

ENTERING THE HEALING WARD

Text: Matthew 9:1-13; Mark 2:1-17; Luke 5:17-32

Key Word: Healing

Key Thought: Healing Is Most Often a Process

A study of Church should be one of edification and especially if we are suffering at times when most are rejoicing like this time of year. It is so easy to become self-oriented or self-focused. We need to be careful not to live in a ME generation.

**** Mother:** Your hairdo looks like a mop.
Daughter: What's a mop?

Dad came home from work just before supper and his five-year old daughter met him on the sidewalk. She wasn't smiling so he asked her why.
"Is something wrong, honey? He asked."
"Yes, all day long I've been having trouble with YOUR wife." ******

Bob Phillips
"More Good Clean Jokes"
p. 34-37

Our text today (which is found in all of three Synoptic Gospels) puts life into perspective for the church. This could be called our Lord's Mission Statement. He made it clear to the Pharisees His reason for coming to earth.

*"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.
13. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."*

Matthew 9:12,13

When I began to ponder these words, I couldn't help but think of the parallel that takes place every single day in our local hospitals which we often consider our church as.

I. THE NEED FOR ADMITTANCE
II. THE NEED FOR EXAMINATION
III. THE NEED FOR TREATMENT

I. THE NEED FOR ADMITTANCE

All three gospels precede this text with a story of the healing of the man who had been a paralytic. His friends brought him on a mat and let him down through an opening of the roof (Mark 2; Luke 5). The Bible gives focus to the faith of this man's friends. I also believe that another important point needs to be addressed. Either this man or his friends or both had to admit that he was a paralytic. You may say, *"That's foolish - everyone could clearly see that he couldn't walk."* That's true! But if they never had admitted that he needed help, they never would have gone to the Great Physician.

Before any treatment can begin, we must enter either the **TRIAGE, ADMITTING WARD** or the **EMERGENCY WARD** of a hospital. The paper work is completed as a number of questions are answered. One thing that needs to be asked is what IS the problem(s). This becomes a statement of admittance which the patient signs. In the church we call it confession.

"Come, now again thy woes impart,
Tell all thy sorrows, all thy sin;
We cannot heal the throbbing heart,
Till we discern the wounds within."

George Crabbe
"The Hall of Justice"
Pt. II, I. 1

"It is an abuse to confess any kind of sin, whether mortal or venial, without a will to be delivered from it, since confession was instituted for no other end."

St. Francis de Sales
"Introduction to the Devout Life, XIX"

Confession IS good for the soul. It is also an important step for our physical body. Some people pass away without getting admitted to the hospital because they just don't want to admit that they are not well.

"Go and learn what this means: I desire mercy, not sacrifice."

Matthew 9:13

God was never interested in taking the life of an animal. What He wanted people to see was the seriousness of their sin. He had to make the penalty severe enough to capture the attention of the repentant heart. In order to receive help from God, we need to admit that we need help. Enter the Admittance Ward and allow the Holy Spirit to ask the important questions that will lead to a healthy life.

II. THE NEED FOR EXAMINATION

Even after filling out the papers, a patient is brought into a room where the doctor evaluates the written information on the admittance form. They then perform an examination. This can often require further tests (i.e., Blood or urine test; X-rays, cat scan etc.). If there is a suspected heart problem, a technician will be called upon to do an EKG. (Electrocardiogram). This gives a readout of the function of the patient's heart.

I don't know about you, but I have never liked school exams. I'm not the kind that jumps for joy when a teacher notified me that one was coming soon. I usually became tense until it was over. Even then, it took some time to relax.

****** **Girl:** *"Too bad you flunked the test. How far were you from the right answer?"*

Boy: *"About two seats!"*

****** A young college student had stayed up all night studying for his zoology test the next day. As he entered the classroom, he saw ten stands with ten birds on them with a sack over each bird and only their legs showing. He sat right on the front row because he wanted to do the best job possible. The professor announced that the test would be to look at each of the bird's legs and give the common name, habitat, genus, species, etc.

The student looked at each of the bird's legs. They all looked the same to him. He began to get upset. He had stayed up all night studying and now had to identify birds by their legs. The more he thought about it the angrier he got. Finally, he couldn't stand it any longer. He went up to the professor's desk and said, *"What a stupid test! How could anyone tell the difference of birds by looking at their legs?"*

With that the student threw his test on the professor's desk and walked to the door. The professor was surprised. The class was so big that he didn't know every student's name so as the young man reached the door the professor called, *"Mister, what's your name!"*

The enraged student pulled up his pants to his knees and said, *"You guess, Buddy! You guess!"*

The World's Greatest Collection of Clean Jokes
pp. 81-82

II. THE NEED FOR EXAMINATION (Contd.)

There are times in my life when I thought that God's examinations were foolish. I questioned the Lord and even got a little upset with Him. My attitude had to change in order to benefit from the Wisdom of God.

God used His examination period of the Paralytic to bring out the hardness of heart that was embedded into the Pharisees. **God's examination often brings about a revelation or illumination of a hidden area of our hearts.** Jesus was using the belief of His day to bring about an examination of the Parasitical hearts.

“The sick arises not from his bed, until his sins are forgiven.”

Rabbi Alexander

“No sick person is cured from sickness, until his sins are forgiven.”

Rabbi Chija ben Abba

When Jesus healed this paralytic, He was making a clear statement. **He made the point that by healing the man He also was able to forgive sins.** The teachers of the law accused Him of blasphemy. They failed to understand the test or reason for His examination.

Some people just never seem to do well on exams.

**** Student:** “I don't think I deserve a zero on this test!”

Teacher: “Neither do I, but it's the lowest mark I can give you.”

A student wrote the following on his Christian examination paper: *“Only God knows the answer to this question. Merry Christmas!”*

The professor returned the paper with the following notation: *“God gets an “A”; you get an “F”. Happy New Year!”* ******

The World's Greatest Collection of Clean Jokes
p. 86

III. THE NEED FOR TREATMENT

“It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick

... .

13. For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Matthew 9:12,13

The word used for “call” is “*kalein*”. It was a word that described “*the inviting of a guest to a house or to a meal.*” According to the Mishnah - “*He who undertakes to be trustworthy (i.e., a Pharisee) may not be the guest of one of the people of the land.*” There was a continued isolation between the “righteous” and the “unrighteous.” Jesus saw the righteous Pharisees as Self-righteous while the publicans were viewed as humble recipients of His grace.

“Jesus was saying, “I did not come to invite people who are self-satisfied that they are convinced they do not need anyone’s help; I came to invite people who are very conscious of their sin and separately aware of their need for a savior.”

William Barclay
“*The Gospel of Matthew Vol. 1*”
p. 334

It is interesting that Luke records that Matthew (Levi) held a great banquet in which not only Jesus but also many other tax collectors were invited. In other words, it was those who needed Jesus the most and were willing to come for treatment who were invited. We all know that doctors do NOT waste their time looking at those who are healthy. They devote their lives to serve the sick.

It is one thing to admit to a need for help. It is another thing to be examined to detect the exact problem. Yet these two important steps still require one more thing. **There needs to be some kind of treatment prescribed.** For some it may be a physical therapy. For others it can be a change in diet. For others doctors often prescribe medication. Others may need crutches, braces, canes or a wheel chair. All of these are often a temporary help until the patient’s health is restored.

Another important point is to have the right treatment prescribed. The gospel of Luke 8:40-48 tells of a woman who had an issue of blood (a bleeding disorder) for 12 years who had spent all the money she had on treatments. The problem was that she was still not healed. The treatment came about when she activated her faith toward Jesus. The moment she touched the hem of His garment, she was completely healed. This may not make sense to the natural mind, but God often uses unusual ways of treating the needs of people.

III. THE NEED FOR TREATMENT (Contd.)

We need to ask ourselves in what and in whom do we put our trust for the treatment of our constant sicknesses and troubles? It takes faith and trust to place ourselves under the care of a medical physician. It is the same way with Jesus. We must come to Him by faith and faith alone. Reach out and receive His mercy today. He is able to meet any need you may have.

C:\My Documents\WPWin(X9)\Sermons.2019\Healing\Matthew 9_1.13.wpd

Date: Dec 15/19

Place: FCA

Time:10:30 Am

Song: I Am the God That Healeth Thee - D

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