

Who Do You Say That I Am?

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

97- Jesus' Authority Over Disease; Disabilities; Demons; and Death- Part 8

Church May 12, 2024

Matthew 9:27-38

27 As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"

28 When He entered the house, the blind men came up to Him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."

29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, "It shall be done to you according to your faith."

30 And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them: "See that no one knows about this!"

31 But they went out and spread the news about Him throughout all that land.

32 As they were going out, a mute, demon-possessed man was brought to Him.

33 After the demon was cast out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed, and were saying, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

34 But the Pharisees were saying, "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons."

35 Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

36 Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

37 Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

38 "Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

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

When we read the four gospel Records- we see several Actions or Statements by Jesus that seem very odd or out of place. And one of those is found at the End of verse 30. Jesus has just miraculously and sovereignly opened the eyes of two blind men and yet He tells them,

... See that no one knows about this!

What? Why wouldn't Jesus want EVERYBODY to know that He has the very SAME absolute Authority that God Almighty has? I mean, He is healing all these people in Public, anyway. So, *everybody* who is there sees it. And Jesus is NOT imposing that "gag-order" on the people who see the Miracles. But only to the ones on whom He healed. So, *why* the Command to be silent?

The Answer lies in what the Purpose for Healings and Miracles were in the first place. Miracles of physical Healing were NOT the *primary* Goal of the Prophets in the Old Testament; nor of Jesus and the Apostles in the New. The Events we read about that reveal amazing, breathtaking Miracles and Healings- are also NOT some kind of "Formula" or "Pattern" that we are to follow so that we can heal people in our Day.

So, *why* would Jesus COMMAND those men to NOT tell others what Jesus has done for them? If you and I were starting a Religion- wouldn't we want as many people as possible to know who we were and what we could do? So, we would probably NEVER tell anyone to purposefully NOT tell someone when they had just received a Miracle. But Jesus did- and He did that- *repeatedly*. So, what is that about?

Now as I have told you before- it is not necessary for people to have Faith in order to be healed. The gospel Records are filled with times when Jesus healed and the people didn't have any Faith at all! Most of the time when Healings occurred in the Bible- the Word of God doesn't mention whether the people who were healed had Faith. So, those who teach that Faith is a Requirement for physical Healing should really spend more time reading and studying the Bible- because they are wrong about this.

But the more you study the New Testament, the more apparent it becomes to you that Jesus, in His first Advent (Coming), put on a breathtaking Display of what was to come in His Kingdom. For example, when He was taken into the Mount and was transfigured before Peter, James, and John- Jesus "pulled His Flesh aside" and showed them the Glory that He had with the Father before the world was made. So, all of these Miracles are actually just previews of what will be common when Jesus comes back.

Later on, when on the Day of Pentecost, the Disciples were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other Languages, the Apostle Peter infallible said,

“This is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel.” (The Acts 2:16)

... in other words, what was going on in the Upper Room on that Day- is what Joel prophesied about some 800 years before Jesus was born.

And it was a Sample- a Foretaste of what was *ultimately* going to come in Fullness in its *final* Form- in the glorious Kingdom! So, Jesus’ earthly Life became a series of Glimpses into the *ultimate* Power to be demonstrated when He establishes His eternal Rule in the new Heaven and the new Earth.

But it is important to realize that Matthew does not select these Miracles randomly. He doesn’t throw them in just because he liked them. They are explicitly in his gospel Record to give his Jewish brethren and us- the full range of prophetic Fulfillment; and to affirm to them as well as us- that Jesus is none other than the promised Messiah!

So, while Faith is NOT necessary for physical Healing- Faith IS necessary for spiritual Conversion. And Jesus saw that these blind men had Faith. And that meant that they had ALREADY experienced the Miracle of the New Birth. And it also meant that God the Father had chosen them for Salvation before the Foundation of the world and had sovereignly given them the Gift of “saving Faith”. And so, they were there before Jesus on that Day- precisely because God the Father had *drawn* them to Jesus for Salvation. In **John 6:44**- Jesus said,

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.

... and again in **John 6:65b**:

... no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.

... and again in **John 6:37**:

All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

So, the reason Jesus receives those who come to Him- even though they are filthy with their Sin- is because He sees them as being Gifts from His Father. And Jesus loves His Father more than anything or anyone else. And that is why He

receives them; and why He will NOT cast them out; nor why He will NOT ever lose them.

No Sinner can come to Jesus for Salvation simply because he wants to or because he chooses to. That is NOT what the Bible teaches. The Bible teaches that lost Sinners are “Fallen”. And in their fallen Condition- they CANNOT come to Jesus UNLESS their Salvation has been sovereignly “granted” by God the Father. And even then- they CANNOT come simply because they want to or because they choose to come. No, Jesus said that God the Father MUST *draw* them; or *drag* them to Jesus.

And that is WHY Jesus receives them. Since no lost person can come to Jesus for Salvation simply because they want to or because they choose to; and because God the Father MUST sovereignly draw them to Jesus- then when they do appear before Jesus; and they say things like, “*I need Mercy!*”; and when they openly confess, “*You are the promised Messiah!*”; and when they say, “*I believe You have the divine Power of God!*” and when they say, “*Yes!*” and when they address Jesus by the title, “*Lord*”; that is Evidence that they have been given the Gift of “saving Faith”; and that God the Father has drawn them to Jesus for Him to wash their black heart in red Blood and make it whiter than snow! And that’s *why* Jesus receives them; and washes them; and why He keeps them!

Now remember, the 1st Century in Israel was *dominated* by a religious Ethic whose main Goal was to find whose Fault it was as to why “Bad things” happened. Turn with me to **John 9:1&2:**

1 As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.

2 And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?"

This man was born blind. And please note that there was NOT one iota of Concern for his Welfare from the Disciples of Jesus as to just how this man was going to eat or live. All they wanted to know- is whose Fault it was that he was born blind! Did his Parents sin or did he sin?

Now *why* do you suppose they wanted to know that? So, they could assign Blame! Again, not one ounce of Concern for the man’s plight in Life- their ONLY concern was who to blame. And along with that evil Desire to blame somebody for this man’s Disability- was the ridiculous notion that, perhaps the man himself had sinned. But if that was the case- then he would have had to sin- BEFORE HE WAS BORN- because this man was *born* blind! But what did Jesus say in the very next verse?

It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him. (John 9:3)

... which tells us that children born with Birth Defects (Blindness/Down's, etc.) are actually Instruments of God's Grace by which the "*Works of God*" may be displayed in them! And that means they should NOT be *brutally* ripped to shreds or *inhumanly* burned to Death through Abortion!

But it also tells us how the two blind men in **Matthew 9** were looked at by the Jewish religious Leaders. So, these were NOT merely blind people- but men who had lived a Life of Ridicule and Rejection because, obviously, they must have sinned horribly before God or they wouldn't be blind. Now look again at verse 29:

Then He touched their eyes, saying, "It shall be done to you according to your faith."

Now why would Jesus make this Statement if physical Healing has NO Connection to Faith? Is my previous Statement in Error? No, it isn't. People who teach that Faith is a Requirement to be physically healed forget about three Issues:

1. We are to interpret the Scriptures in accord with the correct Context
2. People who have enough Faith to be saved- are not always healed
3. Lost people (who have NO Faith) are sometimes healed

When Faith-healers and other "*Snake-oil Salesmen*" teach that Faith is *required* to be *physically* healed- they are taking these verses *completely* out of the Context of 1st Century Israel and bringing them into 21st Century America. And in addition to being sloppy Exegesis- it also happens to be Wrong and Sinful. Because taking Verses or Passages out of Context *changes* what the writer had in mind; and gives people a Meaning that the writer NEVER intended. And that, in effect, is "false Doctrine". It is a Lie; and it is Evil. No one has the Right to do that.

The correct Context back in 1st Century Israel- is that blind people were considered to be very sinful and evil people. Because, obviously, God has cursed them to live their entire Lives as beggars. Blind people couldn't work in most Occupations and there was NO Government Program or School or Charity to help them. So, back then- Israel was filled with people- both Children and Adults- who sat on the sides of the roads- begging people who came by- to give them food or money or both. So, not only were these blind people living horribly- the social Stigma of them being cursed by God was almost as bad as being Blind. So, the last

thing that any self-respecting Jew of the 1st Century would have thought was that any blind person could be chosen by God for Salvation. That would have never entered their mind. And THAT is why Jesus said,

"It shall be done to you according to your faith."

... Jesus was NOT referring to healing their blind eyes as much as He was referring to their Salvation! Because inherit in Salvation is the Gift of "saving Faith" that is part of the Miracle of the New Birth. So, if these two men ONLY wanted to be healed- Faith was NOT a Requirement at all. But if they desired to be rescued from God's Wrath against their Sins- then Faith was the MAIN Requirement.

The renowned Anglican Arch-Bishop of the 19th Century, Richard Trench said this about Faith,

*"The faith which in itself is nothing is yet the organ for receiving everything. It is the conducting link between man's emptiness and God's fullness, and herein lies all the value faith has"... "Faith is the bucket let down into the fountain of God's grace without which the man could never draw water of life from the wells of salvation. For the wells are deep and of himself man has nothing to draw with. Faith is the purse which cannot of itself make its owner rich, and yet effectually enriches by the wealth which it contains."*¹

So, what Jesus is doing here is causing these two men to prove (to themselves; to those who knew them; and to those who were standing there watching)- that God the Father had in fact, chosen to "set His Love" on them before the Foundation of the world to forgive them of all their Sins; and to give them perfect Righteousness. Because if they had already experienced the Miracle of the New Birth- then God has already given them the Gift of "saving Faith" as well as a heart that could believe and trust and hope in Jesus. No look at the first part of verse 30:

And their eyes were opened...

Now as Jews, these two men had been taught the Old Testament Scriptures their entire Lives. And one of the Characteristics that the Old Testament clearly and repeatedly assigns to the Messiah is the Ability to open blind eyes. And so, back in verse 28, when Jesus asked them,

¹ "Trench, Richard Chenevix (TRNC825RC)". *A Cambridge Alumni Database*. University of Cambridge.

"Do you believe that I am able to do this?"

... this was an *unnecessary* Question to ask- if all that was involved here was physically healing these two men. And to verify that- look at what Matthew wrote in verse 35:

Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

... and Matthew gives us no indication that Jesus was asking any of those people if they had enough Faith to be healed.

Jesus simply sovereignly healed them- to prove that He was God. But here with these two blind men- Jesus *lingers* with them; and talks to them; and asks them Questions. So, that tells us that the Event here with these two men was NOT put into Matthew's gospel Record to simply record another physical Healing- but to show us that Jesus will save even those considered to be outcasts and great Sinners- because of their Disability.

Now historically, it is important to know that it was NOT the Government, who first built schools for the Blind; the Deaf; the Cripple; and those who were mentally impaired- to teach them to read and write and empower them to hold Jobs. It was the Christian Church! And it was the Christian Church that lobbied Lawmakers to pass Laws that *prohibited* evil people from *abusing* the Disabled.

By God's Grace- it was the tens of thousands of unknown and forgotten Christian men and women- who dedicated their Lives to helping these people with Disabilities to live an infinitely better Life. And along the Way to giving them a better Life- they preached and taught God's Word to those people- so that those whom God chose for Salvation would hear the Gospel; believe the Gospel; repent; and trust in Jesus and in His finished Work; and be eternally saved!

Now we need to know that not ALL disabled people are chosen for Salvation- just like not ALL of any other Group are chosen. But because of the Christian Church- disabled people today have a very good Quality of Life- even if some are NOT saved. But those who have been chosen- they can now have the Gospel made clear to them- so that they may be saved! And that simply didn't happen until the Church did it. And we should thank God for that! Because that is an Example of Christians taking the Bible to heart and going forth- into the Darkness of this fallen and broken world-

... so that the works of God might be displayed in [them]

We should remember that God told Moses in **Exodus 4:11b**:

... Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes him mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?

... so, the inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word of the one, true, and living Owner and Creator of Heaven and Earth says that God Himself made... the Deaf and the Blind on Purpose! And that means they are NOT Mistakes! They are NOT aberrations of cells that didn't *evolve* correctly! And so, disabled Children are to be allowed to live; and be loved; and taught; and given Hope; and afforded the Opportunity of a productive Life.

But since the Government of the United States as well as both the medical and legal Professions are determined to *systematically eliminate* the Disabled through the modern- day equivalent of the horror of "*Eugenics*"²- the Christian Church must stand up against this great Evil and cry out against the wicked Mentality that says that human babies, who are inconvenient; or sick; or frail; or weak- should be murdered in the most inhuman and barbaric and violent Way.

And then the Christian couples, who make up the modern Church- need to put their Money where their Mouth is and *promote* the Birth of ALL Children- even those who have Disabilities! Now please read verse 30 again:

... And Jesus sternly warned them: "See that no one knows about this!"

Now this is another one of those very strange and odd Statements that Jesus made. And look how Matthew worded this,

... And Jesus sternly warned them ...

... now the tense of this verb, "*to warn*" is in a very strict and serious tense. So, Jesus wasn't kidding here and He wasn't being frivolous. He is dead-earnest about these two men NOT letting anyone know what God had done *with; for; and to* them. Now keep in mind that Jesus has just saved them- in addition to physically healing them. So, what are these men supposed to do? And why is Jesus so serious about them not telling anyone?

Many people teach that the Reason Jesus said this- was because He didn't want the people to make Him their King. And I think this is probably, at least, a

² Eugenics was the Concept that by killing off or by not allowing the "Undesirables" to procreate (through forced Sterilization) Mankind would evolve into a "super-race" of highly intelligent; productive; and physically stronger people, who would be genetically "pure". Contrary to popular Belief however, Eugenics was birthed in England and the United States in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Germany only adopted its tenets after Hitler came to Power.

part of why Jesus said this. We must remember that the average Jew of the 1st Century was NOT looking for a Savior to rescue them from God's Wrath against their Sins. They were looking for a human being- a flesh and blood man to act as a warrior/politician- to raise an army to vanquish the Romans and return Israel back to its Glory that the Nation enjoyed under King Solomon.

Back then, the Nation of Israel extended as far North as Damascus and as far South as Egypt. Even modern-day Israel hasn't recovered that much real estate. Secondly, they were looking for the Messiah to receive all of the dispersed Jews, who had been *forcibly* spread across the known world through both Persecution and War. Thirdly, they wanted this "Messiah" to go out from the borders of the re-constituted Nation of Israel and engage in military campaigns to utterly *annihilate* the Gentile Nations and incorporate them into a "greater Israel". And then (and only then) would this Messiah be able to rule and reign over the "whole earth" with a "rod of iron" from Jerusalem.

The 1st Century Jew's understanding of God's Choice concerning them (Sovereign Election) was both warped and unbiblical. And Jesus NEVER went along with them about it (and neither should we). Instead- Jesus rebuked them as NOT understanding either the Scriptures (OT) nor the Power of God! (**Matthew 27:11**). So, their Understanding concerning who the Messiah would be; and what he would do once he got here- was a Man-made fabricated Belief System that was almost completely *disconnected* to the Old Testament Promises.

And that is somewhat understandable- since it is always *infinitely* easier to look back than it is to look forward. But what is NOT so understandable is how so many in the modern Church believe what is just as warped and just as disconnected from the Scriptures concerning this Subject. And so, as a result of building Belief on top of Man-made Teaching- what the average Believer in the modern Church holds to concerning this subject is filled with Superstition and of taking entire Old Testament passages completely out of Context while almost *universally* ignoring many New Testament ones.

But the focus this morning is on the Reality that the Jews then (as well as now) desperately needed the Messiah to graciously rescue them from God's Wrath that was against their many Sins. And as Joseph contemplated either ending the Engagement with his Fiancé (divorce)- or having her stoned to Death- an Angel spoke with him in that Dream- and gave him the *primary* focus of the earthly Ministry of Jesus,

She [Mary] will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21)

... so, for the most part, the Jew of the 1st Century was NOT already

saved; nor were they already a son or daughter of Abraham- precisely because they were NOT already saved! And that means that during the earthly Ministry of Jesus- all the Jews, who embraced Jesus by Faith; repented of Sin; and put ALL their eternal Hope in Jesus- were saved. And those who didn't weren't- even though they could trace their Genealogy back to Father Abraham; and even though they had already been circumcised.

So, since it wasn't time for Jesus to be crowned as King- many today teach that this is why He told those two men He had just healed to not tell anyone. But even though there may be *some* validity to this- it can't be the main Reason because even if those two men had obeyed Jesus' Command- the News of this amazing Miracle would still reach all of Israel- because this Healing had taken place in the sight of tens of thousands of people- who were constantly following Jesus.

But what exactly does Jesus expect from these two men? They were blind and now they're not. And even if they weren't famous- *somebody* knew them. And so, are they supposed to walk around and act like they're blind by purposefully bumping into things? On top of that- these men were also Lost and now they're saved. So, should they keep sinning so nobody will know they're saved? So, there must be something much more important than this.

First of all, it was what they called Jesus. Back in verse 27, they called Jesus, "*Son of David!*" And that is a *messianic* Title. And going around proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah- the legitimate Son of David and the true Heir to the Throne- could really cause quite a stir. It might even cause an Insurrection because Jesus was NOT working through the acceptable Channels.

We must remember that Jesus NEVER met with the High Priest in Jerusalem; He NEVER appeared before the Sanhedrin to be awarded the proper Credentials; and He NEVER sought approval from the Scribes or Pharisees. ALL of His Preaching and Teaching was *outside* the normal Protocol of Accountability. And so, Jesus NEVER placed Himself under any other human Authority.

Now people do that today. They make the Claim that they are hearing directly from the Holy Spirit and they say, "*I'm following Jesus and so, I'm NOT going to submit myself to any Man.*" And they will say they are following Jesus' Example as they do this. But they're NOT following Jesus' Example. They are simply being Rebellious as they think too highly of themselves. So, there are several Problems with people like this:

- They are NOT Deity- so they are NOT hearing directly from the Holy Spirit
- They are NOT Infallible- so they NEED to be held Accountable

- The New Testament COMMANDS that EVERYONE submit themselves to Church Government

But not only would the Jews NOT understand this- the Romans wouldn't have understood it either- because to them- Caesar was the *ultimate* King. And ultimately, if you know the Story of Jesus- it was that very Affirmation that Jesus was the King of all the other kings; and the Lord over all other lords of the earth that brought Him to the Cross.

So, what Jesus was telling those two men was, "*It's just NOT the time for all that- yet- so, don't get that started!*" Because God's Plan MUST ALWAYS be in accord with God's Timing.

Secondly, the people wanted a King- for a number of Reasons. And most of those reasons were Selfish and Sinful. Very few people wanted God's Will concerning this. The despised Romans had their boot on the neck of the Jews; and they had lived under the Humiliation of Gentile over-lords for hundreds of years. So, they reasoned to themselves that ANYTHING that would deliver them from that- *had* to be God's Will. Also, they reasoned to themselves that ANYONE who could give them the Welfare State they wanted- MUST be in God's Will, too. Please look at **John 6:26-29**:

26 Jesus answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.

27 Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal."

28 Therefore they said to Him, "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?"

29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."

Now here, Jesus had just feed 5,000 men with two fish and five loaves of bread. And back then- they didn't count Women and Children- so, there *could* have been as many as 25,000 people who had just been fed with two fish and five loaves of bread. So, this is an amazing Miracle! But Jesus saw their Unbelief. So, He told them in verse 26,

"You don't come after Me because of what I say, but because you just want free food!"

Now this is NOT simply a Rebuke. The Jews actually DID expect the Messiah to create a genuine “Welfare State” when he came into Power- where ALL of what they needed to live would be provided for them- without any Cost; and without any Labor. And this was a *large* part of their eschatological Belief System and the ancient Rabbis wrote about it quite extensively.

But Jesus said what God wanted from them was both very Simple and very Profound. God wanted the Jews to believe in Him. And Jesus said that the Labor that God wanted from them- was for them to...

... believe in Him whom He has sent

... but look at their Response in the very next verse:

So they said to Him, "What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform? (John 6:30)

Jesus had just performed one of the most amazing Miracles He ever did- by feeding 25,000 people with just two small fish and five loaves of bread- while taking up 12 baskets of scraps! None of those people had ever seen anything like it! So, believing in Jesus *should* have been easy as pie. And yet- when confronted with the Command to believe- they responded by asking Jesus what Sign He was going to give to them!

Now this is NOT an honest effort to believe. This is an Insult to the Man, who just showered them with His Mercy. So, this is a categorical REJECTION of Jesus by these people and a wicked Sin!

What audacity! What Self-righteousness!

The Point I am making is that even though the people wanted to make Jesus their King- they didn't want to do this because they loved Jesus and sought to obey Him. They simply wanted Jesus as their King- so they could eat anytime they were hungry. So, they didn't love Jesus at all; they didn't delight in obeying Him- they simply wanted to *use* Jesus to get what they really wanted- a total Welfare State!

And this tells us that Jesus told those two men He had healed and saved to NOT tell anyone- because He wanted people to conclude WHO He was- *for themselves!* Jesus did NOT want people to hear Rumors and Hearsay about Him- He wanted people to come and see for themselves- Who He was- and then make a correct Judgment about Him.

And so, if those men went beyond the circle of the people who already knew them and started broadcasting what had happened to them- people would say, “*Well how do we know you were really blind? We don't believe that. We don't buy that.*” So, it is *always* better if the people came; and saw; and met; and talked with

Jesus *themselves*. And then, after *carefully* examining everything themselves- they decided that Jesus was the Messiah. THAT would be infinitely better! But what did they do? Please read verse 31 again with me:

But they went out and spread the news about Him throughout all that land.

... so, even though there may have been some very important reasons for them NOT to say anything- those two men, who were blind and lost and who Jesus healed and saved- disobeyed anyway! And they disobeyed- *spectacularly*! I mean, they *really* disobeyed! As soon as Jesus commanded them to not tell- they went out from His Presence and spread the News about Jesus...

... throughout all that land

... and as far as I know- this Disobedience is the ONLY kind of Disobedience that even today- 2,000 years later- when we hear about it- we *rejoice*! We literally praise and thank God for their Disobedience! And we give God Glory for their Disobedience! And so, even though I'm not sure what God thinks about this- because Sin is Sin- I actually *celebrate* this Disobedience!

And that represents everything I know about this. Jesus didn't want a fickle, premature Movement to enthrone Him as a King. Jesus didn't want a whole lot of people following Him- who agreed with the Cause, but who were *personally* unrepentant and couldn't care less about the King of the Kingdom. And that eliminated those people- because they were simply looking for a circus atmosphere and a Way- *any* Way- to get Rome off their land! But Jesus had no Desire to start a revolutionary Uprising on behalf of Himself- at the wrong Place and the wrong Time. And that's *why* Jesus sternly warned them and said,

See that no one knows about this!

Please listen to me. Yes, Jesus loves us. And we should always *celebrate* and *rejoice* in His Love for us. But Jesus knows full well that the very BEST thing He can do for us- to prove His great Love for us- is to deliver us *out* of a "*Man-centered Theology*"- where everything God does is for *our* Benefit- and bring us into a "*God-centered Theology*"- where everything God does is for His own Glory!

Because the very BEST thing Jesus can give to us- is *Himself*! NOT Health; NOT Money; and NOT Possessions- just Jesus! And that means that by allowing us to feed into our base Desire to be "made much of" is NOT the Highest nor the Best Way He can love us. The BEST Way God can love us- is by *radically*

changing us (by what He alone does for us)- so that we possess the Fullness of our Joy- in God alone being glorified!

But Sin stops that from happening. And so, if we are to attain to the highest and best degree of Happiness and Satisfaction and Delight- it will be when we are promoted and exalted the Least! Please remember that we were *originally* created to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. And loving God like that- brought our first Parents into the ultimate Joy. But their Sin and Rebellion *destroyed* that. And ever since we lost our “first Estate”- Mankind has been trying to regain that ultimate Joy- by what we do *for* ourselves- to the Benefit *of* ourselves.

But that wasn't the original Pattern. The inhabitants of the Garden were not happy because their focus was on themselves. They walked with God in the Cool of the Day- so it was their proximity *to* God and their Love *for* God- that brought them perfect Delight. And so, we will NEVER regain what was destroyed by promoting and exalting ourselves.

And that is what Salvation does to the human vessel. By giving us a new Nature in the Miracle of the New Birth; and by forgiving us of all Sin; and by giving us the Righteousness of Jesus- we can *regain* our Proximity to God and our Love for God. And that would be Jesus loving us the MOST and the BEST!

At that Time- Jesus' *primary* Goal was to die for Sins. And so, He was NOT wanting to be exalted- at that time. It was God's Will that, at that time- Jesus would be debased and rejected and beaten and killed! And so, He told those two men- *He strictly warned them-* to NOT tell anyone! But it was because of the Glory of their Healing and Salvation that they *disobeyed* and told EVERYBODY what Jesus had done for them!

And that is the Example we should follow today. Because now it IS Time for Jesus to be exalted! Now IS the Time for Jesus to be embraced and loved and followed and obeyed and treasured! And so, what was Rebellion for those two men- is the BEST Example for us today. And we should be in awe of what God has done for us! And our tongue should be loosed in our mouths; and with every bit of our Energy and with the greatest degree of Joy- we MUST not only *celebrate* the Grace of God at work in our Lives- but we must then shout it from the rooftops!

Amen. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.