

Lesson 35 Matthew 17 19-21 (19) Jesus teaches why healing does not happen

The first reason

The disciples were no doubt deeply disappointed with themselves. They felt like we do who pray for the healing of friends when we see disease claim a life we have undoubtedly prayed for with faith. The disciples did not feel the LORD was criticising them -indeed they knew he levelled his rebuke at the downgrade of the nation and the evil intrusion of Satan. "Why were we not able to expel the demon? Jesus said "because of your lack of faith!" This simply means that they approached it on the basis of the "improbable"(Greek *απιστος*)

Jesus took the disciple band as a body. He knew there were different levels of trust in operation and this is not a balance of the "probable" believers and "improbable" ones among them. What is wanted is "perfect" faith which does not deal in "Ifs" There has to be a context of faith-a believing community-that is the first necessity-people born again and walking with God and active in ministry

The second reason

If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, "Move from now over there and it will move" The LORD is now showing that it is ***not the greatness of faith***-but its simple reality and that like a grain of mustard seed it is ***"planted in the ground"***The power of faith is that it takes root in Christ and though unseen produces a great harvest. It is not "faith healing" we are called to practice-it is "healing that draws its power from the Christ and His Name." We must never doubt the name of Jesus continues to have its ancient power and is acknowledged in the dimension of the spirit world.

The third reason

Jesus said, "This kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting". Only Jesus was prepared that day to deal with Satan. Demons will march out in disarray and be subject to Christian control as Luke says but there must be vows and fasting. Vows indicate lives given to ministry as an absolute priority (I am taking the root meaning of "Prayer" (Greek *προσευχομαι*) as meaning "vowing"

If a man wants to be a doctor he gives himself to training. If he wants to be a preacher he studies theology .If he wants to be used in healing like Elijah he must be under solemn vow and daily conduct himself before God for souls. There is no easy road to this powerful ministry.

It is at this level that we have terribly misunderstood the cost of the healing ministry. The man devoted to this ministry must be willing to consider his time claiming the LORD'S attention before his necessary food. Have nay persons set themselves aside for this ministry in your church? In your county? In this country? Is this a classic sign of the downgrade in modern Christianity?

From Paper to practice



- 1 Is the whole question the need for a church which believes for healing?
- 2 People condemn us because we have not enough faith. Why is that not a valid criticism?
- 3 What is the Third element?
- 4 Where is the church failing today in the light of this teaching of Jesus?