

Who Do You Say That I Am?

Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expository
Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew**

73- Jesus Demonstrates His Absolute

Authority- Part 11

Jesus Has Authority to Forgive Sin- Part 1

Church October 08, 2023

Matthew 9:1-8

- 1 Getting into a boat, Jesus crossed over the sea and came to His own city.**
- 2 And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven."**
- 3 And some of the scribes said to themselves, "This fellow blasphemes."**
- 4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?"**
- 5 "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, and walk'?"**
- 6 "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — then He said to the paralytic, "Get up, pick up your bed and go home."**
- 7 And he got up and went home.**
- 8 But when the crowds saw this, they were awestruck, and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.**

*To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;
and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

In 1765- Jonathan Edwards, who is perhaps America's greatest Theologian, finished a Book that took him 15 years to write. The Book was entitled, "*The End for Which God created the World*". And this Book teaches that the primary Reason God created the Universe was to display the Greatness of the Glory of His Grace!

You see, 258 years ago, MOST of the people of the visible Church on earth at that Time- taught and believed that the Main Reason God created the Universe- was for their own eternal Happiness. So, you can see that almost three Centuries ago- a "*Man-centered*" Theology had already found footing inside the Church of Jesus and had already infected many with the Disease of "*Self-importance*".

But Edwards cried out against that Wickedness by teaching a “*God-centered*” Theology: that God receiving ALL the Glory was His primary Intent as to *why* He created the World! So, that is why God made the Earth. And that is also why God made Man. And it also explains why God allows for Sin and Suffering to exist. Because nothing in all the Universe reveals or shows or manifests or displays the Glory of God- MORE- than when wicked Sinners are so radically transformed- by what God alone does for them (in all three Persons of the Trinity)- that they find the fullness of their own Joy in God alone being glorified! That is the one single Decree of God- that He made BEFORE He made anything else! God desires to be glorified! And that is proper and correct- because of Who God is- absolutely glorious! And so, EVERYTHING that God says or does- is to the one End: that God alone is glorified!

But in order for God alone to be glorified the MOST and the BEST- required that He make Man in His Image and Likeness; and who He would allow to live on the earth; and who God would allow to fall into Sin; and who would be redeemed by the sovereign Act of all three Persons of the Trinity- so that this redeemed Man- would magnify the Greatness of the Glory of God’s Grace- throughout all Eternity!

So, that is why Jesus came to this earth. To save Sinners. So, that those saved Sinners- would be transformed- to the End- that they would rejoice and celebrate God’s glorious Grace throughout all Eternity! And so, that is why Jesus is manifesting the various Divine Attributes that we have been examining since the last Day of June.

So, this is the eleventh Sermon on the Issue of Jesus proving to the World that He was fully and truly God Almighty in human Flesh. And I want to remind you how the Apostle Matthew went about to prove to his Jewish readers- Who Jesus was- so they would believe and be saved.

So, all through this Gospel Record- Matthew is displaying Jesus as:

- The long-awaited Messiah
- Immanuel (God with us)
- The 2nd Moses
- The Messenger of the New Covenant (**Malachi 3:1**)

So, in Chapters 1-4 Matthew gave us the Divine “Introduction” to this Man named, “Jesus”. And then in Chapters 5-7- Matthew gave us the first of five major Sections of Teaching from the Lips of the only sinless Man who ever lived- where Jesus linked the “**Righteousness that surpasses the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees**” (**Matthew 5:20**)- to the *infinitely* superior New Covenant that He alone was bringing upon the world through His Life; Death; and Resurrection.

And then immediately after Jesus finished preaching the only perfect Sermon that has ever been preached- Matthew is now determined to prove to his fellow-Jews that Jesus is:

Fully and truly God and fully and truly Man in the same Body; at the same time- without Conflict or Contradiction

... and Matthew will do that- by proving that Jesus had “*Absolute Authority*”; “*Total Authority*”; “*Complete Authority*”; “*Divine Authority*” over every single element of human Life on this Sin-cursed Earth-including Death itself!

So, over these last Ten Sermons- we have seen that Jesus had

- Absolute Authority over Leprosy (8:2-4)
- Absolute Authority over Paralysis (8:5-13)
- Absolute Authority over Infection (8:14&15)
- Absolute Authority over Sickness and Demons (8:16&17)
- Absolute Authority over Nature (8:23-27)
- Absolute Authority over many Demons (8:28-34)

... and now we will go into Chapter 9- where this Apostle will clearly reveal to us that Jesus had:

- Absolute Authority over Sin and Forgiveness (9:2-8)
- Absolute Authority over Paralysis (9:6&7)
- Absolute Authority Conversion and Salvation (9:9-13)

Then in verses 14-17- Jesus will teach about the correct Way to Fast under the New Covenant as opposed to how people fasted under the Old.

In verses 18-26 Matthew gives us the true Account of how Jesus has Absolute Authority over both Hemorrhages as well as Death itself. And, finally, in verses 27-38 Matthew gives us yet another inspired Account of Jesus organically healing two blind men; as well as completely and totally healing what Matthew called, “**every kind of disease and every kind of sickness**” (v. 35); as well as cast out demons.

And we will see that even though the Jewish religious Leaders NEVER disbelieved in Jesus’ Miracles and Healings and Signs and Wonders- those supernatural Gifts did NOT convert their evil hearts. So, while those wicked men never doubted Jesus’ Power to heal and to cast out demons and to control Nature and Death- they attributed His Ability to do those things as coming from satan- which was Blasphemy- and which doomed them for all Eternity!

Now all through the Centuries- there have been many Sermons and Teachings and Books written about just what the so-called, “*Unpardonable Sin*” is. In **Matthew 12:30-32**- the Apostle quotes Jesus as saying,

30 "He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters.

31 "Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven.

32 Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

Now there is a lot here- but I want to simply mention a few things before I get to the meat of the Issue. Right out of the box please notice that Jesus says there are ONLY two “Ages” of Man. There is “*THIS Age*” and then there is, the “*Age to Come*”. So, as you seek to understand Time- always keep this in mind. There are ONLY two “Ages”:

1. What has been; what is now; and what will be going on until Jesus returns (*This Age*)
2. What will go on in what is called, “*Eternity Future*” (*the Age to Come*)

So, the ENTIRETY of Time when men have walked the Earth is called, “*This Age*”. So, back when Adam was made it was “*This Age*” and today in 2023- it is still “*This Age*”. And that means we are in the very SAME “*Age*” as was Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, as well as Jesus and the Apostles. All human Life has existed in a Time called, “*This Age*”. The other “*Age*” will NOT come into being until AFTER Jesus comes back; and there is a new Earth and a new Heaven. And, in the Bible, that Time is referred to as, the “*Age to Come*”.

Now, within the part of Time called, “*This Age*” there is a biblical Distinction called, the “*Last Days*” (**Isaiah 2:2; Jeremiah 23:20; Ezekiel 38:16; Hosea 3:5; Micah 4:1; The Acts 2:17; 2Timothy 3:1; Hebrews 1:2; James 5:3; 2Peter 3:3**); or the “*Last Time*” (**Daniel 11:29; 1Peter 1:5; and Jude 18**). And that Distinction is referring to the Time in between Jesus’ *first* and *second* Advent- or what we sometimes call, the “*Church Age*”.

But Jesus teaches a profound Truth in **Matthew 12:30-32**- that is *summarized* when Jesus said this in verse 32:

Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

The Apostle John put it this Way in **1John 5:16**:

If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this.

Now this is the Issue of what is termed as the “*unpardonable Sin*” or a “*Sin leading to Death*”. And there is a lot of Confusion about it because Jesus said..

... any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

Now this *seems* to suggest that there is a Distinction between the three Persons of the Triune Godhead. Jesus said Blasphemy against both God the Father and God the Son CAN and WILL be forgiven. But then He also said Blasphemy against God the Holy Spirit CANNOT and WILL NOT EVER be forgiven. And based on this section of inspired; inerrant; and infallible Truth- I want to ask several Questions:

1. Is God the Holy Spirit somehow MORE Holy; or MORE sacred; or MORE Important than either God the Father or God the Son?
2. If so, why and how?

In other words, *why* does it seem that Jesus is teaching that “*speaking against*” the third Person of the Trinity is an infinitely WORSE Sin than “*speaking against*” God the Father or Jesus?

Now the term, “*Blasphemy*” has become a very serious and frightening word to many people within the modern Church- precisely because of what Jesus seems to be teaching here. But the Definition of “*Blasphemy*” in a secular Dictionary is:

Impious Utterance or Action concerning God or other sacred Things; An Act of Cursing or Reviling God.¹

¹ Dictionary.com

... which means doing ANYTHING that has ANYTHING to do with God- in an *unserious* Manner.

But we also know that, for the Old Testament Jew- simply uttering the “*Tetragrammaton*” (God’s Covenant Name- **YHWH**) in the *original* Manner instead of using a substitute Pronunciation such as, “*Adonai*” was also considered to be “Blasphemy” because in **Exodus 20:7**- Almighty God spoke to Moses and said,

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

So, taking the common Definition of “*Blasphemy*” into account- causes us to realize that EVERY human on earth is guilty of this Sin. Because speaking or even thinking about God in an “*unserious*” Manner is *exactly* what ALL lost people do. Being “*unserious*”; or being “*unconcerned*”; or being “*frivolous*” about God and the “Things of the Spirit of God” (**1Corinthians 2:14**) is the classic Definition of what it means to be “Lost”. Yet Jesus seems to say if we ever do this- we CANNOT EVER be forgiven!

This is a perfect Example of why we simply CANNOT read the Bible in a 21st Century; American; Western Mentality. It is almost *guaranteed* that we will either “add” or “take away from” what Jesus was saying here; or we will completely miss the Point. And that is *exactly* what has happened to this Truth. And that is why we MUST try very hard to “get into” the Mind and the Heart of the biblical writer and find out what he meant when he wrote something.

Our first Mistake in dealing with this Issue is that we are trying to find which particular Sin; or Thought; or Action qualifies as being “Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit”. But what we should do- is to take Jesus’ Statement itself as the Answer.

Jesus did NOT begin the Passage in **Matthew 12** with this Statement about Blasphemy in verses 31&32. He began that Passage with the Statement in verse 30 about how vital it was for the 1st Century Jew to NOT reject WHO Jesus is:

He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters.

... and then He began verse 31 with the word, “THEREFORE”- which means: “*Since what I just told you is true- now here is the sum of the Matter.*” And AFTER

He said, “**Therefore**”- Jesus began to teach about not being forgiven for “Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit”.

We have to realize that what God is doing here through Jesus- is bringing a decisive End to the Old Covenant. And through His Life; Death; and Resurrection- Jesus is now the FOCUS of EVERYONE who loves God.

In other words, now that Jesus has Come- the ONLY Way that ANYBODY can be forgiven of ANY Sin- is through Him! Now that Jesus has Come- there is no longer any Hope for Salvation or Forgiveness for the Jew (or anyone else) through the Way that God gave to Moses. From this Moment until He comes back in Glory- if a person does not come to Jesus- they will die in their Sins! And that is true- even if they seek to be faithful to what God sovereignly gave to His servant, Moses!

Now, in His Mercy- Jesus dialogued with several of the Jewish Leaders. But with many- He simply condemned them. Why? The Reason that Jesus did NOT even attempt to rescue most of the Jewish religious Leaders; and the Reason He NEVER said anything Good about them- is because- almost to man- they had already assigned Jesus’ Ability to perform Miracles; Signs and Wonders; Heal the Sick; raise the Dead; and cast out Devils- to satan!

These religious Frauds *blasphemed* the Holy Spirit Who, for the first Time in human History, was residing or dwelling *continuously* in Jesus- *empowering* Him to do such astounding Things! We have to remember that God the Holy Spirit didn’t dwell continuously in ANYBODY before Jesus. He came on certain people- but then He departed. He fell but then He lifted. God the Holy Spirit did NOT stay or reside or dwell or abide continually in ANYONE until John the Baptist said this in **John 1: 33**:

I did not recognize Him [Jesus], but He who sent me to baptize in water [God the Father] said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'

The ongoing *abiding* of the third Person of the Trinity *inside* the Believer- is strictly a New Covenant Reality. Not a single Old Covenant Believer was blessed with experiencing that Marvel.

And so, by *rejecting* Jesus- those Hypocrites were cutting themselves off from the ONLY Way that ANYONE can be forgiven and saved- Faith in Jesus!

So, the “*unpardonable Sin*” is NOT a particular Act or Thought or Word. The “*unpardonable Sin*” is the Sin that people do NOT take to Jesus! It is *whatever* Sin that people try to overcome or be forgiven by any number of different Ways- *beside* Jesus! And by trying to find Forgiveness and Salvation in anyone or

anything else beside Jesus- testifies that that individual does NOT believe that Jesus is the ONLY Way to God! And that Act of Unbelief constitutes the “*unpardonable Sin*”.

The Jewish religious Leaders of Jesus’ Day were secure in doing and trusting in their own warped Interpretation of what God gave to Moses. And that seemed to work fairly well- until Jesus came on the scene. What the Scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees and Essenes and Zealots believed and taught attracted many Followers- until the *fulfillment* of what God gave to Moses occurred. And at that moment- what God gave to Moses could NO LONGER forgive a single Sin or save a single Soul. Once Jesus came- what God gave to Moses about Forgiveness and Salvation was as ineffectual and useless as what all of the pagan religions of the World teach.

Now it is true that God sovereignly gave Moses what he faithfully wrote down in the first five Books of the Bible. And for Centuries- that was ALL the Jew had- as far as it pertained to both Forgiveness of Sin and Salvation. So, during that Time- disbelieving what God gave to Moses and/or rebelling against what is in those five Books- brought Damnation to the Soul.

But what many Jews then as well as now choose to forget- is that *within* that *first* Covenant itself- God Himself promised that He was going to bring about an infinitely BETTER Covenant; that was based on infinitely BETTER Promises; brought about through an infinitely BETTER Sacrifice; offered by an infinitely BETTER High Priest. And when God did that through Jesus- the writer of **Hebrews** infallibly wrote this:

When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear. (Hebrews 8:13)

What God gave to Moses is what identified our Sin; our Depravity; and our Lostness. Reading the Law of God reveals our Sin. And the Law of God was brutally Frank and agonizingly Clear that- in and of ourselves- we CANNOT achieve Forgiveness for our Sins. So, as hard as we might try- we will ALWAYS fail in keeping God’s Law- perfectly-which ONLY serves to damn us even more! So, why did God give Moses the Law in the first place- if nobody can be forgiven by trying to obey it? The Apostle Paul gave us the Answer in **Galatians 3:24&25**:

Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

So, our greatest Problem is our Sin. And our greatest Need is to be forgiven for our Sins. So, whoever the “*Messiah*” is to the Jews and whoever the “Christ” is to the Gentiles- He MUST be able to forgive our Sin and save our Souls- or we don’t have anything Better than what God gave to Moses! If all the New Testament is- is simply a different set of Rules and Ordinances and Commandments and Requirements- we have to obey- in order to gain the Favor and the Forgiveness and the Salvation of God- then we are NO better off than the Old Testament Jew. In fact, we would be much *worse* off!

We need to remember that the Old Testament is filled with Accounts of physical healing; of astounding Signs and Wonders; and of breathtaking Miracles. Old Testament Prophets were given that Ability. But NOBODY but God Himself can forgive Sin and save Souls!

So, the Issue here as we begin Chapter 9- is that Matthew wants his Jewish readers (and us) to know that Jesus can not only heal our sick Bodies (which is great); He can not only command the Sea and the Wind; He can not only cast out demons- but what is infinitely BETTER- is that Jesus can forgive our Sins and save our wretched Souls! So, that is the Issue here at the beginning of Chapter 9- Matthew is *proving* that Jesus has the Authority to forgive Sin and save lost Souls!

So, let’s begin this Examination by looking at verse 1:

Getting into a boat, Jesus crossed over the sea and came to His own city.

Now as I taught last Time- this Statement by the Apostle is literal. And in the last seven verses of Chapter 8- we discovered that Jesus had gotten into a boat- perhaps a much larger boat than the normal fishing boats used by the followers of Jesus. And Jesus went from the eastern Shore of the Sea of Galilee to the western Shore to the “country of the Gadarenes”.

Now as I told you last Time- there are some real Problems with Matthew’s Account of that Trip. And I was faithful to go over them at length with you. You see, I do NOT view a careful Examination of the Word of God to be anything other than Helpful. God does NOT want; and He has NEVER asked for “*blind Faith*” from us. Instead, God desires that we “KNOW”; that we become “PERSUADED”; that we carefully examine every verse- so that we come to a logical and reasoned Belief in what the Bible says.

So, that’s what I did, last Time. And since I simply CANNOT reconcile all of the details that Matthew gave us- does NOT in any way detract from the Truthfulness of the Bible. All it reveals is how shallow I am. I’m certain there is a very simple and logical Explanation for the Problems I listed for you. I’m just not smart enough to find them.

But as we begin the 9th Chapter- those Problems seem far away as now, in verse 1, we see that Jesus has now gotten into a boat- maybe the SAME boat- and has now traveled from the western Shore back to the eastern Shore.

Now Matthew gave us an interesting phrase at the End of verse 1. He infallibly wrote that Jesus went back across the Sea and “**came to His own City**”- without naming it.

Now 2,000 years ago- everybody knew what City that was. But as Time has gone by- it is *possible* that we may lose some of that Information and be confused about which City Matthew was referring to. I mean, after all, Jesus was born in Bethlehem and was raised in Nazareth. Yet neither of those two Cities qualifies as Jesus’ “**own City**”.

The most *logical* Choice would be Capernaum- as it sits on the eastern Shore of the Galilee and was the very Center of Jesus’ earthly Ministry there. That City saw amazing Miracles on an ongoing basis during the Time Jesus walked the earth. And along with those astounding Miracles- the people of Capernaum heard perfect Teaching and Preaching from the Lips of the incarnate God.

Capernaum was founded around 150BC and by the Time Jesus began His Ministry there- it held around 1500 people. So, it was a very *small* “City” at best; and would probably be more *accurately* described as a “Town” or even a “Village”. In **Matthew 4:13** we read:

and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali.

... but *why*?

Why did Jesus leave His “Hometown” and “**settle in Capernaum**”? Was He attracted to the water? Did Jesus like fish and fishermen more than He liked carpentry Work? No. Matthew tells us in the next three verses:

14 This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet:

15 "THE LAND OF ZEBULUN AND THE LAND OF NAPHTALI, BY THE WAY OF THE SEA, BEYOND THE JORDAN, GALILEE OF THE GENTILES—

16 "THE PEOPLE WHO WERE SITTING IN DARKNESS SAW A GREAT LIGHT, AND THOSE WHO WERE SITTING IN THE LAND AND SHADOW OF DEATH, UPON THEM A LIGHT DAWNED." (Isaiah 9:1&2)

... and this sound so wonderful and glorious!

The incarnate God has chosen that region to begin His earthly Ministry- in order to fulfill a 600 year- old Prophecy. And so, the people of Capernaum would

be the people who would hear and see MORE about Jesus than any other group during His 3-1/2 year Ministry! So, this is great, right? Well, maybe not. Because in verse 17- the former tax-Collector wrote:

From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

But WHY did Jesus have to preach for the people of Capernaum to repent? Because they were NOT already saved! They did NOT already believe! And their ethnic Jewishness; and their ability to trace their Genealogy back to Father Abraham had NO positive effect on their Salvation!

Okay, so, Jesus preached Repentance; and then they all repented; and they were all saved; and everything was great then, right? Well, not really. Because in **Matthew 11:23&24**- Matthew was faithful to tell his Jewish audience (and us) that once Jesus had completed His Ministry in Capernaum- and made His Way down to Jerusalem to die- He did NOT bless that City. Instead, our Lord placed a "Divine Curse" on it:

23 And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day.

24 Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you."

And by saying this- Jesus was illustrating the frightening Reality that *rejecting* Him; *refusing* to love and adore Him; *rebellious* against trusting in Him- was *worse*- MUCH WORSE- than engaging in sexual Immorality! In fact, rejecting Jesus is THE single WORST Sin that anyone could commit!

Let me say this another Way. The Judgment that awaits those who reject Jesus- will be HARSHER; it will be infinitely WORSE- than raining Fire and Brimstone down on a Region that had given themselves completely over to sexual Perversity!

Now Jesus was NOT condoning sexual Immorality by saying this. No! But He absolutely WAS teaching that *rejecting* Him- pushing away the ONLY Way to receive Forgiveness and Salvation by *refusing* to *embrace* Jesus; and bring that Sin to Him for Forgiveness- was then- and still is today- the "*unpardonable Sin!*"

Friends, there are a lot of Old Testament Prophecies that Jesus fulfilled in many Good and Wonderful Ways. But there are also some Old Testament Prophecies that Jesus fulfilled in a Way of Judgment- even *cataclysmic* Judgment. And we will see more about that- when we get to Chapters 23 & 24.

Okay, so, Matthew tells us that Jesus got into a boat and went from the “country of the Gadarenes” back to Capernaum. Now look what happened next:

And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven."

Now God led me to build this Church and serve as its first Pastor after I had already left the “Pentecostal”; “Charismatic”; or “Full-Gospel” Movement that I had been a part of for over 30 years. And I have been very open about my “Journey” with all of you. I was never in the “*weird Wing*” of that Movement- so you could classify me as being basically in the “*Continuationist Camp*”².

But when I was a part of that “Movement”- this 2nd verse in **Matthew 9** was used a “*proof-text*” verse to justify their Doctrine of “*physical Healing.*” That Doctrine says that it is ALWAYS God’s Will to heal the sick bodies of His people. And the ONLY Reason Healing does not occur is because of one of these Problems:

- Not enough Faith in the sick person
- “*Unconfessed Sin*” in the Life of the sick person
- “*Generational Curses*” in the Life of the sick person
- “*Unforgiveness*” in the Life of the sick person

... which is almost Impossible for anyone to know for certain or validate.

The Reality that people in those religious Camps never seem to want to acknowledge is- that the *overwhelming* Majority of sick people that they pray for- are NOT healed. And yet *some* of them are saved! So, they had enough Faith to be saved but not enough Faith to be healed? And precisely how much Faith is required to be healed? 10%; 30%; 83.4%? And exactly how are we supposed to measure that?

Also, for a person to be required to have to go back and uncover all of the Sins of their Ancestors (*Generational Curses*)- before they can be healed today- is ridiculous- primarily because, in most cases- it isn’t even possible to know all that our forefathers did.

The Truth is that EVERYONE on earth has “*unconfessed Sin*” in their Lives- even those who are healed- primarily because we don’t even remember what we did many years ago. However, saved people don’t have any “*unforgiven Sin*” in

² “*Continuationism*” is the Belief that the “spiritual Gifts” listed in **1Corinthians 12&14** are ongoing to this Day and will be active until Jesus comes back. “*Cessationism*” is the Belief that the Gifts that God gave to His Church to help “establish” the Church on the earth did their job and are no longer needed. The Church of Jesus was “established” back in the 1st Century and will never be “established” again. What is needed now are those Gifts that will help *propagate* and *expand* Chrit’s Church throughout the earth.

their Lives. Which is *why* we celebrate the Fact that Jesus forgave ALL of our Sins- even the ones we forgot about!

The Truth, my friends, is that many of the people within that wayward Movement are well-meaning and sincere people- who genuinely love Jesus. And they see how terrible Sickness is- and they want to help. And that is a very wonderful and noble Ideal. But they're just wrong about this. And they misapply verses or take them completely out of Context to try to prove their point.

But the Danger in teaching people that it is ALWAYS God's Will to heal; and if they aren't healed- there is some kind of Problem in their Life- is that when they are NOT healed- they then are terribly defeated and feel as though God has cursed them.

So, now these precious souls are not only sick- and maybe even dying- but now they are encouraged to think that God is very disappointed in them; and has probably even abandoned them! They are in the worst time of their Lives- and yet- because God didn't heal them- they are rejected and condemned. And that makes this Teaching one of the most EVIL and DESTRUCTIVE Teachings that has ever come from the Mind and heart of Man.

Yet here in verse 2- Matthew clearly writes:

... **Seeing their faith ...**

So, it was *supposedly* the fact that those people believed THAT JESUS COULD HEAL THEIR FRIEND- that "allowed" Jesus to perform that Miracle. Jesus saw their Faith. And because they believed; because their Faith was high; because they didn't doubt- that powerful and active Faith gave Jesus the PERMISSION to heal their Friend.

And then they would give a few other verses – *especially* **Matthew 13:58** that says:

And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

... as "proof" that what they teach is true.

But what they teach is NOT true. Because the OBJECT of the people's Faith in **Matthew 9:2** was NOT Jesus' Ability or Desire to physically heal sick bodies- but rather their Faith to believe that Jesus was GOD and the ONLY Way for Forgiveness and Salvation!

And that is why it is *crucial* for all of us to put the Miracles and Healings and the Signs and Wonders of Jesus into their proper Context. Miracles; Healings; Signs and Wonders; and the casting out of demons- was done by Jesus and the Apostles for ONLY ONE REASON:

To give “*Divine Credibility*” to the radical Teaching of the New Covenant

... and once “Divine Credibility” was attached to the Truth of the New Covenant- in, by, and through those Miracles; and those Signs and Wonders; and those physical healings; and those demons that we cast out- those supernatural Manifestations accomplished the ONLY job they were given to do- and they were no longer needed.

You see, the Jews already had the “*Divine Truth*” that God had given to Moses. And they had it written down. And it had been passed down from one Generation to the other for hundreds and hundreds of years- BEFORE Jesus was born! So, it was in their hearts and minds and was burned into their very soul.

And in their minds- what God had given to Moses (by Way of Angels) was THE Truth; the WHOLE Truth; and the ONLY Truth that God would ever give. So, the Irony here is that one of the hardest Issues the Jew had to overcome back then (as well as today) was the Reality that what God gave to Moses was:

- Inspired
- Inerrant
- Infallible

... which means what Moses wrote down was FROM God and was absolutely True!

And that part is fine and something that we all should believe today: that all 39 Books of the Old Testament are the inspired; inerrant; and infallible Word of the living God!

But what we MUST also believe- is what Moses and the other Old Testament writers told us- and that is that the first five Books of the Old Testament are also INCOMPLETE! And the Old or the First Covenant- is an utterly unworkable; and a completely impossible Covenant for a normal human being to obey. But the “weakness” of the Old Covenant is NOT the Covenant itself- but rather us. WE are the Problem with the Old Covenant- precisely because NOBODY born of woman can obey it- perfectly. And it isn’t a matter of simply “trying harder”. We CANNOT obey the Old Covenant- perfectly- because we are HUMAN.

So, written inside the Old Covenant is the Promise of a BETTER Covenant. A this BETTER Covenant is NOT based on human obedience or human performance- but is based on the spotless Obedience and Performance of the God/Man- Jesus, the Christ!

Therefore, we are NOT forgiven and made Righteous through our Obedience to the Law of God. We are forgiven of ALL Sin (Past; Present; and Future) and we are made perfectly Righteous by BELIEVING and putting our Hope and Trust in the historical Fact that Jesus DID obey God's Law- without flaw.

And the people who brought that paralyzed man to Jesus believed that. They had put their Hope and Trust in Who Jesus was. And THAT was the Object of their Faith- Jesus HIMSELF- and NOT physical Healing.

And to prove this is true- look what Jesus said,

... Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven...

Jesus did NOT immediately even address the man's Infirmity. He addressed the Problem that was *infinitely* more important than walking- that his Sins could be Forgiven!

And next time- we will see how that Jesus connected Sin with Sickness/Disease/Infirmity; and even Death itself. But suffice it today to come to know that whoever the true Messiah is; whoever is the "Anointed One" (Christ); whoever we should follow and believe in and trust; and strive to obey- MUST be able to bring us to God- spotless. He MUST be able to forgive Sin and give us eternal Salvation. Other than that- it would all be a colossal waste of time.

So, Matthew is showing his Jewish readers (and us) here at the beginning of the 9th Chapter- that our greatest Problem is Sin. And therefore, our most urgent Need is NOT physical Healing- which will only last during this Life. No, our greatest Need is whoever we embrace as Savior and Lord and Master and Sovereign and King and God- MUST be able to forgive our many Sins and save our sinful Souls. And Matthew is telling us here- that Jesus saves Sinners!

Amen. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.

