

Who Do You Say That I Am?

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

63- Jesus Demonstrates His Absolute Authority- Part 1
Jesus Has Authority Over Sickness and Disease- Part 1

Church July 30, 2023

Matthew 8:1-17

8 When Jesus came down from the mountain, large crowds followed Him.

2 And a leper came to Him and bowed down before Him, and said, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

3 Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

4 And Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the priest and present the offering that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

5 And when Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, imploring Him,

6 and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, fearfully tormented."

7 Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

8 But the centurion said, "Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed.

9 "For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, 'Go!' and he goes, and to another, 'Come!' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it."

10 Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled and said to those who were following, "Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel.

11 "I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven;

12 but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

13 And Jesus said to the centurion, "Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed that very moment.

14 When Jesus came into Peter's home, He saw his mother-in-law lying sick in bed with a fever.

15 He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she got up and waited on Him.

16 When evening came, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill.

17 This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: "HE HIMSELF TOOK OUR INFIRMITIES AND CARRIED AWAY OUR DISEASES."

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

Note: Today will see the Start of a new “mini-series” on the “*Absolute Authority of Jesus, the Christ*”. The Apostle Matthew wanted his Jewish brethren to see Jesus as not only the “*promised Messiah*” (concerning which the Jews had the wrong Idea); and not only the “*2nd Moses*”; but he also wanted them to see Jesus as being “*Immanuel*” (God with us). So, for the next several weeks- we will look at what Matthew infallibly wrote about the “Divine Authority” that Jesus had over everything God had made- which proved His full and true Deity.

The Demonstration of God’s Omnipotence; or the Manifestation of God’s Absolute Authority over the entire created Universe; or the Display of God’s sovereign Power over all things visible and invisible; are also called,

- Acts of Providence
- Miracles
- Signs
- Wonders
- Mighty Acts
- Acts of God

And these things have been experienced; and analyzed; and marveled at; and taught; and sung about; and debated; and *over-emphasized*; as well as being *under-acknowledged* for the entire 6-10,000 years that humans have walked the earth. Some saved people, as well as those who are Lost- believe very strongly in modern-day Miracles; and Signs and Wonders. While others, who are both Saved and Lost, believe that the “*Day of Miracles*” is past.

But what Miracles; and Signs and Wonders; and Acts of Providence really are- are Examples of God’s “*Absolute Authority*” over EVERYTHING that has been made. And the Old Testament reveals several Moments when God proved His total and complete Authority over all things. So, the people raised under the

Old Covenant- *with the exception of the Sadducees*¹- had no Problem with God Himself; or God- *acting through His Prophets*- periodically showing His Omnipotence through various displays of His Divine Authority.

But now we see something strange that the Apostle Matthew wants his Jewish readers (and us) to see. The last two verses in **Matthew 7** say:

28 When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching;

29 for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

So, now we see that this “Proof” of full and true Deity is now being assigned to Jesus- because now Jesus is going to demonstrate the very SAME Authority that God has- over all things in the created Universe. So, during His earthly Ministry- Jesus demonstrated...

- He had Authority to heal Diseases (**Matthew 4:24**)
- He had Authority to forgive Sins (**Matthew 9:6**)
- He had Authority to *transfer* the Power to heal sick bodies and cast out demons to his Disciples (**Matthew 10:1**)
- He had Authority to multiply Bread and Fish (**Matthew 14**)
- He had Authority to create a Coin in the Fish (**Matthew 17**)
- He had Authority over “unclean spirits” (**Mark 1:27**)
- He had Authority over the Wind and the Sea (**Mark 4**)
- He had Authority to turn Water into Wine (**John 2**)
- He was given Authority for Judgment (**John 5:27**)
- He had Authority to “lay down His own Life” and to “take it up again” (**John 10:18**)
- He had Authority over “all Flesh” and to give God’s elect, “Eternal Life” (**John 17:2**)

... and then Jesus demonstrated that He had Authority to bring new, spiritual Life to spiritually dead souls by just His spoken Word- as He *instantly* converted His Disciples- including Matthew.

And finally, Jesus also discussed His own “*Absolute Authority*” when the Apostle Matthew quoted His “*Summary Statement*” from **Matthew 28:20b**:

... **All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.**

¹ The Sadducees rejected the Supernatural

... and when God cast satan down to the earth- like Lightning- the Apostle John quoted the “**loud voice in Heaven**” say this in **The Revelation 12:10**:

... Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.

... which tells us that this full and absolute Authority of Jesus occurred when satan was cast down to the earth- which was at some Point BEFORE the serpent spoke to Eve.

And now that Jesus has entered His 3-1/2- year earthly Ministry- Matthew is going to prove to all who have an ear to hear; and an eye to see; and a heart to believe- that, in addition to Jesus being a full and true Man- Jesus is also God Almighty in human Flesh!

So, we have come to a place in our verse-by-verse “Journey” through the **Gospel Record of Matthew** that contains the “*historical narratives*” of the Absolute Authority of Jesus being demonstrated here on the earth. And so, over the next several Lord’s Days- I want to ask and answer several Questions pertaining to what Matthew infallibly wrote here:

1. What is God’s Absolute Authority?
2. Did these supernatural Events really happen?
3. Why did Jesus demonstrate His Authority?
4. Is this Authority active today?

... so, let’s begin to examine this together.

1. What is God’s Absolute Authority?

One Way in which God’s Absolute Authority is seen and displayed in the earth is through “supernatural Events”- where God temporarily *suspends* the natural Order of how the created world normally operates in order to accomplish His Will. Another Way to understand this- is to say that a visible Demonstration of this Divine Authority happens when God sovereignly *inserts* Himself into the operation of the Universe or into the Lives of people to do something that ONLY God can do- to accomplish His Will.

So, by definition, “Miracles”; “Signs and Wonders”; and various “Acts of Providence” are Demonstrations of the Absolute Authority that God has- over every aspect of the created World. So, these are the “mighty Works of God” that change the direction of people’s Lives and alter the Course of human History.

Divine Authority can take the shape of things as wide- ranging from instantaneous physical Healings; to Salvation; to pushing the Sun backward; to raining Fire and Brimstone down on sexually Immoral people. And many Books have been written; and many Songs have been sung; about how these “Acts of God” have impacted the Events and Lives of very *ordinary* people who were called to do very *extra-ordinary* things.

But one of the most *common* Characteristics of God’s Authority over all things- is that their visible Demonstration is *rare*. Now when I say this- we need to keep in mind that God is *constantly* raising up and casting down; He is *constantly* pushing and pulling; He is *constantly* doing millions of things- *mostly unseen things*- to keep the earth spinning on its axis; and to keep us at the right distance from the sun; and to regulate the Tides and Temperatures of the Seas; and to keep Nations in place; or to cause them to rise and fall; and to keep saved people saved! God is also *constantly* “doing and moving”- so that the Prayers of His people- *that are in accord with His Will*- are answered. And God is *constantly* doing many, many things- *most of which are hidden from us*- to make sure that the *original* Decree that He made before He created anything- is coming to pass- as He originally intended!

But MOST of what God does every second of every day- is *unseen* and *unknown* to us. But throughout the Centuries- through ongoing Efforts in Science and Exploration- we have discovered tens of thousands of things that are *constantly* going on- all around us- every day- that we didn’t know until they were discovered! So, it is safe to say that God “*sees to it*”² that those things (and many more) that we sorely need are carried out- all in accord with the gracious and loving and majestic Will of Almighty God.

But *visible* Displays of God’s Authority through “Miracles” and “Signs and Wonders” are *rare*. And they have *always* been rare- which is one reason these things are so amazing to us. Because ALL Miracles; and ALL Signs and Wonders are beyond ANYTHING that humans can do. ALL Miracles; and ALL Signs and Wonders are God ordained and carried out by God- to say to the entire World,

Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself, The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness And will not turn back, That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance. (Isaiah 45:22-23)

But as far as the Bible goes- there are roughly six “Epochs” or “Seasons” when God chose to visibly display His absolute Authority over all things:

² “*seeing to it*” comes from the Latin word, “*pro-videre*” which has to do with God “seeing” our Need and meeting it. This is called, God’s “*Providence*”.

- Creation
- Periodic times from **Genesis** to the Prophets
- The Ministries of Elijah and Elisha
- The Ministry of Jesus and the Apostles
- Periodic times from the Apostles to Today

The *entirety* of Creation was nothing but a series of powerful; earth-shaking (literally); jaw-dropping; and non-repeatable Miracles where God literally created Reality out of Nothing (*ex-nihilo*). But once God rested on the 7th Day and said that what He had made was, “*Very Good!*”... the visible Acts of God became sparse and infrequent during the long- extended Period of Time from **Genesis** to the Prophets.

Now to be sure- God displayed His Divine Authority all during those Days- in many Ways- but the public and visible Demonstration of Miracles and Signs and Wonders was NOT carried out very often.

But then there was a literal Explosion of great and powerful and plenteous Miracles and Signs and Wonders during the Ministries of the Prophets Elijah and Elisha. But as soon as Elisha died- those public Acts and visible Displays of God’s Authority became almost non-existent again until the Angel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias, the Priest to announce the birth of John the Baptist.

And so, from just *before* the Birth of Jesus until toward the *end* of the “*Age of the Apostles*”- the *greatest* Time of visible and public Acts of God’s Authority- through Signs, and Wonders, and Miracles, and angelic Visitations, that the world has ever known- came to pass. Truly during that Time- the Heaven kissed the earth and supernatural Manifestations were being carried out over and over and over again. For example, Angels (that the Old Testament mentions) and Demons (that are practically non-existent in the Old Testament) were everywhere! Physical Healings were common! Literal bodily Resurrections happened! Blind eyes were opened! Leprosy cured! Diseases were abolished! And Miracles were all over the place!

And at the Center of it all- was Jesus! Walking on the water; speaking to the Wind and the Sea; commanding fish; opening blind eyes; multiplying food; and forgiving Sin! Nearly every day; with all sorts of people; in all kinds of situations- Jesus was *continually* proving and demonstrating and displaying and revealing and verifying the very SAME Absolute Authority over all things- that Almighty God has- even to the Point of converting souls and forgiving Sins! And this became so Common with Jesus that Nicodemus said,

Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him. (John 3:2)

... which was great. But until this man experienced the Miracle of the New Birth and could say with Conviction that Jesus was “God”- he was yet in his Sins.

Even the people who *despised* Jesus and who, eventually, had Him murdered- *the Pharisees*- NEVER denied His Miracles; Signs; and Wonders. But in order to explain why Jesus could perform all those Miracles and yet those men not worship Him- they attributed Jesus’ Ability to perform supernatural Acts- as coming from satan- which is the *worst* kind of Blasphemy!

And from that we conclude that the main reason people rejected Jesus was NOT because He performed Miracles- but because of two other things:

1. Who He was
2. What He said

... yet Jesus “did what He did” (perform Miracles) precisely because of Who He was and What He said.

So, nobody was able to separate the Miracles from Jesus’ Deity back then. And people can’t separate between them today, either. If ANYONE says they love Jesus- then they MUST also love what Jesus said and what He did. There is no such thing as anyone loving Jesus- yet rejecting Who He was and What He did.

Now from Chapter 8:1- all the way down to Chapter 9:38- Jesus is going to demonstrate and prove His full and true Deity- as God Almighty in human Flesh- through a series of supernatural and miraculous Events that showed that Jesus had:

- Absolute Authority over Sickness and Disease
- Absolute Authority over the Earth and its Functions
- Absolute Authority over Demons (fallen Angels)
- Absolute Authority over Death
- Absolute Authority to forgive Sin

... but during these Events- while Jesus is *unmistakably* proving His full and true Deity- He will teach very little.

Now our Lord has just finished preaching a very detailed Sermon that began in **Matthew 5:3**- and that went all the way to Chapter 7:27 in what we now call, the “*Sermon on the Mount*”. And this was the world’s *first* perfect Sermon. Before this Sermon- the world had very good and anointed and true Sermons- preached by many good and godly men. But the Sermon on the Mount was the first PERFECT

Sermon- preached from the SAME God- Who spoke to Moses and gave him the Law.

And this Sermon was designed to establish the NEW Standard- by which all things would be measured and judged. Before Jesus preached this Sermon- the Standard was set by God through Moses in the Law. But now the Standard is set by the incarnate God, Himself- without using a human Mediator.

And what this Sermon was designed to do- was to show; or display; or reveal; or manifest; just who among the people of Palestine in the 1st Century were:

- True, spiritual Jews
- Sons and Daughters of Abraham
- Heirs of the Abrahamic Covenant
- Heirs of the new Kingdom of Heaven

... which were the ONLY people in all of 1st Century Palestine, who were genuinely saved.

But this Sermon was also designed to draw a clear Distinction between the Jews who were saved by Grace and through Faith; and the unsaved and apostate Jewish Leaders- who had *perverted* the Old Testament; and who were fighting against God. So, in **Matthew 5:20**, Jesus told the people,

For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

... and then Jesus went about to illustrate what that “surpassing Righteousness” looked like. And He also detailed many of the Jewish Leader’s personal Sins; their hypocritical Lives; and their unbiblical Teachings throughout this Sermon.

Now in order to see just how radical Jesus’ Teaching really was- we have to try to understand the mindset of the average Jew of that Time. For the most part- Jews of the 1st Century were NOT looking forward to Heaven- in the same way that we do today. They were NOT looking for a Messiah who would come and forgive their Sins; save their souls; and give them eternal Life- like Christians believe and teach today.

No, the average Jew of that Day belonged to one of two Camps:

1. Many Jews had given up their “*Jewishness*” and had *capitulated* to the pagan Gentiles in both civic and religious Life
2. Other Jews resented the pagans and were determined to maintain their “*Jewishness*”; re-establish their Religion; and rid their Land of the Gentiles

We have to remember that by the time Jesus began His Ministry- Palestine and the Jews who lived there had been under the cruel domination of pagan Gentiles for over 300 years: *first* the Greeks (333-63 BC) and then the Romans (from 63 BC). And so, most of the Jews were horribly discouraged as to why God was allowing Gentiles to *dominate* His people for so long.

And the Reality of being dominated for so long by pagans caused the overwhelming majority of the Jews to look for a “*Messiah*” who was NOT a godly or spiritual Man; He would certainly NOT be a God/Man; He would NOT be the incarnate God, either. No, the “*Messiah*” that most of the Jews were looking for- was going to be a very human Warrior- like the beloved David- who, “**killed his ten thousands**” (1Samuel 18:7).

So, for the most part- the Jews were NOT looking for the Messiah to “**save His people from their Sins**” (Matthew 1:21)- but a man who would command a great army of faithful and fervent Jews³- who would wage war against the pagans; cast them out of the Promised Land; and restore Israel to its former Glory they had under King David.

And the four religious Groups of Pharisees; Sadducees; Essenes; and Zealots all *encouraged* that false Conception of who the Messiah would be; and what he would do- when he arrived.

You see, because the Jew KNEW he was THE chosen of God- then, in their minds- the ONLY Way that God *could* be pleased was for the Jew to *dominate* in the Land that God gave them; and for the Law of Moses (as interpreted by the Leaders) to be *imposed* on the people and to *dominate* their Lives.

So, the Jewish understanding of “*Last Things*” (*Eschatology*) was wound around an outcome that was ONLY favorable to the Jew- as they simply could NOT imagine why God would want to even deal with the pagan Gentile Nations at all. And this was so engrained in the mind and heart of the average Jew of the 1st Century that even AFTER Jesus had taught them for 3-1/2 years; and AFTER His Death and Resurrection; and AFTER Jesus had spent 40 days with them after His Resurrection- teaching them about the true Kingdom; while they were on the Mount of Ascension- the men who supposedly knew Him best- asked Him this Question:

"Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (The Acts 1:6b)

³ According to ancient Rabbinical writings of the 1st Century- the most common description of the Messiah was that he would be likened unto the Maccabean brothers- who waged war against the Romans in 167-160 BC.

Now why did they ask Jesus that Question? Because Jesus had just told them,

... He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." (The Acts 1:4b&5)

So, even after ALL that Jesus had said and done- when He told them that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit- the Disciples took that as a Sign that they would be “empowered” to form an Army that would vanquish the pagan Romans and restore the Kingdom of Israel back into Jewish Control! That is the “lens” through which the 1st Century Jew saw almost every Promise of God found in the Old Testament.

So, how did Jesus respond to their wayward Eschatology? He did NOT say, “*Look, I know you guys are sincere- but you’re just a little bit off in how you see the Future- so, let Me help you get it right.*” Instead, Jesus said,

... "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (The Acts 1:7b&8)

So, in response to their *unbiblical* Eschatology- Jesus told them two things:

1. What God is going to do or NOT do with Israel in the Future is none of your business- so quit worrying about it
2. Be faithful to do what I told you to do- and go and preach the Gospel to every Creature- even to the Gentiles- and let the Future take care of itself!

... and Matthew knew this.

And so, out of his great Love for his Jewish brethren, who had been deceived by the religious Leaders, Matthew quotes Jesus as talking about, the “*Kingdom of Heaven*” as opposed to, the “*Kingdom of God*”- which the Jewish leaders had twisted to mean a *reconstituted “Kingdom of Israel”*- which was the “*Nation of Israel*”- a Land that had been given to them by God and that, in their mind, would be free from Gentile domination.

Yet the Will of God for them was NOT to wage war against the Romans- but to go and preach the Gospel to every creature- even the despised Romans! And to help the saved remain faithful to THAT Charge- Matthew is now going to help the

Jews understand that Jesus is truly the *primary* Focus of every person; and every event; and every Teaching- in all of the Old Testament! And to do that- Matthew is now going to list Miracle after Miracle; Sign after Sign; supernatural Event after supernatural Event- that Jesus performed- over and over and over again so that Matthew's Jewish readers (and us) will come to the Conclusion 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 as I told you as we began this verse-by-verse "Journey" through **Matthew**- the Apostle designed this Gospel Record on purpose to resemble the first five Books of Moses- to disarm the Jew- so he would read it. So, the **Gospel of Matthew** has an "Introduction" and an "Ending". But then in between- Matthew's Gospel Record has five major Sections of perfect and infallible Teaching- where the "*Sermon on the Mount*" is the first one. And sprinkled in between all of the perfect Teaching- are historical Narratives that detail Miracle after Sign after Wonder; after supernatural Event- to prove Jesus' full and true Deity.

So now as we have finished the first "*Book*" or the first Section of perfect Teaching (*the Sermon on the Mount*)- Matthew is now going to give his 1st Century Jewish readers (and us) a long Section of supernatural and miraculous Events- that are designed to prove that Jesus has Absolute Authority over everything that has been made!

In the Sermon on the Mount- Jesus showed that He was in full Accord with God's Mind and Heart and Purpose- as Jesus would periodically say things like,

You have heard that it was said [in Exodus 20:14], 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matthew 5:27&28)

So, when Jesus said, "*But I say to you*"- He was giving the people the correct and full Meaning that God intended all along- but that the Jewish religious leaders had twisted and perverted and hidden from the people. And the reason Jesus could give the correct and full Meaning- is because He is God. And as God- Jesus originally gave Moses the Ten Commandments! And this is *why* Matthew recorded this from **Matthew 7:29**:

... He [Jesus] was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

2. Did these Supernatural Events really Happen?

The Apostle Matthew is now going to give what is called, an “historical Narrative” to show his readers that Jesus demonstrated His full and true Deity by displaying His absolute Authority over every Realm in the Universe like:

1. Sickness and Disease
2. The Earth and its natural Functions
3. Demons
4. Death
5. Sin

... and here in **Matthew 8:1-17**- Jesus displays His absolute Authority over Sickness and Disease by healing three different people with three different physical Ailments:

- A. Leprosy
- B. Paralysis
- C. Infection

... so, let's examine each one.

A. Jesus has absolute Authority over Leprosy

Matthew 8:1-4

1 When Jesus came down from the mountain, large crowds followed Him.

2 And a leper came to Him and bowed down before Him, and said, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."

3 Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

4 And Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the priest and present the offering that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

The Disease that is called today, “*Hansen’s Disease*” was literally a “Death Sentence” back in the 1st Century. And that was true, partly because nobody understood how it was contracted or how it could be cured- but also because of the social as well as the spiritual Stigma that went along with it.

If you contracted Leprosy in 1st Century Palestine- you were physically ostracized into what were called, “Leper Colonies”- areas out in the Wilderness, where the sick were *forcefully* herded into to spend the rest of their Lives. But the Disease didn’t just affect the one who was sick. Their entire Family was also attached to the Disease as well and suffered being shut out; ignored; and shunned.

But perhaps the *worst* part of being a Leper was that the average Jew looked at you as obviously being cursed by God. And so, you were not only physically sick- but you were also labeled as a wicked sinner, who had so displeased God that He punished you with this Disease. The closest Sickness that we have today that mirrors Leprosy the most as far as being ostracized and condemned by the majority of the people- is AIDS.

Leprosy caused your fingers and toes- and eventually your arms; legs; and head- to literally rot away. It went into the mucous membranes and sinuses and rotted your face as well as causing blindness. It was a horrible Disease that was so bad- that it was actually addressed by God in the Law of Moses- *primarily* in **Leviticus 13&14**.

Now even though Leprosy was cured even back then- it was a terrifying Disease. And so, God gave Moses a step-by step Treatment Plan that would conclude with the patient being declared either “Clean” or “Unclean”.

Now in verse 1- Matthew is faithful to tell us that “large crowds” began to follow Jesus- everywhere He went. And according to History- these crowds were *enormous*- with 10, 15, even 25,000 people- all following Jesus everywhere He went; all pushing in to touch Him; all crying out and trying to get Jesus’ Attention- for themselves or for a friend or loved one.

So, from Chapter 8- all the Way to the Crucifixion- it was the normal Pattern for many thousands of people to follow Jesus and to try to get Him to do something for them. An Example of this Chaos would be over in **Mark 5:25-34**:

**25 A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years,
26 and had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse —
27 after hearing about Jesus, she came up in the crowd behind Him and touched His cloak.
28 For she thought, "If I just touch His garments, I will get well."
29 Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction.
30 Immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that the power proceeding from Him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, "Who touched My garments?"**

31 And His disciples said to Him, "You see the crowd pressing in on You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'"

32 And He looked around to see the woman who had done this.

33 But the woman fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth.

34 And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction."

So, many times, the Disciples' job, as Jesus went through a City- was to merely act as a human barrier between Jesus and the crowds- as they pushed in on Him. And let me hazard to guess that they may not have always carried this job out in a Christ-like manner. So, walking with Jesus through a City was a very noisy; physically exhausting; and scary thing for the men, who were His Disciples.

Now the reason we need to understand the correct Setting here- is to show you that when Jesus does talk to; or He does heal; an individual- it is an "Example" of Jesus full Deity and NOT a "Formula"

that we are to follow today so we can receive Miracles like they did.

Now look again at what the sick man told Jesus in verse 2:

Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.

So, a couple of things we need to see here. First, either this man had escaped from the Leper Colony; or else he had just recently been diagnosed and hadn't had time yet to go into one; or he had heard that Jesus was coming his way and desperately wanted Jesus to heal him- because he was not in a Leper Colony.

Second, the sick man said, "*If You are WILLING- you can make me clean.*" So, the Issue with this man was NOT Jesus' Ability or His Power- but whether Jesus was WILLING to heal him. So, the man didn't have any Doubt that Jesus had the Authority to heal him. And that tells us something about the man's disposition toward Jesus. It very well could have meant that this man was more than willing to believe that Jesus was God- and that his Faith to be healed had MORE to do with his Faith in Jesus for Forgiveness (Salvation)- than merely to be healed.

Also, because the man talked to Jesus about His Willingness and NOT about His Authority- gives us a hint that he might have been acknowledging his own Sin. Remember, people wrongly thought that Leprosy (and almost every other "Bad" thing) was brought to them because God was angry with them because of their Wickedness. And by saying to Jesus, "**If You're willing...**" this man *might* have been saying, "*I know I am a sinner- obviously- I'm sick. But because You're God- you can forgive me and heal me- if You're willing.*"

Now I have no idea if this is true. I don't know this man's heart. But this is very possible. And I certainly hope it was true about him. But the bottom line is that Jesus said,

"I am willing; be cleansed."

... which also tells us several things about Jesus.

First, it was NOT true that the man's individual Sins caused him to have Leprosy because God was punishing him. How do we know that? Because Jesus healed him. And if God was punishing this man with Leprosy- *because of his Sins*- then Jesus would have been going against God's Judgment by healing him. Because even after Jesus healed him- he was a Sinner.

We always need to remember that Jesus NEVER violated His Father's Will. EVER! Jesus was the ONLY Man in all of human History that was always in perfect Harmony with His Father in EVERYTHING! Okay, so why was this man sick? There are several Answers among them are:

- God had chosen this man to be used by God to help display Jesus' Deity
- He was sick because this earth is broken (by Adam's Sin) and Sickness and Death are now normal and natural.
- He was sick so that he could be saved

But the fact that Jesus said, "*I am willing!*" shows us that whether we get sick because of our own individual Sins or the general Sin of Adam- "**Sickness and Death are caused by Sin.**" So, if we could get rid of the Sin- Sickness and Death would have no Basis. That is why there is NO Sickness or Death in Heaven!

Now Jesus said He was willing to heal the Sickness- which He already knows is the Result of Sin. But since Jesus was NOT fighting against God's Judgment- that means that Jesus was also willing to forgive this man's Sin- which was the Foundation of his Sickness.

And so, periodically- as God's Will determines- there are times during Jesus' earthly Ministry when Sickness will be removed- when Sin is forgiven- as a public and visible Sign that the Sin has been forgiven.

And that is what happened in **Luke 5** with the man, whose friends tore the roof off in order to get their friend in front of Jesus so He would heal him. When Jesus saw their Faith- He said,

"Friend, your Sins are forgiven you" (v.20)

... but the religious Leaders began to reason among themselves by saying,

"Who is this man who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" (v.21)

... then Jesus made this remarkable Statement:

"Why are you reasoning in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? But, so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins," — He said to the paralytic — "I say to you, get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home." (v.22-24)

... and verses 25&26 say,

25 Immediately he got up before them, and picked up what he had been lying on, and went home glorifying God.

26 They were all struck with astonishment and began glorifying God; and they were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen remarkable things today."

... and this is just one Way in which Jesus proved His full and true Deity- by *immediately* healing Sickness- with just His spoken Word!

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.