

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

The Healing Ministry of Jesus
Matthew 8:1—9:38

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a series of sessions needs to have access to the "Introduction" article found at the beginning of this series (Bible Teaching #06). The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.
2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)
3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Bible Study Leader:

Copy the Notes About Healing to distribute to your group

Worship Time Leader:

Plan how you will present the Call to Worship. One person may read it or several may participate. Make copies as needed from the material at the end of the Worship Time.

Copy the Five Pillars of Islam to use during the prayer time. Participants can take their copy home to study further.

Music Sources:

Hosanna, *The Worship Hymnal* # 135; CCLI # 221545

You Are My All in All, *The Worship Hymnal* # 143; CCLI #825356

Bless His Holy Name, *The Worship Hymnal* #151; CCLI # 17566

Gathering Time: Suggested time: 15 minutes)

The Healing Ministry of Jesus

Focal Text

Matthew 9:18-38

Background Text

Matthew 8:1—9:38

Main Idea

Jesus' authoritative words and deeds invite us to respond to him in faith.

Question to Explore

How will you respond to Jesus' authoritative words and deeds?

Teaching Aim

To lead my church to respond to Jesus in faith and to identify ways of helping others respond to Jesus in faith.

Gathering together:

Sing **Hosanna**, *The Worship Hymnal* # 135; CCLI # 221545

First thoughts:

Each one in this gathering most likely is praying regularly for the healing of a friend or loved one. As we do so some very basic faith issues emerge. We ask how important our prayers are? Do they accomplish anything? Does God's healing depend upon many people asking for healing? Is healing related to the amount of faith a person has?

We won't answer all of those questions in this session, but as we examine the healings of Jesus we will see that faith was involved and sometimes it was the faith of another on behalf of the person who was ill. Whatever else emerges from the study, however, we should also understand that Jesus desired more than the physical healing of the person. He wished each one to understand God's power at work for good. He always saw beyond the immediate need to the possibility of that life. Wouldn't it be wonderful to know what the woman healed by touching his garment did after her healing. We really can not

imagine that she returned to a life burdened down with the cares of the world for she had encountered Jesus and His power.

Physical healing is never the greatest good. When we pray for ourselves and for others, we need to pray that we will sense God's power working in our lives. Perhaps we will understand that he is sustaining us through difficult times. Perhaps we will know that he has healed because His purpose for our lives is not yet complete.

May our study today lead us to understand God's sovereignty or authority in our lives for good.

Closing the Gathering Time:

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

The Healing Ministry of Jesus

Focal Text

Matthew 9:18-38

Background Text

Matthew 8:1—9:38

Main Idea

Jesus' authoritative words and deeds invite us to respond to him in faith.

Question to Explore

How will you respond to Jesus' authoritative words and deeds?

Teaching Aim

To lead my church to respond to Jesus in faith and to identify ways of helping others respond to Jesus in faith.

Introduction to your personal study:

We live in a world where people are constantly trying to become one of “the lucky few.” People buy lottery tickets hoping to become instant millionaires. People make risky business investments, hoping that their gamble will pay rich dividends. Entire economies are built on the prospect that some people will prosper and some will not.

The problem is that people have begun to take that sort of mentality to heart. They believe that certain “lucky” people win and most of the rest are doomed to suffer. Jesus met a man who had been lame for thirty-eight years (John 5:2-9). The man was laying beside the pool of Bethesda, where legend had it that whenever an angel stirred up the water, the first one in the water would be healed. For thirty-eight years he believed that God's grace was for only “the lucky few,” and for thirty-eight years he tragically waited, hoping one day to be “the lucky one.” The Jesus approached him and offered God's touch of

grace to this individual, if he would only believe in Jesus' power enough to "Get up, pick up your pallet and walk."

The issue is faith – faith in God's power to be unleashed and transform a person's brokenness and wholeness. God has no limits in his transforming power, except the limits that people place on him with their unbelief. In today's passage we will see some mighty works of Jesus in his earthly ministry. Those works are marked by the faith that desperate people placed in him. They dared believe that God's grace was for them, even in their time of suffering. We will also see certain people who refused to believe, and they missed a blessing. The crowds who refused to believe Jesus' power to raise the dead were sent out and could not witness the miracle. The Pharisees who attributed Jesus' power to the devil were so hardened against Jesus that in that state they would never know his transforming power in their lives.

All of this begs a question. Would you believe that Jesus can touch your life and transform it?

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the **"Introduction"** article found at the beginning of this series of Bible Study and Worship sessions (Bible Teaching #06). The person who downloaded this session should have that material for you, as well.

Matthew highlights the teaching and preaching ministry of Jesus as well as his power to heal, his words and his deeds. By this, Jesus demonstrated that God's kingdom had become evident with the coming of Jesus (3:2). No one could do or say the kinds of things Jesus did unless God was working through him. He indeed was Israel's promised Messiah. The teaching and healing ministry of Jesus did not go without opposition, however. His ministry disrupted the religious status quo, and the religious leaders questioned Jesus' authority to forgive sins (9:3), Jesus' choice of company (9:11), and the note of celebration in Jesus' ministry rather than one of sadness (9:14).

In our passage today, Jesus heals people with a variety of infirmities, performing miracles that the Old Testament prophets said would happen when the Messiah came (Isaiah 35:5-6). Even still, such a ministry received opposition from the religious leaders, saying that such power came from "the prince of demons" rather than from God (9:34). Their refusal to believe prevented them from experiencing God's grace and transformation in their lives.

Matthew sums up this passage with the statement, "Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and **healing every disease and sickness**" (v. 35). This passage includes a variety of those healings (e.g. death, bleeding, blindness, demon-possession, and muteness). But Matthew also tells us the motivation behind Jesus' ministry, "When he saw the crowds,

he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (v. 36).

Each healing story carries some common elements with the others. First, someone came to Jesus out of a sense of desperation. Second, Jesus responded to that person’s need out of his compassion. Third, Jesus healed each infirmity with his great power. And fourth, in several of these stories Jesus deliberately pointed out how vital the person’s faith was to the results that they received. Matthew concluded the section with Jesus’ statement of how many souls need the touch of God’s grace and are ready to respond in faith if someone would only reach out to them, **“The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few”** (v. 37).

Jesus’ authoritative words and deeds invite people to respond to him in faith. All power and authority still rests upon him (Matthew 28:18), and he invites people to come to him in faith with their needs and find his restoring power in their lives. He gives an open invitation saying, “Come to me” (Matthew 11:28). How will you respond to Jesus’ authoritative words and deeds?

Focusing on the Meaning:

“Your faith has healed you” (vv. 18-26)

Not all of the religious rulers stood against Jesus, because **“a ruler came and knelt before him”** in despair because his daughter had just died. Other gospels describe this “ruler” as one of the leaders in the local synagogue (Mark 5:22; Luke 8:41), a man named Jairus. Expressing tremendous faith in Jesus’ power, he begged, **“come and put your hand on her, and she will live.”** Even though his beloved daughter had already died, he knew that Jesus had the power to raise her. Jesus responded to this man’s faith by going with him (v. 19).

The trip to the ruler’s home was interrupted by a woman who had been hemorrhaging for twelve years. As such, she would be ritually unclean and those who made contact with her would be considered unclean also (Leviticus 15:25-30). Having suffered for twelve years, she had already sought whatever medical care she could (Mark 5:26; Luke 8:48), but to no avail. She had the courage to trust in Jesus’ power, saying to herself, **“If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed”** (v. 21). She came up behind Jesus and touched the edge of his cloak. Jesus stopped, turned to her, and said, **“Take heart, daughter, your faith has healed you”** (v. 22).

Jesus made it perfectly clear that her faith in Jesus opened up his power to work in her life. It was not a “magical cloak” that brought her healing, it was God. She believed that God through Jesus could do something that no doctor could do. She wanted to be healed anonymously, but Jesus called for a personal encounter with the object of her faith, himself. She met her Saviour face to face, and immediately **“the woman was healed.”** By making her healing public, she could now re-enter normal social and religious life. The

word for “healed” that Jesus used also means “saved,” and it could be that by using this term, her act of faith in coming to Jesus was for more than just physical healing. Not only did she find salvation from her physical condition, but also salvation from her sins (Matthew 1:21).

When Jesus got to the ruler’s house, the mourners were already crowded around the dead girl, a rather noisy crowd including mournful flute players. Jesus dismissed the crowd with, **“Go away. The girl is not dead but asleep.”** The mourners laughed at him, because they thought Jesus did not understand the reality of the situation. Because of their unbelief, they missed out on seeing the miracle Jesus intended, and they were put out of the house. Of course, the little girl was “dead” because the text tells us that (cf. v. 18), but to Jesus raising someone from physical death was no more difficult than waking a sleeping child. He was going to demonstrate his divine power. Taking the girl by the hand, **“she got up.”** Placing one’s faith in Jesus takes fear away from death, for in the resurrection of Jesus, death has lost its “sting.” For believers, death is merely a period when one’s body is “asleep” until the final resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:20-23, 51-55; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Physical death is by no means our final state, for, “He who believes in me will live, even though he dies (i.e. physically); and whoever lives and believes in me will never die (i.e. spiritually)” (John 11:25-26).

Under the power of Jesus, the ruler’s daughter received a new life. Word of this tremendous miracle **“spread through that region.”** This sort of news would be hard to suppress by Jesus’ opponents, and it probably fueled their hatred of him.

“According to your faith” (vv. 27-31)

From there two blind men followed Jesus, calling out, **“Have mercy on us, Son of David!”** By calling Jesus “Son of David” they seemed to understand the Old Testament prophecies that the Messiah would be a descendant of David (2 Samuel 7:12-16), Israel’s rightful king who would bring in God’s glorious kingdom, including great physical miracles. The prophecy they were probably most interested in was that the Messiah would bring sight to the blind (Isaiah 29:18; 35:5; 42:7). In the ministry of Jesus, healing blind people was one of his most frequent miracles (Matthew 9:27-31; 12:22-23; 15:30-31; 20:30-34; 21:14-15).

These two blind men dared to believe that Jesus was the person prophesied from ancient times in the Old Testament (Matthew 1:1). Jesus asked them, **“Do you believe that I am able to do this?”** (v. 28), to which they replied, **“Yes, Lord.”** Combined with their statement that Jesus was the Messiah (“Son of David”), now they acknowledged him as “Lord.” Jesus was more than a prophet, and he was more than a king. Jesus was “the Lord” himself. Such was their faith. Touching their eyes, Jesus said, **“According to your faith will it be done to you,”** and their sight was restored. Their faith opened up their need to the power of God to work in their lives.

Jesus warned them, **“See that no one knows about this”** (v. 30). This command has been commonly called the “messianic secret.” Demanding secrecy was a regular aspect

of Jesus' ministry at this point (8:4; 12:16; 16:20; 17:9), and this may be the reason that Jesus conducted the miracle "indoors" (v. 28). Not until his triumphal entry into Jerusalem did he openly receive the praise and adulation of the people regarding his messiahship (21:1-11). Jesus' concern seems to be with the popular ideas most had about "the Messiah." Most were expecting a military ruler (21:6-10) who would set Israel free from all their enemies. In addition, because of the Old Testament prophecies, the people expected the Messiah to be one who works miracles. Jesus indeed would set people free, but freedom from political powers was not his chief concern. Jesus indeed did have the power to perform miracles, but he did not want to be known primarily as a traveling miracle-worker. Such a response to his ministry would have gathered interested onlookers and gawkers wanting more of an entertaining show than seeking true salvation. Jesus' primary mission was to bring people forgiveness for their sins (9:1-8; 20:28; 26:28). After Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus lifted all restriction on this so-called "messianic secret" from his disciples (Mark 9:9), when they finally understood what his messiahship truly meant. At that point the command to "tell no one" became a bold command "go and tell" (Mark 16:7), to be bold witnesses of him to the entire world (Acts 1:8).

Thus, Jesus at this point in his ministry warned the two healed blind men not to pre-empt his continued ministry by spreading the good news of their healing. Instead of obeying Jesus, however, **"they spread the news about him all over that region"** (v. 31). Their faith did not lead them to the obedience that should follow. The result was that their celebration, no matter how well-intentioned, contributed even more to the opposition the religious leaders felt against Jesus (cf. v. 34).

"Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel" (vv. 32-34)

In Matthew's gospel demon-possession presents itself in several different forms. Sometimes it displayed itself in violent behaviour that threatened others (8:28), but in other occasions the demon simply affected the person physically, such as blindness or muteness (12:22). In this case, the affected man was caused to be mute because of the demon, and someone brought him to Jesus to be healed. Using his divine authority over all spiritual forces, Jesus drove the demon out and the man regained his speech. God's kingdom had certainly arrived with the coming of Jesus as he came to do battle with the devil and his minions. In Mark's gospel, Jesus described this activity as entering the strong man's house, binding the strong man, and plundering his house (Mark 3:27; cf. Isaiah 49:24-25). In the presence of Jesus, no demon has power.

The result of this miracle was two-fold. The crowds were amazed and responded with, **"Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel"** (v. 33). In the ministry of Jesus they saw an amazing work of God like never before. But the Pharisees hardened their own hearts against God's work and responded with, **"It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons"** (v. 34). They refused to believe the evidence they saw of God's divine activity and attributed the work of Jesus to the devil himself.

Notes About Healing

(A ready to print copy is available on the final pages of this session for those participants who wish to have more information on the subject of healing than the leader will present in the Bible Study.)

Jesus did not heal everybody who was sick in his day any more than he raised up everyone who was dead. There were many people at the pool of Bethesda who were “sick, blind, lame, and withered” (John 5:3), and yet Jesus healed one lame man there (5:5-9). The apostle Paul asked three times for God to take away his infirmity, but God’s deliberate answer was “No” (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). Therefore, it is a misreading of God’s word to take the healing miracles recorded about Jesus as promises that it is automatically God’s will for every person to find physical healing of all of their infirmities in this life.

It is important to understand the teachings the biblical writers intended by recording the stories where Jesus healed somebody miraculously. First, the stories are deliberate indicators that Jesus is God’s promised Messiah. Jesus simply pointed to these events as signs to his identity (Matthew 11:2-5). The Old Testament promises of God’s power unleashed through the Messiah are now clearly demonstrated through the life and ministry of Jesus (Isaiah 35:5-6). God said to the Israelites, “I am the Lord, who heals you” (Exodus 15:26). The miracles of healing confirm where Jesus came from and where he got his power.

Second, the stories point to the fact that God sent Jesus to bring healing into a broken world. Biblical “healing” is far more than physical, for someone is truly “healed” or “saved” when they are made whole or complete in every aspect of their being, physically, spiritually, mentally, emotionally, socially, etc. God is not content to leave us in our brokenness -- that is why he sent Jesus. We sell salvation short when our greatest desires are only for physical healing. People find healing every day (by God’s power) through the wonders of medical science, but their lives are still tragically broken in various aspects. Besides that, one day they will eventually die physically. Meaningful healing can never take place without finding the brokenness brought about by their sin restored. Reconciliation with God is the only way to find true healing. Physical well-being is never the true essence of the Christian faith.

Third, faith in God unleashes his power in our lives. The power never comes from our ability to believe, even though our belief may be wavering (Mark 9:24). Any person who truly believes in God will set absolutely no limits on God’s power to work in the situation. Faith is God’s invitation to work in areas that are beyond our capacity, with the desire that he receive all the glory from the results. Even God’s people need to remember that they are powerless within themselves. Only Jesus is the answer to everyone’s needs. When people come to us for help, they actually are coming to get help from *Jesus*, not from us. We err when we try to minister under our own strength. In faith and prayer we should bring people’s needs before God, asking for God to do a miracle in their lives.

God's purpose is that one day all sickness, all death, mourning, crying, and pain will end for his people (Revelation 21:4), but most will need to await such healing in the age to come. Until then, we pray for healing for ourselves, our friends, and our loved ones, trusting that the God who made our bodies is more than able to restore them to physical health. But at the same time, we trust the Father's heart – that He knows what is best, not ourselves in our own limited perspective. Our model should be that of Jesus who asked the Father, ***"If it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will"*** (Matthew 28:39). If the Father's answer is "No," then we should ask that God would give us the grace to bear that burden as Jesus would, that we would learn to be more like him (Romans 8:29; Hebrews 5:7-9).

"He had compassion on them" (vv. 35-38).

Matthew summed up this section of Jesus' ministry with these words, ***"Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness"*** (v. 35). Matthew used similar words at the beginning of this section of his gospel (4:23). In the Sermon on the Mount (chapters 5-7) Matthew recorded the summary of Jesus' teaching, and in chapters 8-9 Matthew presented Jesus' amazing works of healing.

Matthew also tells us of Jesus' motivation behind his preaching and healing ministry, ***"When he saw the crowds he had compassion on them"*** (v. 36). The term "had compassion" means "to be moved in the inward parts," a deep feeling inside one's stomach and heart, an overwhelming sense of emotion. Several times Matthew notes Jesus with this kind of emotion (14:14; 15:32; 20:34; 18:27), demonstrating that Jesus had the heart of God that hurts for the hurting and is driven to action as a result. The people were ***"harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."*** The religious leaders had not fulfilled their responsibility of taking care of God's people. Instead of shepherding the people, like wicked shepherds they were instead harassing them (Ezekiel 34:1-10). As a result, the people were "helpless." Seeing them in this helpless and harassed state, Jesus was moved with compassion to be their "good shepherd" (John 10:1-21) who would lead, feed, and take care of his sheep. Ultimately the good shepherd himself would become the sacrificial lamb, willingly giving up his own life to pay the price for mankind's greatest need, sin (Isaiah 53:4-9; John 10:11-15).

Jesus then invited his followers to be a part of God's work in reaching out to helpless people. He described the many souls in need of a touch of God's grace, souls who are ready to respond in faith if someone would only reach out to them, ***"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few"*** (v. 37). As long as there are needy crowds Jesus continues to call to his followers to be a part of his work in the harvest field. Jesus calls his followers to minister with his heart of compassion to those who are hurting and helpless. Jesus' followers are regularly to ***"ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field"*** (v. 38).

God will respond to their desperate pleas for more workers, workers who are to continue the task of bringing in the harvest until the Son of Man returns (10:16-23).

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

Re-read the goal statements for this session:

Main Idea: Jesus' authoritative words and deeds invite us to respond to him in faith.

Question to Explore: How will you respond to Jesus' authoritative words and deeds?

Teaching Aim: To lead my church to respond to Jesus in faith and to identify ways of helping others respond to Jesus in faith.

Keep your church focused on these things. Don't allow some participants to turn the Bible study into nothing more than a series of sensationalist stories of healing. The above goals are very important for learning to live as mature followers of the Lord.

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

The Healing Ministry of Jesus

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

Matthew 8:1—9:38

Background Text

Matthew 8:1-9:38

Main Idea

Jesus' authoritative words and deeds invite us to respond to him in faith.

Question to Explore

How will you respond to Jesus' authoritative words and deeds?

Teaching Aim

To lead my church to respond to Jesus in faith and to identify ways of helping others respond to Jesus in faith.

Connect with Life:

As the group gathers, ask them, “Why do people buy lottery tickets? Have you ever felt that everyone else was ‘lucky’ but you were left out?”

Explain: Many feel God reserves his grace for certain “lucky people.” But that is not what the Bible teaches. God wants to touch **everyone’s life** with his transforming power, but people must respond to him in faith for that power to be unleashed in their lives. We’ll see this in today’s passage. As people responded to Jesus in faith, they saw him do an amazing work in their lives.

Add: “Jesus’ authoritative words and deeds invite people to respond to him in faith. In our lesson today, we will ask the question, ‘How will you personally respond to Jesus’ authoritative words and deeds?’”

Background

Give a brief explanation of the background of this passage found in the “Teacher Preparation”.

Share: Matthew sums up this passage with the statement in verses 35-36.

Have someone read verses 35-36.

Explain how this passage includes a variety of those healings (e.g. death, bleeding, blindness, demon-possession, and muteness).

Emphasize: But verses 35 and 36 tell us the **motivation** behind Jesus’ ministry, **“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd”** (v. 36).

Describe to the learners how each healing story carries some common elements with the others:

First, someone came to Jesus out of a sense of desperation.

Second, Jesus responded to that person’s need out of his compassion.

Third, Jesus healed each infirmity with his great power.

Fourth, in several of these stories Jesus deliberately pointed out how vital the person’s faith was to the results that they received.

Have the group look for these four elements as we examine the passages.

Guide the Study:

1. Jesus responds to people’s faith (vv. 18-31).

Have someone read verses 18-19.

Ask:

In this passage, who came first to Jesus and asked for help? [a ruler – possibly one who attended to the practical administration of the synagogue].

Request answers to these questions:

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What was his request?

According to verse 18, how much faith did he have in Jesus' power?

According to verse 19, what was Jesus' response to the man's request?"

Have someone read verses 20-22.

Ask, "What was the condition of the woman who touched Jesus' cloak?" Be prepared to explain how her condition would make her ritually unclean.

Search for responses:

According to verse 21, how much faith did she have in Jesus' power to heal her?

(We might think her faith was almost superstition. It seemed an inadequate faith.)

What was Jesus' response to the woman in verse 22?

What had her faith in Jesus done for her?

Have someone read verses 23-26.

Encourage responses for these:

According to verse 23, who was already gathered at the ruler's house?

What was Jesus' response to them? What did Jesus call the girl's condition?
[sleep]

According to Jesus' words, how difficult would it be for Jesus to raise the girl from the dead? [no more difficult than waking a sleeping person]

According to verse 24, what was the response of the crowd to Jesus' statement?
[they laughed at him]

Why would they laugh at him? What do you think they knew better than Jesus?

According to verse 25, how did Jesus respond to the crowd's unbelief? [he put them outside]

What did Jesus do for the girl? [he raised her from the dead]

Have someone read verses 27-31.

Ask: According to verse 27, who next approached Jesus for help? [two blind men]

Add: What did they call Jesus? [Son of David] Be prepared to explain from the "Teacher Preparation" section the significance of the term "Son of David."

Have the group look at Isaiah 35:5-6.

Look for answers to these questions about the above verses:

What did the Old Testament prophecies say would happen when the Messiah appeared?

Do you think the two blind men believed the prophecy?

According to verse 28, did they believe that Jesus had the power to help them?

According to verse 29, what did Jesus indicate was vital to their healing? [their faith]

According to verse 30, what response did they receive for their faith in Jesus? [their sight was restored]

After they were healed, what did Jesus warn them not to do (v. 30)? If necessary, be ready to explain about the “messianic secret” concept from the “Teacher Preparation” section.

Ask, Did these two men obey Jesus’ command (v. 31)?

Had their faith in Jesus led them to obedience?

Have the group look again at these three instances in verses 18-31.

Search out opinions: What is common in each of these instances of healing?

Continue: How important is faith in Jesus’ power for him to work in someone’s trying circumstance?

2. Jesus ministers with divine power (vv. 32-34).

Have someone read verses 32-33.

Ask, “What was this man’s desperate condition?”

According to verse 33, how much authority did Jesus have over the demon? What was the response to the crowd to this miracle (v. 33)?”

Tell the group: If anyone wants more information on the subject of healing, “Notes About Healing” is available and may be copied from the final pages of the session. Whoever downloads the sessions for the group will make copies for those who want them.

Make sure the group understands the purpose the biblical writers had for recording the healing miracles in Jesus’ ministry.

Be prepared to discuss any issues arising from the reading such as:

- Does God still have the power to heal today?
- Is it always God's will to heal our sickness?
- Is physical healing our greatest need?
- Do we still need faith in God's power to work in our lives?
- Will we always get what we ask for in our prayers?

Have someone read verse 34.

Pose these questions:

- What was the response of the Pharisees to Jesus' miracle (v. 34)?
- To whom did they attribute Jesus' power?
- In this state of unbelief, would these Pharisees experience God's transforming power in their lives?

3. Jesus calls his followers to participate in his work (vv. 35-38).

Have someone read verses 35-36.

Inquire of the group:

- According to verse 36, what was the motivation behind Jesus' ministry?
[compassion]
- How did Jesus perceive the people? [harassed and helpless]
- What did the people need? [a shepherd]

Have the group look at John 10:11-18.

Seek an answer to this: What did Jesus come to be for people? [the Good Shepherd]

Have someone read verses 37-38.

Search for answers to these questions:

- According to these verses, how many people are ready to receive a touch from God and respond to him in faith? [the harvest is plentiful]
- What is the main problem with God's harvest field, is it lack of an abundant harvest? [no, the problem is that the workers are few]

According to verse 38, what should Jesus' followers regularly be doing regarding God's harvest field of souls? [asking God to send forth workers]

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Point out that as long as there are needy crowds Jesus continues to call to his followers to be a part of his work in the harvest field. Jesus calls his followers to minister with his heart of compassion to those who are hurting and helpless.

In light of what we have studied in God's word today:

What does God want me to *believe*?

What does God want me to *do*?

Is there a *promise* I need to claim?

Is there an *example* I need to follow? Or to avoid?

Close in prayer.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

YOUTH!!! TAKE TEN

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

The Healing Ministry of Jesus Matthew 8:1—9:38

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

How Do I Minister to Those Who Are Ill?

Young people sometimes feel that serious illness is something that happens to older people. But it is probable that in your circle of friends someone is seriously ill. Usually, when serious illness occurs, there is an outpouring of concern for the first few days or weeks. But as time goes on, everyone gets busy with their own lives and may put the needs of a sick friend to the back of his/her mind.

Ask yourself these questions:

Do I have a friend who is struggling with illness? (This could include cancer, depression, anorexia, an immune disease, anxiety and others).

How long have I known about this?

What have I done to help in the past?

Is there some concrete thing I can do to help now?

(A visit, take homework over and help them stay up with their classes, communicate by Facebook or twitter or the phone, share a video or computer game you liked etc.)

Write out a prayer you would be comfortable praying for your friend or acquaintance.

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***The Healing Ministry of Jesus***
Matthew 8:1—9:38**Beginning the Service:**

Sing:

You Are My All in All, *The Worship Hymnal* # 143; CCLI #825356**Bless His Holy Name**, *The Worship Hymnal* #151; CCLI # 17566**Call to Worship: Isaiah 35***First reader:*

The desert and the parched land will be glad;
 the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.
 Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom;
 it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.
 The glory of Lebanon will be given to it.
 The splendor of Carmel and Sharon,
 they will see the glory of the Lord,
 the splendor of our God.

Second reader:

Strengthen the feeble hands,
 steady the knees that give way;
 say to those with fearful hearts,
 "Be strong, do not fear;
 your God will come,
 he will come with vengeance;
 with divine retribution
 he will come to save you."

Third reader:

Then will the eyes of the blind be opened,
 and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
 Then will the lame leap like a deer,
 and the mute tongue shout for joy.
 Water will gush forth in the wilderness

and streams in the desert.
The burning sand will become a pool,
The thirsty ground bubbling springs.
In the haunts where jackals once lay,
grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

Fourth reader:

And a highway will be there;
it will be called the Way of Holiness.
The unclean will not journey on it;
it will be for those who walk in that Way;
wicked fools will not go about on it.
No lion will be there.
But only the redeemed will walk there,
and the ransomed of the Lord will return.
They will enter Zion with singing;
everlasting joy will crown their heads.
Gladness and joy will overtake them,
and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Offering:

Praying for the World:

Pray that we are sensitive to the five pillars of Islam as we have opportunity to share Christ with Muslim neighbours and co-workers.

Confession of faith, or Shahada – Sincerely pronouncing that there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet. Denial of the Shahada removes hope for salvation.

Prayer, or Salat – Following ceremonial washing, Muslims must pray five times a day facing Mecca. The five times of prayers are before sunrise, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset and before sleep.

Almsgiving, or Zakat – The Quran teaches that giving 2.5 percent of one's capital wealth to the poor or toward spreading Islam purifies the person's remaining wealth.

The Fast, or Sawm – During the month of Ramadan, nothing should pass through a Muslim's lips between sunrise and sunset.

Pilgrimage, or Hajj – All Muslims who are able must journey to Mecca at least once in their lifetime. Each pilgrim must walk seven times around the Kaabah – the shrine of the black rock, the holiest site of Islam.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

Jesus Heals Every Disease and Sickness

In our passage today, Jesus heals people with a variety of infirmities, performing miracles that the Old Testament prophets said would happen when the Messiah came (Isaiah 35:5-6).

Matthew sums up this passage with the statement, "Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and **healing every disease and sickness**" (v. 35)

Chapters 8 and 9 of the book of Matthew contain story after story of the healing which Jesus did. Obviously, as many as are recorded, they are not all the healings which Jesus did. They could not possibly be all the people who needed healing or who may have come to hear Jesus preach in hopes of receiving healing. Only eternity will indicate why some were healed and others were not. That is true of healing which occurs today.

A man with leprosy was healed. A servant belonging to a soldier was healed. A disciple's mother-in-law was healed and she got up and began to care for Jesus. Perhaps she prepared a meal for him. Two demon-possessed men were healed. A paralytic walked. A woman with a long standing bleeding disorder was healed when she touched the garment which Jesus wore. A child who had died was brought to life again. Blind men received their sight. Many of these involved the faith of another person. Some involved the act of asking and the faith that represented on the part of the healed person.

David Wyman, editor of homechurchonline.com, was diagnosed with throat cancer in 1993. He was 52 years old and a busy educational specialist helping churches across Canada. His first grandchild was one year old.

The prognosis was grim. In fact, the young doctor making the diagnosis told him he might not survive beyond Christmas. It was already late July.

Good doctors and medical care and the prayers of friends and strangers were a reality. The following February, the doctor said there was no sign of the cancer.

David's testimony then and now was gratitude to God for his sustaining grace and peace during the months of treatment. But he has no illusions that his faith was different or stronger than some of his friends who have not been healed. His own brother and his brother-in-law, both dedicated Christians, died of cancer.

Somehow in God's eternal purpose, David was to live. He likes to think that he was to develop homechurchonline.com and that ministry would be used to win people to Christ and help them live in healthy churches around the world.

In that journey the Wyman family realized that physical healing was not the greatest good. Knowing God's sustaining peace and grace and experiencing the love of the community of faith was a greater good.

Matthew 9:35-38 says ***Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep with a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."***

Jesus saw the need of people for physical healing and the great need for spiritual healing. He was always preaching the good news. He wanted the people who were healed physically to be healed spiritually as well. In Chapter 9:2 we are told ***Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven"***.

How sad it would be for someone to be healed physically, but not be made whole spiritually. Often even after a major illness, other physical issues arise. Aging will take its toll and death will eventually come for all of us.

Running through these chapters in Matthew is the call to discipleship. In Chapter 8:19 a teacher of the law told Jesus that he would follow him wherever he went. Jesus replied that unlike foxes who have holes and birds who have nests, he had no home. Following Jesus was not easy.

Another disciple wanted to bury his father. It would be appropriate for a son to attend to this responsibility. Perhaps this disciple really meant that he needed to care for an aging parent and that someday he would be free to follow Jesus. At any rate, Jesus indicated that the call to follow him was immediate and took precedence over all other commitments.

He called Matthew, the tax collector, to be his disciple and later ate with friends of Matthew's –other tax collectors and "sinners".

Finally he says that the harvest is plentiful and the workers are few. There are multitudes to be healed, to be fed, to be taught about the kingdom. There are few people who are committed to doing this.

This was the reality when Jesus spoke and it is the reality today.

Call to Commitment:

It is possible that as your church met today you prayed for the physical illnesses of people within your circle of love and influence. That is good and appropriate.

But it also good and absolutely essential that we pray as well for those who need to hear about the good news of salvation. We may pray in general terms; but every day we ought also to pray for those people within our own circle of influence – that person who will only hear the gospel if we share with him or her.

Concluding the Service:

Give time for individuals to identify in their minds and hearts someone who they need to pray will come to know Christ as Saviour. Pray that we may have an opportunity to share the gospel with him or her this week in some large or small way.

If desired, copy these notes on healing for those who wish more information on the subject than is included in the Bible Study.

Notes About Healing

Jesus did not heal everybody who was sick in his day any more than he raised up everyone who was dead. There were many people at the pool of Bethesda who were “sick, blind, lame, and withered” (John 5:3), and yet Jesus healed one lame man there (5:5-9). The apostle Paul asked three times for God to take away his infirmity, but God’s deliberate answer was “No” (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). Therefore, it is a misreading of God’s word to take the healing miracles recorded about Jesus as promises that it is automatically God’s will for every person to find physical healing of all of their infirmities in this life.

It is important to understand the teachings the biblical writers intended by recording the stories where Jesus healed somebody miraculously. First, the stories are deliberate indicators that Jesus is God’s promised Messiah. Jesus simply pointed to these events as signs to his identity (Matthew 11:2-5). The Old Testament promises of God’s power unleashed through the Messiah are now clearly demonstrated through the life and ministry of Jesus (Isaiah 35:5-6). God said to the Israelites, “I am the Lord, who heals you” (Exodus 15:26). The miracles of healing confirm where Jesus came from and where he got his power.

Second, the stories point to the fact that God sent Jesus to bring healing into a broken world. Biblical “healing” is far more than physical, for someone is truly “healed” or “saved” when they are made whole or complete in every aspect of their being, physically, spiritually, mentally, emotionally, socially, etc. God is not content to leave us in our brokenness -- that is why he sent Jesus. We sell salvation short when our greatest desires are only for physical healing. People find healing every day (by God’s power) through the wonders of medical science, but their lives are still tragically broken in various aspects. Besides that, one day they will eventually die physically. Meaningful healing can never take place without finding the brokenness brought about by their sin. Reconciliation with God is the only way to find true healing. Physical well-being is never the true essence of the Christian faith.

Third, faith in God unleashes his power in our lives. The power does not come from the strength of our belief. Our belief may be wavering (Mark 9:24). Any person who truly believes in God will set absolutely no limits on God’s power to work in the situation. Faith is God’s invitation to work in areas that are beyond our capacity, with the desire that He receive all the glory from the results. Even God’s people need to remember that they are powerless within themselves. Only Jesus is the answer to everyone’s needs. When people come to us for help, they actually are coming to get help from *Jesus*, not from us. We err when we try to minister under our own strength. In faith and prayer we should bring people’s needs before God, asking for God to do a miracle in their lives.

God's purpose is that one day all sickness, all death, mourning, crying, and pain will end for his people (Revelation 21:4), but most will need to await such healing in the age to come. Until then, we pray for healing for ourselves, our friends, and our loved ones, trusting that the God who made our bodies is more than able to restore them to physical health. But at the same time, we trust the Father's heart – that He knows what is best, not ourselves in our own limited perspective. Our model should be that of Jesus who asked the Father, ***"If it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will"*** (Matthew 28:39). If the Father's answer is "No," then we should ask that God would give us the grace to bear that burden as Jesus would, that we would learn to be more like him (Romans 8:29; Hebrews 5:7-9).

The Five Pillars of Islam

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The splendor of Carmel and Sharon,
they will see the glory of the Lord,
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Second reader:

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steady the knees that give way;
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Third reader:

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