

What The Lord Is Able To Do

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[0 : 00] Let's turn again to the chapter we read in the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 9. Matthew's Gospel, chapter 9. I'm reading in verse 28.

When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, Do you believe that I am able to do this?

They said to him, Yes, Lord. Now the Sermon on the Mount, which is just before this, chapter 5 to 7, is probably the greatest sermon that is ever preached.

A lot of people quote some of the sayings that came from that particular sermon. And it tells us when Jesus had finished preaching in chapter 7 at the very end there.

And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority. Now although there were huge crowds present while Jesus preached that sermon, it was to his people, to his disciples, to his followers, that he was really preaching.

[1 : 24] It wasn't an evangelistic sermon as such, although parts of it are evangelistic. There were many times in Jesus' life, in his ministry, when he was very evangelistic in his appeals to people.

And he called on people, and indeed he wept over people who were refusing him. It hurt him into the very depth of his heart. Jesus had a great heart for those who were lost.

And it tells us in the chapter we read, verse 36, when he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd.

And Jesus could see the grief and understand the pain that was in so many people's hearts. And so his heart was constantly going out to people, and there was always an appeal.

Come to me, him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. Come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I'll give you rest, and so on. The Sermon on the Mount, though, was different in that this was a particular sermon that was addressed to his people.

[2 : 34] And there are two main sections within the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew chapter 5, verses 1 to 16, is speaking to us about the character of the Christian.

That's where we have the Beatitudes. Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Blessed are the peacemakers, so on. This is speaking about the character of the Christian.

And then the rest of the sermon speaks to us about the conduct of the Christian. For instance, how the Christian conducts himself with regard to the law, with regard to reputation, with regard to treasure, with regard to our priorities in life.

And that's almost the way it is. Conduct flows out of character. That is why the Lord is seeking, first and foremost, to have our characters changed, so that we become more and more Christ-like.

And the more Christ-like we become, the more our conduct will begin to reflect the Lord Jesus Christ. If we begin without Jesus, and if we begin without seeking that our characters will be changed, then even if we're trying to improve our conduct, we won't be able to do it properly.

[3 : 59] So that is why it always begins with character, the change of heart. And a change of heart that begins more and more to resemble Jesus. And from that, the conduct comes out.

So after the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus is teaching with all the authority of the kingdom, all the authority of God, his teaching of the kingdom, then the next chapters are really showing the power of the kingdom.

Because Jesus is healing. He's demonstrating his power over illness. He's demonstrating his power over the natural world, where he calms the storm.

He demonstrates his power over the spiritual world, where he's able to cast out demons. And he's showing that he is Lord over all. And in chapters 8 and 9, we find Jesus there, that we see him on this healing ministry.

He heals a leper, the centurion's servant, Peter's mother-in-law, a paralyzed man who was brought in a mat. He raised a dead girl. He healed a woman who had been bleeding for 12 years.

[5 : 12] He enabled those who had been made mute because of demon possession to be able to talk again. And then he opened the eyes of these two blind men who were there.

So after that great sermon, and where people were marveling, the thousands who were there marveling at his teaching, he is then beginning to show the power of the kingdom as well.

Now as Jesus walked by, these two blind men followed him, and they were crying aloud, Have mercy on us, son of David. And this word, the crying aloud, indicates that it was constant crying.

And these men were blind physically, but they were able to see spiritually in a way that many others couldn't see.

Because as they cried on Jesus, Jesus, son of David, this was, they were seeing Jesus as the Messiah. And although they were blind, they were seeing a lot more than many people who had their normal natural sight.

[6 : 23] The scribes, and most of the Pharisees, and most of the religious leaders, they couldn't see that Jesus was the Messiah. Or they chose not to see that he was the Messiah. Well, it's good to remember that sometimes people just can't see, but also there are people who choose not to see.

They just block their mind to it. And here's one of the worst things that a person can do, is to shut your mind to the truth. To say, now, I'm just not going down this road.

And you know, there's a lot of people who do that. In fact, by and large, that is what people really have to do. Because to say, as many people say, there is no God, you're having to block your mind to the truth.

You're having to suppress the truth, to push it down, in order to come to that conviction within your own heart. You're having to deal with the truth, and push it aside, remove it out altogether, press it down, and unfortunately, so many of the religious leaders, sadly, they wouldn't face up to the truth.

They should have known. They studied the scripture. And the scriptures were constantly being fulfilled, in the life of Jesus. But they closed their mind to the truth.

[7 : 39] They were prejudiced. They were bigoted. And these are, a lot of people talk about bigotry, and how wrong it is. Well, bigotry, it is wrong. Because, you know, if we're bigoted, if we're like that, we close our minds very often.

We can only see, we've got kind of tunnel vision. The only thing we should really have tunnel vision for, is God's word. Because this is real truth.

So, here are these blind men, but they were able to see that, this is the Messiah. This is Jesus. He is the Lord. And so they take the opportunity, and they cry to him, constantly.

Can I ask you, are you doing that today? If you don't have Jesus Christ, as your Savior, remember, Jesus is here today. He has promised, to be here.

As few as two or three, gather together in his name. He's promised, to be in the midst. Now that's an amazing promise. So Jesus is here, today. The presence of Christ, through the ministry of his, but he says, I come, where my people gather together.

[8 : 51] And this is why, it is so important, when we're in church, that we call upon Jesus. It's an opportunity, for salvation. I know we can, call on Jesus anywhere.

But it's a special time, when he's near. He's here. He's in the house. These two blind men, were going to follow Jesus, into the house. It wasn't the church, but into a house.

Well you're in the house, of God just now. And so this is the opportunity, for you, to call upon Jesus. Because, remember, if you don't today, see your need, of a saviour, you're spiritually blind.

And spiritual blindness, leads to, spiritual, well, spiritual blindness, equals spiritual death. And spiritual death, equals eternal death.

Unless your eyes are opened. So Jesus came, to open people's eyes. Enable people to see, to see him as a saviour, to see him as Lord. Now, you'll notice here, that, as Jesus passed on, from there, two blind men, followed him, crying aloud, have mercy on us, son of David.

[10 : 02] It doesn't say, tell us, that he stopped, to deal with him. He just carried on. And he went on, into the house. And often we find that, that there are times, Jesus answers right away.

But other times, he doesn't. And sometimes, Jesus doesn't, in order to test, the reality, the genuineness, of the cry.

Because sometimes, people will cry, but they don't really mean it. An example of that, is sometimes, and I'm sure, as you look back, over your life, you remember times, where you were, shaken to the core.

Where God's providence, shook you, your world, as it were, collapsed, your own personal world. And you said to yourself, oh, I've got to become a Christian. And you begin to call, to the Lord, to cry to the Lord.

But as the fear, that initially was there, begins to subside, and as time goes on, sometimes, the cry stops. And you don't, search for him anymore.

[11 : 07] Because the Lord knows, when it is real, when it is genuine, or when it's just superficial, when it's not real. And so sometimes, the Lord tests.

And sometimes, the Lord lets people call, for quite a while. Because you might be somebody, in here today, like that. And you're saying, you know this, I've been crying to the Lord, for so long.

I've been calling, upon the Lord, to save me. And he doesn't seem, to be hearing. Well, if you are really crying, genuinely, sincerely, he will hear you.

He is hearing you. And he will answer. But sometimes, as we say, he tests the genuineness, of our call. Anyway, these two blind men, they came into the house, and, he, we see here, that he begins, to show them, mercy.

And all, you also have to remember, the Lord is our Lord, who delights in mercy. It's his great delight. And so, the two men came there, and Jesus asked them, a very simple question.

[12 : 11] Do you believe, that I am able, to do this? A very, very important question, but a vital one. You've been crying to me, Jesus is saying to them. You've been calling out to me, but I'm going to ask you, a question.

Do you believe, that I'm able to do this, that I'm able to give you, your sight back? And very simply, they said, yes Lord. You know, some of the greatest, dialogues, between, a person and Jesus, are so, so brief.

That's all they said, have mercy on us, son of David. And then, yes Lord. That's all, that's recorded for us, that they said.

Not much. And we don't need a lot. We don't need many words. We don't need, to have long, long prayers. Sometimes, just two or three words, is enough.

That's what we have here. And so, Jesus, asked them, do you believe? And so, they were, what Jesus is really saying to them, do you know who I am?

[13 : 18] Do you believe, that I, as the Messiah, as the Lord, do you believe, I am able, to open your eyes?

And that's important. Because I believe, a lot of people in here, if you're not, if you're not a Christian, I would imagine, that most of you, if not all of you, believe, that the Lord, is able to save.

But there's a big difference, between believing, that the Lord, is able to save, and that the Lord, is able to save you. Personally. Because as you look around, and you say, well I know the Lord, has saved him, and he saved her, I know the Lord, the Lord is saving people, I believe that, I know that, I know it to be true.

But the Lord, becomes very personal, and he says, but I'm asking you, do you believe, that I am able, to save you? That's the question.

And are you able then, to say in return, yes Lord, I hope so. I hope today, you're saying, yes Lord, I do believe, you're able to save me. Because if you're saying that, then you're seeing Jesus, as the Savior, who is there for you, that he is able to save, you personally, not just in a, in a way that's abstract, or in a way, where you know, that he's doing saving, this is direct business, with Jesus, you want him to come, right into your life, and to save you.

[14 : 46] And Jesus is asking you, this question today, do you believe, that I am able, to do this? Do you? It's an important question.

Because are you seeing Jesus there, as the great Savior? You see, our faith, is not, faith and faith. It's not, these blind men, weren't congratulating themselves, and saying, well look at all the faith, we have, we are trusting, in our faith.

Our trust, our everything, has to be focused, upon Jesus Christ. And so often, we can get distracted, a lot of people, they look to the Bible, and don't get me wrong, we need to have the Bible, they look to the church, they look to people, it's always looking to Christ, got to be looking to Jesus, looking to Jesus.

He is the author, and the finisher, the perfecter, of our faith. Don't look anywhere else. And so they said, yes Lord. And so he says, according to your faith, be it done to you.

First he touched their eyes, and then he opened their eyes. Now, he is able. But I want us just, to think about it, just for a few moments, that when Jesus says, do you believe, that I am able to do this?

[16 : 04] We find, in the Bible, that there are so many things, that the Lord is able to do, amazing things. Of course we know, that the Lord can do everything, but for instance, in Ephesians, it tells us this, that he is able to do, exceedingly above, all that we ask, or think.

Now isn't that incredible? Able to do, exceedingly above, all that we ask, or think. Now you, stop for a moment. Everything that you've ever asked, the Lord.

If he so chooses, he could do for you. Now, we've got to remember, one or two things here. The Lord, is never going to give us, everything that we ask for.

Because some of the things, that we ask for, might be wrong. They might go against, the nature, and character of God. God has always, got to be true to himself. And he'll never give us, something that, it goes against his nature, goes against his character.

But if we ask, for things, that are in accordance, with his will, he promises to hear, and to, to answer our prayer. So, it tells us here, while that is amazing, that he will do, everything we ask.

[17 : 22] But it goes beyond that, or even think. Now, there are, there are many things, that we've thought, and we would say to ourselves, wouldn't it be great, if God could do that for me?

But we've never actually, asked it. Well, the Bible tells us, that he is able to do, above, what we ask, or even think.

Isn't that amazing? But it even goes above that. He's able to do, abundantly above, what we ask, or think.

So that, you put together, all the things, you ask the Lord, and all the things, that you think, that the Lord, is able to do. And the, the, it goes beyond that, that he's able, abundantly above that, to do.

And it's able to do, all, that we ask, or think. Not just some of it, but all. But you know, it even goes beyond that, it goes, and says, exceedingly, abundantly, above, all that we ask, or think.

[18 : 31] It's like the apostle, when he was writing. It's like he's running out, to superlatives. It's like he's gone, so far, and he says, you know this, I can't really get my head, around this. But the Lord, is able to do, exceedingly, abundantly, above, all, that we ask, or think.

Stop there for a moment, and think about it. If you're today, living a defeated, Christian life, if you feel, that the spark is gone, and you're saying to yourself, you know, I feel like I've got, heavy boots on, and I'm trudging through, deep sand, or through, out on the moor, and it's wet.

That's the way, I feel my Christian walk to be. You have to stop, and ask yourself a question. What is your relationship, with the Lord, really like? Here is the Lord, of heaven and earth, whose great delight, is to fill his people, with himself.

And he's saying to you, I am able, to do, exceedingly, abundantly, above, all, that you ask, or think.

I can fill your life, I have all the resources, at my disposal. And I am the most, liberal giver. Why, are you just, trudging, along?

[19 : 51] It's a question, we have to ask ourselves. Maybe it is, we're not giving the time, to the Lord. Maybe our time, of being alone, with the Lord, is getting less, and less.

You know, there are a lot of, some people say to me, you know, if I didn't have my wee time, with the Lord, in the morning, I don't know how, I would cope in the day. We need it. It's never, a wasted hour.

We all know, Martin Luther, he was, he had the whole world, on his shoulders, to a certain extent, when the whole, reformation, was taking place. And yet, he was saying, if I don't give, the first two hours, to the Lord, I've had it.

He had to spend, two hours every day, for a man who, in many ways, changed the world. But that was the heartbeat, that was the secret of it. It's never, remember this, time alone, where the Lord, is never wasted.

In this world, that is putting, so many demands on us, and wants, 24-7 activity, do you know what, Satan comes to us, when we stop, and we just sit, and we look at the Bible, and we pray in the silence.

[21 : 02] There's a voice saying, come on, you're wasting time, there's so much to do, you've got so much to do, you be sure, that the moment, you start to try, and have your own, personal devotions, there'll be a voice saying, look at all you've got, to do today, you can't stop, with this just now, come on, you've got to get going.

We have to resist, these voices, because, our well-being, and life, depends, upon this. Again, we can be hampered, in our spiritual walk, with the Lord, by unconfessed sin, by lovelessness, by worldliness, there are so many things, that come in, and invade, our lives, so that the edge goes, and the spot goes, but please take to heart, with the Lord, the question, Jesus asked these blind men, do you believe, that I am able, we can say it, with regard to this, he is able, to do exceedingly, abundantly, above everything, you ask or think.

So you take that, to the Lord, and ask him to, to fill you. Again, we are told, that the Lord, is able, to save, to the uttermost. It is not wonderful.

He is able, to save, to the uttermost. That can be looked at, in two ways. One way of looking at it, is he is able, to save anybody. Anybody in this world, can be saved, by the Lord.

It does not matter, what the history is, it does not matter, what your past is. And there are many, trophies of grace, throughout this world. The great, Apostle Paul, is an example, of that.

[22 : 36] Paul, rightly called himself, the chief of sinners. You know, we often say, I am the chief of sinners, and we mean it. Well, Paul meant it. Paul hated Christ, like few in this world, have ever hated Christ.

He hated, the very name of Christ. He wanted, every Christian dead, imprisoned, off the scene. His very breath, was anti-Christian.

You see, people today, and they are, very anti-Christian, that are working against, the Christian faith, will be quite persuaded, of him. They don't, be persuaded of this, they didn't have the enmity, or the malice, of the Apostle Paul.

He hated, he had murder, in his heart, breathing out, slaughtering, and persecution, to the church. And yet, the Lord, had mercy on him. And Paul, never got over it.

He couldn't believe, how the Lord, that he hated, had saved him. You look at Manasseh, in the Old Testament, that king, had a great father, Hezekiah, but unfortunately, Manasseh, he came to the throne, probably far too young.

[23 : 45] And he broke down, everything his father, had done. And he became, a byword, for, the persecution, of the believer. It tells us, that the streets, of Jerusalem, were running red, with the blood, of the godly.

He even, sacrificed his own children. He was involved, in the occult. He had, absolutely abandoned, with a ferocity, the God of heaven. And hated, the God of heaven.

Hated the God, of his father. But then, remember, he was captured, he was taken in prison. And it tells us, it's the most amazing thing, when he was in chains, that he turned, in repentance, to the Lord.

So you look, at these two characters, and you say to yourself, whoa, that's what it means, that he's able, to save to the utmost. So he's able, to save you.

You might be saying today, oh you know, if you knew my history, if you knew my past, if you knew, all these things, about me, you would say, you can understand, why I'm not a Christian.

[24 : 48] No, the Lord doesn't. It doesn't matter. He is able, and he's in the business, of seeking, and saving those who are lost, and washing the slate clean. But saving, to the uttermost, also means, that he keeps on saving, right to the very end.

In other words, once you're safe, you're always safe. It's like, he's continually saving you, every day, and every night. Every day, every night, right to the end. That's what it says, in Romans, neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, or powers, or things present, or things to come, or height, or depth, nor any other creatures, will be able to separate us, from the love of God, in Christ Jesus.

And that takes us on, to another thing, that he's able to do. He's able to keep you, from falling. That's what we're also told, in the Bible. He's able to keep you, from falling.

Now that doesn't mean, that as a Christian, you'll never slip, or you'll never stumble. It means, there will never be, a fatal fall, because he has you, by the hand. The steps of a good man, are ordered by the Lord.

Although he falls, he shall not be, utterly cast down, because the Lord, is holding him, with his hand. And that hand, is such that, it can never be, prized open. Not even all the forces, of hell, gathered against, can open the hand, of God, as a hold of you.

[26 : 09] He's able to keep you, from falling. We're also told, that he's able, to succor, those that are tempted. That means, that word, sucker, means he's able, to come to the aid, the help, of those who are tempted.

And the Lord says to you, don't try and go through, temptation on your own. Do you know why? Because you can't. If you try and go, on your own, you'll fail. Ask the Lord, for help, when you're tempted.

Especially, ask the Lord, for help, when you don't want it. And you might say, that's strange. How do you mean, that you don't want, the Lord's help? Because sometimes, is it not true, that we can enjoy, temptation?

And you say to yourself, oh surely not. Be honest with yourself. Is it not true, that there are times, that as temptation, begins, you're almost happy, for it to be there.

And you don't want, the Lord's help, to be delivered. Well that's when, you need it most. That's when you have to say, Lord I'm not in a good place, right now. I'm being tempted, and I feel like, going down this road, and you know this, to be honest Lord, I don't want help, but I need it.

[27 : 26] I need it now, more than I ever needed it. Well the Lord says, I'm able, to come alongside you, and help you. And he promises, to do that. Time is going, with just one last thing, that he says, another thing, that he's able to do, he's able to make, all grace, abound towards you.

Isn't that amazing? We are told, that the Lord's grace, is sufficient for us. But he tells us, about the sufficiency, of this grace, when? Always.

That you always, having all sufficiency, in all things, may abound, to every good work. Where we discover, the sufficiency, of his grace.

The Bible is full of things, that the Lord is able to do. And do you believe that? Is that the, is that the Lord, you're seeing today, and you know, that he's able to do, all these things, in your life.

Able to do far, and beyond anything, you ask or think. He's able to keep you, from falling. He's able to come, alongside you, in temptation. He's able to pour out, his grace upon you.

[28 : 33] He's able to make, your life something, in himself. Do you believe that? Or if you're, without Jesus today, do you believe, that he can save you, even now?

Go to him, and ask him. Lord, save me. Let us pray. Oh Lord, our God, we pray to, bless us. We give thanks, that we know, that you are a God, who are able to do, great and wonderful things.

Your power, is beyond, any understanding, of ours. Your power, is greater, than all the forces, and powers, in this world. And even although, the power of darkness, can be great, and the power of evil, within our own heart, is awesome, and awful.

Yet your power, is greater still, where you're able, to melt, the stoniest heart. You're able, to break, the hardest heart. And you're able, to change, our lives, in the most, wonderful way.

Lord, we pray, that we might be willing, for you to change, our life. Help us to, follow you, with all, with all our heart. And bless us, we pray.

[29 : 46] Bless the cup of tea, coffee in the hall after, and take us all, home safely. Bless the Sunday school, and the Twinnies, and the Crescent, those who help there, we give thanks for them.

Take away then, from us our sin, in Jesus name. Amen. We conclude, our service, singing from Psalm 146, Psalm 146, and this is, the Scottish Psalter.

We sing, from verse 7, to the end, and the tune is, Moravia. Psalm 146, from verse 7.

Who righteous judgment executes, for those oppressed, that be, who to the hungry, giveth food, God sets the prisoners free.

The Lord doth give the blind, their sight, the bowed down, doth raise, the Lord doth dearly love, all those who walk, in upright ways. The stranger's shield, the widow's stay, the orphan's help, is he.

[30 : 47] But yet by him, the wicked's way, turned upside down, shall be. The Lord shall reign, forevermore. Thy God, O Zion, he reigns to all generations.

Praise to the Lord, give ye. The tune is, Moravia, Psalm 146, 7 to the end. Who righteous judgment executes, for those oppressed, God sets the prisoners free.

The Lord doth give the blind, God sets the prisoners free.

The Lord doth give the blind, their sight, the Lord doth give the blind, the Lord doth raise.

The Lord doth hear me, love of all those, that walk in upright ways.

[32 : 07] The stranger's shield, the widow's stay, the orphan's help is he.

But yet by him, the wicked's way, turned upside down, shall be.

The Lord shall reign forevermore, thy God, O Zion, he reigns to all generations.

Praise to the Lord, give ye. Now may the grace, mercy, and peace of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, rest and abide upon each one of you, now and forevermore.

Amen.