

He is able

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Date: 24 March 2019

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[0:00] Did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith. miracles there except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them and he was amazed at their lack of faith so there's a little bit of ambivalence here because in the passages we've read already Matthew 8 and 9 it's quite clear there are degrees and different sources of faith and sometimes there's no faith apparent at all so think of the situation where the two demon possessed men the pigs where's the faith there there's no evidence that these people had faith and yet

Jesus did that fantastic miracle the only conversation that takes place is between the demons and Jesus and yet he does what the demons ask for to be taken out of that person's body and taken in to the pigs so and sometimes the faith isn't in the person who's being healed so the dead girl has no faith but it's it's the father who has who's had the faith so faith is a very interesting ingredient here and it's expressed in different ways throughout that chapter it's not the same formula given all the time there are signs of great faith aren't there where Jesus is amazed he said I haven't seen faith like this in all Israel and he rebukes the disciples in the boat because they they have such little faith when they cry out and they say Lord save us and Jesus

Jesus verdict on that is oh yeah you have such little faith so Jesus is doing that healing and in this chapter these two chapters I say he does this healing whether there is faith or not so and yet throughout his ministry there are times when he's making a big play on the importance of faith what are we to make of that these chapters point us to Jesus as the Messiah this is the key point isn't it the miracles are never an end to themselves that isn't the point of the reason Jesus came on earth was to just do miracles they were always a pointer they were a signpost to the fact that he was the Messiah and that when people saw a miracle it was to point them and to remind them that this is what Messiah does so Matthew 8 17 this was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah he took up our infirmities and carried our diseases that's what Messiah does but it's a small thing in a way because the bigger point is that he is the Messiah he is the Messiah and he hasn't come just to do miracles in a sort of broad way of healing people who are sick but they are a fantastically greater miracle of saving and delivering in a spiritual sense that's what Messiah does every miracle is a sign to something bigger never an end in itself and I think what we're seeing here in these two chapters is repeated miracles done in all kinds of situations and circumstances to keep on saying to the people this is the Messiah this is the Messiah however he's doing it this is the Messiah and the passage in Isaiah of course is much bigger than this these are just a couple of verses taken out of that passage but it goes on to talk about all the things that this one is going to do how he is going to be the saviour how he is going to bear the iniquity of a people and by bearing that iniquity he's going to take their sin upon himself so that they may be delivered from their sin and this is the Messiah we want we don't stop at the miracles we have to go further to the Messiah and let me try and tackle this other perplexing verse in this passage here what about verse 30 then he touched their eyes and said according to your faith will it be done to you and their sight was restored and Jesus warned them sternly see that no one knows about this but they went out and spread the news about him all over that region so what's going on here it's a strange one isn't it it wasn't done in too much secret he had gone into the house but there were plenty of miracles being done in a very public fashion in these two chapters and people were seeing it they were seeing a dead girl raised to life you can't keep that quiet can you and it's not just the people who have received the miracle but those around them have seen what's going on and they're saying and of course the word gets spread around so back to the the ruler's house in verse 25 after the crowd had been put outside he went in and took the girl by the hand and she got up news of this spread through all the

region it wasn't secret was it it couldn't be kept secret

Jesus says to these to men who have had this blindness don't tell anybody the actual word there's three words there in the original see none discover see none discover and even more strikingly that is is used here Jesus warned them sternly it's an extremely strong piece of language Jesus is very very strong with them about this it's the same word that's used about how the disciples rebuked Mary Magdalene for pouring the ointment over Jesus it says that they rebuked and scolded her it's a very strong piece of language it wasn't just a piece of advice like just keep this a bit quiet it was a don't do it you mustn't tell anybody what this is this is actually being said the same thing was said other passages that are up there we'll look at Mark 1 so both the Mark and the Matthew passage on the screen they refer to people who had leprosy who had leprosy now that's a special sort of disease and it was important under the Jewish law that if you had a leprous condition and considered yourself to be healed of it authenticated by a priest

Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning see that you don't tell this to anyone it's the same language being used strong warning see that you don't tell this to anyone but go show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing as a testimony to them he went out and began to talk freely spreading the news so we have these issues of disobedience going on here and it's rather the compassion of Jesus who has just healed somebody a marvellous thing he's done for them he's told them to do something and they disobey in the next minute so of course Jesus knew that was going to happen but he still gives that strong warning so what are we to make of this this idea and certainly we can say about the people who had leprosy that it was the right thing it should have been the right thing for them to go and see the priest immediately if they didn't do that they were going to be on the wrong side of the law this would raise the hackles of the religious establishment that Jesus hadn't followed the Jewish law correctly and hadn't advised them appropriately so he's saying go to the priest as soon as possible don't stop on the way get this done first so there's a kind of a logic behind that

[9:22] Jesus was not wishing to have early confrontation with the religious authorities and in the second case we see these blind men they are in a sense groping towards the Messiah this is the only place in these two chapters where where people cry out to Jesus and use the language of Messiah let's look again at that verse 27 as Jesus went on from there two blind men followed him calling out have mercy on us son of David mostly the language before that has been Lord, Lord, Lord but in this particular case they are using the phrase son of David which is a rather remarkable thing for them to use that language in that way that though they were blind and in some senses restricted hadn't actually seen any of the miracles themselves they had some understanding that Jesus was more than just a teacher that there was something rather special about him they are groping towards the Messiah but they still have very limited understanding so what may be going on here is the fact that these people are going to be very believable they've just had a miracle they could not see and now they see they are much more believable than anybody else in the crowd around so whatever they say people are going to take to heart and yet they have this very limited understanding of Messiah so their words are going to be powerful and they are going to say and the likelihood is that this particular stage in Jesus' ministry would have been a danger and limitation to Jesus' God-timed ministry because they wouldn't have enough information to pass on helpfully to the and there could be more confusion and Jesus was extremely sensitive to the timing of his ministry you see that right the way through the Gospel accounts the wedding feast of Canaan he says my time has not yet come started his public ministry my time has not yet come and then at the very end of his ministry now the time has come so day by day he is walking in the footsteps and being prompted to do the things which his father has told him to do

I do always the things that my father tells me and this wasn't yet the time it was important that he did everything that the father had asked him to do in that ministry and that nothing should be left out

that there would be a perfection and a wholeness in his teaching and his actions and his interactions and that this could be jeopardised by something premature so it's wonderful when he comes almost with a sense of relief to the end of that public ministry and searching for the right passage here it's John 17 and he says and he says Father the time has come glorify your son that your son may glorify you it's a great thought isn't it that Jesus did absolutely everything that the father asked him to do and that in those three years absolutely everything he did was exactly what was necessary to be done there was nothing omitted nothing lacking you know we think about our lives and the lacks in our lives and the regrets that we didn't act on God's promptings we haven't behaved as we ought to have done we've gone in stray directions and so forth and Jesus didn't do any of that at all absolute perfection in his ministry just to be able to read the record in these gospel accounts and say he said exactly the right thing when he was silent he was doing exactly the right thing when he goes up into the hills to pray he's doing exactly the right thing he's always doing the thing which pleases his father and that was necessary for his perfection and for him to be fully justified as the Messiah because he has fulfilled in obedience all the father has asked him to do so one can understand his anxiousness or concern that nothing should interfere with that that he must be about his father's business all the time it's a good model for us isn't it?

it's a good encouragement for us to make sure we're about the father's business so there's a couple of thoughts there about this particular challenging verse but what I want to draw attention to tonight is the key message in in this passage and it's a lovely thing that we come to the end of these miracles Jesus offered himself in these situations as sometimes the people have approached him we think of the woman with the issue of blood and she touches the coat of his garment and she's healed and she's healed so he hasn't said anything at that point and she just touches the father and the ruler and the master and they're all making these very upfront approaches to Jesus in response to the cries of these two men

Jesus has this wonderful wonderful open invitation do you believe that I'm able to do this? and this is the word that Jesus gives them do you believe that I'm able to do this? this is so good to have this at the end of the chapter to be able to see that this is what Jesus is offering do you believe that I'm able to do this?

[16:14] I think that's such an accessible thing isn't it? as we read the Gospel accounts as we see more and more of Jesus and he's he's not demanding anything of us open your eyes do you think I can do this?

I don't know how you respond to that as well but I find this so encouraging this is what Jesus is offering this is what Jesus is offering I don't know how you respond to that as well but I find this so encouraging for faith because we're just being presented with Jesus he's not saying have you got enough faith for this?

do you believe that I'm able to do this? and I think Christian people, brothers and sisters if we have any familiarity with Jesus and we're getting close to him we will always be saying yes, Lord, you can do this you can do this to be personal about my own condition I have absolutely no doubt that Jesus can completely heal me I've got absolutely no doubt that Jesus can heal me and that's the question Jesus is putting to us tonight really can I do this?

can I heal you? absolutely absolutely and all they have to do is say this yes, Lord yes, Lord it's a lovely response and that's the place where where we're at we're all at a place where Jesus is putting that question to us and saying to us in our lives do you believe I can do this?

every single one of us has issues where Jesus is putting that question to us do you believe that I'm able to do this? can I rid you of this habit which is just dogging you?

[18:07] can I get rid of your your anger? can I sort out this relationship? he's just putting it to us all the time and we see so much about the ministry of Jesus yeah, you can do that you can stop the storm he can raise the dead he can certainly deal with anything we're facing we have the breadth and the bigness of Jesus' ability portrayed to us tonight these things seem very large to us but Jesus is coming to us and saying look at me I'm bigger than that situation I'm bigger than your storm I'm bigger than the thing which is dogging you the 24-7 which is on your mind I'm bigger than that we see the breadth it's lovely that Matthew has given us all these different examples just to encourage us in every way to say the one who can deliver from a particular you know a

kind of an expert in that particular problem he's one who's that big who can deal with all our problems everybody in this room here tonight

Jesus is able to deal with your situation Jesus the Messiah is able because he hasn't just come to deal with our problems he's come to deal with our sin he's come to deal with our sin now that's the rub isn't it where we can say my sin could he deal with my sin you don't know how badly I've sinned you don't know what's in my heart you don't know how as a Christian I've sinned and how wretched and! you can feel because because of that sin particular to yourself and how important that is because if we have a spot of sin upon us we cannot face death and judgement if we feel there is unforgiven sin in our lives that God cannot forgive we are not fit to face to face the judgement but Jesus Christ has come to deal with all sin if we confess our sin he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness do you believe the bigness of it?

all our sin not in part but the whole is laid on the cross praise the Lord, praise the Lord it's the bigness of what Jesus does there's no spot left there's no unforgiveness left when we come to him and confess our sin to him and that's a beautiful thing isn't it?

what a releasing thing that is we can live in the grand freedom of it and know that we can approach a throne of grace and find mercy because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin embrace that dear brothers and sisters embrace that don't allow yourself to get into that place where where there is the unconfessed sin and just the thought that this is too much it's gone on too long nothing can be done about it Jesus can deal with that but you have to come to him you have to ask him for that Jesus the Messiah is able our trust in him has begun and strengthened as we realise that he is able that's the point of all this really in the end it's giving a bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger picture of Jesus and his ability ability to deal with all that we need to have dealt with to have dealt with so our faith sort of recedes into the background is looking to him

I have no confidence in my faith I'm trusting you to be the deliverer that I need that's where we need to be and this is such an encouraging passage for us tonight to be able to get ourselves into that place our trust in him has begun and strengthened as we realise that he is able we're going to sing a song and it's one that's not in our book sadly so it has to be up on the screen I want to tell you about the writer of this song here his name is Joseph Hart he lived from 1712 to 1768 which was a very exciting time in this country because he lived during the days of and heard both those preachers but here's an extraordinary thing about this man he was 21 when he began to have serious concerns about his soul he realised that he was a sinner he needed a saviour but he spent the next 24 years unconverted 24 years he was unconverted he just slid around in his life he was an intelligent man he was having this conviction of his sin but he he he fled against religion he got into antinomianism and he was hearing all this good preaching all the time he couldn't actually grasp and when he was 45 years old he suddenly realises for the very first time that could my hands can fulfil the Lord's demands could my zeal no respite no could my tears forever flow all for sin could not atone you must cleanse and you alone understanding of the gospel seeped into him he became a pastor of a church he's best known for best known for some great songs one of which is the one we're going to sing tonight of a sort of better expression of the bigness of this gospel that is found in these in these verses here let me just run through the text as it is on the screen there so it's all in the original language it's all 1700 stuff come you sinners poor and wretched weak and wounded sick and sore

[25:27] Jesus ready stands to save you full of pity join with power isn't that a great great thought he's got compassion on us and he has the power to deal with us he is willing doubt no more that's the message to everyone that was denied he's willing to deal with your sin your great need every single one of us come you needy come and welcome God's free bounty true belief and true repentance every grace that brings you night even the belief and the repentance that has to come from him as well and he'll grant it because he's willing come to Jesus Christ very Isaiah like isn't it come ye weary heavy laden bruised and broken if you tarry if you just if you wait hoping to get better you'll never come at all not the righteous not the righteous not the righteous sinners Jesus came to call

Matthew 8 I didn't come to the righteous I came for sinners that's wonderful isn't it Jesus has not come tonight for the righteous he's come for sinners we're in that bracket aren't we that's us tick in the box we're sinners!

nor a fitness fondly dream this was his problem in a way he thought he could become a better person just by doing good things and he did good works for all those 20 years or so don't even dream it don't even think it you'll never make it all the fitness he requires is to feel your need of him you can't make yourself better you can't make yourself acceptable the best place to be is just to say I need you I need you and this he gives you this he gives you it's the work of the Holy Spirit and look this is the incarnate God the man on earth has ascended to heaven he has finished his work he pleads the merit of his blood venture on him venture holy let no other trust in truth don't go anywhere else none but Jesus none but Jesus we're proud of this message aren't we? because there's no other there's no other saviour out there he's the only one he's the only one he's the only one that can deliver us and so we sing with absolute gratitude for the grace of God that has come into our lives if we have experienced this and if you haven't experienced this this is a song for you this is a song for you to be in that right place and to be able to say none but Jesus can do me good and to embrace it and to embrace it do we know that maybe just play the first verse through we're going to have a look at this oh oh oh oh oh Amen.
He is able, he is able, he is willing doubt no more.
[30:03] He is willing doubt no more.