

Healing; His Message And The Methods Jesus Used

‘They went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord kept working with them and confirming the message by the attesting signs and miracles that closely accompanied it (that is the message). Amen’ (Mark 16:20).

The Lord confirms His Word with miracles, and if we want miracles, then logically we need the Word. If we preach the wrong message, or a watered down message, then we cannot expect God to confirm His Word. ‘So Paul and Barnabas stayed on there (at Iconium) for a long time, speaking freely, fearlessly and boldly in the Lord, Who continued to bear testimony to the Word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be performed by their hands’ (Acts 14:3).

The signs and wonders came because they were bearing witness to the Word of His grace; He confirmed His Word by the miracles. If we preach the wrong Word we cannot expect the attesting miracles. For many centuries, the church has not presented the fullness of the Gospel as it was presented in the New Testament. Part of the Gospel was cut off and for all those hundreds of years, the people heard only a small portion of the Gospel. The most important part – the miracles – has been left out. The word ‘Gospel’ means good news, and healing is part of that good news.

The standard used in the New Testament is ‘The Gospel of the Kingdom’. It is unscriptural to leave out the Kingdom and throughout the whole Bible there is a continual emphasis on the Kingdom of God. It is more than solely salvation. That is the first part – repentance – belief – baptism – receiving the Holy Spirit – and faith. Thank the Lord that is all true and they are stepping stones into the Kingdom, but that is not God’s ultimate purpose – there is more to the message.

In the Bible, a kingdom is the normal form of government. The full Gospel message is: God is going to take over all the governments on the earth. All of mankind’s problems began when Adam rejected the government of God. The only solution to human problems that will work, is for man to come back under the government of God. That is the good news message – that God is willing to take man back under His government – and the way that will happen, is when men willingly agree to allow God to govern their lives. People have such an attitude of rebellion, most people (including many Christians) don’t like the thought of God being King over their lives, and they don’t see that as good news at all. However, we cannot receive the full Gospel in the New Testament sense, unless we are prepared to accept and submit to the righteous government of God in our lives. This sermon is a ‘PR’ exercise to usher in the Kingdom of God ... proclamation, prophecy, proof, prayer, priority and prediction.

Proclamation and Prophecy: ‘For to us a Child is born; to us a Son is given; the government will be upon His shoulders ... Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end’ (Isaiah 9:6 & 7). As we see in these two verses, peace follows government. Peace is only possible under the government of the Lord. Those who are not governed by Jesus, do not know His peace. He has established a Kingdom, and once we are born-again and committed to God, we are part of His Kingdom. Matthew’s Gospel is the Gospel of the King and His Kingdom. John the Baptist said, “Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand’ (Matthew 3:2). ‘All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned, every one, to his own way, and the Lord (God the Father) has made to light upon Him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all’ (Isaiah 53:6). Iniquity is rebellion – or going our own way. Our way is not God’s way. Repentance is not an emotion, it is a decision, and there is no way

into the Kingdom of God without repentance. Jesus started His ministry with exactly the same words as John the Baptist used when he ushered in Jesus' ministry. (Matthew 3:2; 4:17). That is THE message of the Kingdom, and no one has any right to truncate, pervert or diminish the full Gospel.

Proof: 'Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, healing every disease and every infirmity among the people. The report of Him spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to Him all who were sick, those afflicted with various diseases and torments, those under the power of demons, and epileptics, and paralysed people, and He healed them all' (Matthew 4:23 & 24). Jesus healed all kinds of afflictions: Mental, emotional, physical and spiritual. That was the proof the Kingdom had come to earth. Sin and sickness cannot exist in the Kingdom of God. When the Kingdom of God is truly established, sin and sickness are banished.

We were promised in the Old Testament: 'To you who revere and worshipfully fear My name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings ...' (Malachi 4:2). Righteousness and healing are the opposites of sin and sickness. Just as the sun is the only source of light in our universe, so is the Son the only source of light in our spiritual universe. Light produces two things; it banishes darkness and brings righteousness and healing. Sin and sickness are the works of darkness. Matthew 12:24 to 28 shows us the victory of the Kingdom of Light over the kingdom of darkness. The attesting signs that accompany the Gospel is the proof of the Kingdom come to earth, and where there is no proof, there really is not any Kingdom, there is just theology.

Prayer and Priority: The Lord's prayer (Matthew 6:9 to 13), says 'Your Kingdom come – Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven'. That is the first priority – His Kingdom coming to earth. The purpose of the Gospel is not only to get us to heaven, it is to bring heaven to earth. God's will, will one day be done on earth, to the same extent as it is done in heaven. All our personal desires have to take second place to the coming of the Kingdom to earth. Most people put their own wants and needs before the coming of the Kingdom of God. That is why there are so few miracles taking place on earth today. If we want miracles, we need to put the Kingdom of God first. 'Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you' (Matthew 6:33). Outside of the Kingdom of God, there is no righteousness and no hope for humanity. Everyone who is not under the Kingship of Jesus is unrighteous and they have no peace or joy.

When the Jewish people rejected Jesus as their King, they temporarily forfeited their Kingdom. If we want to be included in the Kingdom, we need to start with the King – no King – no Kingdom. It was a Gentile ruler (Pontius Pilate) who confronted Israel with their King. "Behold your King!" But they shouted, "Crucify Him!" "Shall I crucify your King?" But the chief priests answered, "We have no King but Caesar" (John 19:14 & 15).

Prediction: Jesus predicted they would reject Him, and He warned the Jews that the Kingdom of God would be taken from them and given to people who would produce fruit for the Kingdom (Matthew 21:42 & 43). The Kingdom of God produces fruit and what we Christians produce, is called fruit. The new holy nation is the church (1 Peter 2:9). The church will never replace the Jews, but Jews and the church walk side by side as Bible prophecies are fulfilled. We are the holy nation on one condition; that we bring forth the fruit.

Before His resurrection, Jesus said not to go to the Gentiles but only to the lost sheep of Israel (Matthew 10:5 to 7); after His resurrection, He said go to all the world (Matthew

28:19; Mark 16:15). Israel had the first offer of the Kingdom. The Kingdom that is offered is invisible, internal and spiritual. Jesus said, "The Kingdom of God does not come with visible display (invisible) ... the Kingdom of God is within you (internal)" (Luke 17:20 & 21). It will one day be visible, but for now it is invisible, internal and spiritual. 'The Kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17). Peace is a result of righteousness, then comes joy. We can't pursue joy and peace, they come as a result of righteousness. The joy is in the Holy Spirit, and only where the Holy Spirit operates, can peace and joy be possible. It is a spiritual reality.

We can have divine health and be completely well, if follow the correct life-style. When we fully establish the Kingdom in our lives, the result is no sickness. 'For the Lord is our Judge; the Lord is our Law-giver; the Lord is our King; He will save us. No inhabitant of Zion will say, "I am sick." The people who dwell there will be forgiven their iniquity' (Isaiah 33:22 & 24). If we allow the Lord to be our Judge, then we will not do carnal things nor speak carnal words. Whatever we do and say, we must do it to the glory of God (1 Peter 4:11), and in the name of the Lord (Colossians 3:17). We are not Biblically free to do anything that does not glorify God. If we apply that principle to our lives, then we are making Jesus our Judge.

If we make the Lord our Law-giver, the Lord will set our life-style. This is not legalism because reality tells us our life-style is built around four things; diet, exercise, rest and common sense. We cannot expect to be healthy if we ignore any of those four basic areas. To be as healthy as we can be, we need to shun unhealthy food and not eat too much food, otherwise we could become overweight, and we know obesity can sometimes cause chronic illnesses. If we consistently eat too much, or the wrong foods, we cannot expect divine healing. We need a certain amount of exercise to be healthy. Rest is as important as diet and exercise. We can do too much work and ultimately, if we don't rest, we achieve less because we can become over-tired and even burn out. We need to exercise common sense and wisdom. If we stay in the sun too long, we could get skin cancer. If we don't get skin cancer, we could end up with skin that looks like leather. Following a sensible diet, exercising regularly and having enough rest are all plain common sense. To fulfil the ministry God has for us, we need strong healthy bodies, regardless of our age. We can pray every day, "Lord, help me to eat wisely." To make the Lord our law-giver, we need to have faith to allow Him to arrange our diet, time to exercise, time to rest and we need His wisdom to show us common sense. To allow God to organise our life-style, some of us need to radically change our lives and our attitudes. To receive divine health, we need to respect our bodies.

If the Lord is our King, that means we have surrendered our will to Him, and will do whatever He tells us to do, even when we don't like it. Look at how Jesus surrendered His will to God the Father, even though He didn't want to go to the cross (Luke 22:42). Once we have surrendered our will to Him, we will live where He wants us to live; attend the church He chooses for us; work in the employment He wants us to work in; marry the spouse He chooses for us; have children if He allows us to; wear the clothes He provides for us; eat the foods He knows is healthy for us; when He says "Go" we go; when He says "Stop" we stop; when He says "Rest" we rest. God's will is done in heaven to the letter, and to be in the Kingdom, we too have to be completely obedient to Him, deny ourselves and do His will, whatever the cost (Luke 9:23; Matthew 10:37).

No one puts a new patch over an old garment (Luke 5:36). Many people don't want to accept a whole new life-style, but want to 'patch up' the old. We can't expect to spend time seeking God for healing, for example, if we spend more time in front of TV watching

unedifying programs, than we spend in the presence of God. There is nothing wrong with some TV programs, but we can't pray effectively when a 'Western' is shooting it up in the background! We need to change the way we spend our time, if we are going to make Jesus our King. Once we change our life-style to a righteous and holy one, spend hours fellowshiping with God, make Him our Judge, Law-giver and King, walk in obedience, then we can expect divine health as He promised. Just like the early church, we too can have the full benefits of the Kingdom – as long as we meet His conditions.

The Method Jesus used for healing is quite different than most people picture in their minds. The picture we have of Jesus' earthly ministry of healing is not as blatant as it seems. Although He did sometimes go out of His way to heal individuals like in the story about the Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21 to 28). Jesus went to Tyre then back to Galilee. In those days, it would have taken about a week, so Jesus took almost a week to heal one non-Jewish little girl, because her mother was so desperate. However, He usually chose a place, gathered people together and healed all who came to Him. Sometimes, He required people to follow Him several days before He healed them. After a few days of following Him through all kinds of weather, often without food or water, the only people left were believers. 'Jesus went away from there (the synagogue), and many people accompanied Him, and He healed all of them' (Matthew 12:15). Sometimes, thousands of people followed Him. 'He went up into the hills and sat there, and a great multitude came to Him ... and He healed them ... "They have been with Me now for three days and they have nothing to eat" ... there were four thousand men plus women and children' (Matthew 15:29 to 39). That is a totally different level of commitment. There were no hospitals, vaccines or advanced medical care in those days; they only had faith in the Lord; it was either Jesus or nothing.

There are times when we too, like those early believers, have to follow Jesus through spiritual storms and go without food (fasting) before we are healed. But if we persevere, don't doubt, don't listen to negative people who will tell you that Jesus doesn't heal everyone, keep focussed on the Lord, meet all of His conditions, including repentance and forgiving others, keep on praising Him for the healing before you ever see any results, then there is no reason why you would not be healed. Healing is part of the full Gospel of the Kingdom message that Jesus preached. He healed everyone who came to Him. He never once refused to give the blessing of healing to anyone who asked. What stops healing from flowing through our body, is sin, unbelief, doubt, unforgiveness, an unrepentant heart etc. Once we meet all of His conditions, we can enjoy healing and divine health, and like the apostles, we can share the full Gospel of the Kingdom with others.

Amen and God bless you.

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