nearly two thousand years ago, through signs and wonders given to us by God?
 - i. Do we accept these teachers and their titles of “modern-day Apostles” simply based off the works they claim to perform?
 - 1. Well in regards to these, I would simply say listen to the rest of their message
 - a. For the vast majority of these preachers are also proclaiming the false message of the prosperity gospel
 - b. Promising health and wealth and prosperity, if you would just have enough faith in Jesus
 - 2. Friends, listen to the messages these men (and women) are proclaiming
 - a. And then ask yourself, “Would God REALLY anoint these people with his EXTRAORDINARY power, as they go around preaching a corrupted message about His Son? Would God REALLY give these men and women such INCREDIBLE gifts of the Holy Spirit, and yet bypass the likes of Charles Spurgeon or Billy Graham or the tens of thousands of faithful and humble proclaimers of the TRUTH of God’s Word?”
 - ii. Surely the answer is NO!

- c. Jesus warned his disciples in Matthew 24:24 that *“false christs and false prophets will arise and perform GREAT signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.”*
 - i. We must be on our guard, my friends
 - ii. We must test EVERYTHING by the Word of God
- j. So, does this mean that God no longer heals? That God no longer advances His Kingdom through signs and wonders?
 - i. I hope and pray that you would say “no” to those questions
 - 1. If God no longer heals, then why bother praying for those who we know are sick?
 - 2. If God no longer advances His Kingdom through the physical healing of lost sinners, then why bother praying that He would draw them to Himself through their healing?
 - a. Aren’t these the things that we pray for our friends and loved ones when they have cancer?
 - b. Aren’t these the things we pray for them when they have a stroke or a heart attack?
 - 3. If God no longer heals, then we might as well erase our prayer board in the Fellowship Hall for good
 - ii. Friends, God is still very much in the business of healing the sick
 - 1. We’ve understandably become calloused to this reality, as we’ve seen all the many BAD examples of the supposed “faith healers”
 - a. But we must be cautious against saying that God no longer moves as He did in the early church
 - i. Now I’ll be completely honest and say I personally believe that healing conferences and healing crusades are ALL a sham
 - 1. As its been said before, if God TRULY gave someone such a powerful ability to heal, then surely they’d be standing in front of a hospital, rather than trying to promote themselves to the masses at a conference!
 - ii. But I also believe that God IS moving on the frontiers of missionary work in ways that might make US a little uncomfortable
 - 1. We were watching a video the other day of a man who has been secretly working underground in North Korea for the past few decades
 - 2. Despite all of the attempts of Kim Jong Un to eradicate Christianity from his empire, the Kingdom is still advancing into the darkness
 - a. And this missionary said that one of the surprising ways that God is advancing His Kingdom in North Korea is through healings
 - b. Christians are proclaiming Christ to the lost, and as they are doing so, they are praying for the sick
 - i. And God is healing MANY
 - iii. So why don’t we LEGITIMATELY see these kinds of things in OUR churches HERE, today?
 - 1. I would argue that it is because we are a nation that is SATURATED with the Word of God
 - a. And by and large, we have chosen to ignore it
 - b. If we have chosen to ignore God’s written revelation of Himself to us, then why would we expect him to attest to our message with signs and wonders?

- i. Friends, the lost here in America do not need a church that is flaunting a bunch of supposed signs and wonders
 - 1. They need a church that looks to the commands of the Scriptures, and then walks in them!
 - 2. They need a church that reads about the Kingdom of God in the Bible, and then says “YES, I will give all that I have to purchase THAT kind of Kingdom”
 - 3. They need a church that proclaims with all her heart that Christ is the supreme treasure, and that he is worthy of ALL of our worship
 - 2. For here is the reality that we are faced with...
 - a. All of those whom Christ healed... eventually died
 - b. Even those he raised from the dead... they all eventually died again
 - c. All of those whom the Apostles, and Paul, and the other disciples healed... they all died (even the Apostles themselves died!)
 - d. And even those who are being healed on the frontiers of missionary work today, in places like North Korea... they’ll all eventually die, won’t they?
 - iv. Church the ONE healing that TRULY matters FOR ETERNITY is the healing of our souls
 - 1. THAT is the message we are to be consumed with
 - 2. THAT is the Gospel we have been entrusted with
 - a. Christ himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.
 - i. Is this your testimony?
 - ii. Have you died to sin, that you might find healing through the blood that Jesus shed upon the cross?
 - 1. THAT is the healing that we are ALL desperately in need of
 - 2. These earthly tents of ours will not last forever
 - a. God may heal you from one sickness
 - b. But eventually, your body will fail
 - i. So has your SOUL been healed?
- v. If so, then take heart brothers and sisters, for the Kingdom of Heaven, is yours!