

Date preached: March 5th 2023

53 그들은 바다를 건너 게네사렛 땅에 이르렀다. 54 사람들은 배에서 내리는 예수님을 금방 알아보고, 55 온 지방으로 뛰어다니며 병자들을 자리에 누인 채로 예수님이 계시는 곳에 데려왔다. 56 또 사람들은 예수님이 이르시는 곳마다 병자들을 길거리에 데려다 놓고 예수님의 옷자락이라도 만지게 해 달라고 간청하였으며 만진 사람은 모두 나았다.

오늘은 조금 다른 방식으로 시작해 봅시다. □□□□□□□□□□. □ □□□□ □□□ □□□□□□□□□□
물위를 걸을 수 있는지 아노씨를 결정해야 합니다. 준비 되었나요?

| No | Animal | Can walk on water 0 | Can't walk on water X |
|----|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | A mosquito | | |
| 2 | A common house gecko | | |
| 3 | A fishing spider | | |
| 4 | A pygmy mole cricket | | |
| 5 | A western American grebe | | |
| 6 | A water snail | | |
| 7 | A human being | | |

I'm sure that you didn't find the quiz very difficult. The first six animals can all walk, or move across the surface of water. The last creature mentioned; a human being cannot of course walk on water. The reason that some creatures can travel across the surface of water is that God has created them with this ability. He has designed them in special ways, or given them physical attributes that enable them to do so. It is also worth noting that in most cases they are small creatures that are light in weight. A human being is not designed to walk across water, and is way too heavy to be supported by the surface of a body of water. There is of course one exception to this general rule. A human being can walk on water if they are God and have full control over the laws of nature. This was what we looked at last time when we considered the miracle of Jesus walking on the Sea of Galilee. Let us remind ourselves now of what we studied last week.

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ . 처음 여섯 마리의 동물은 모두 물 위를 걷거나 이동할 수 있습니다. 마지막으로 언급된 생물, 물론 인간은 물 위를 걸을 수 없습니다. 어떤 파조물이 물 위를 이동할 수 있는 이유는 하나님께서 파조물을 이러한 능력으로 창조하셨기 때문입니다. 그분은 그들을 특별한 방식으로 설계하셨거나 그렇게 할 수 있도록 물리적 속성을 부여하셨습니다. 대부분의 경우 무게가 가벼운 작은 생물이라는 점도 주목할 가치가 있습니다. 인간은 물 위를 걸을 수 있도록 설계되지 않았으며, 물 표면으로 자행하기에는 너무 무겁습니다. 물론 이 일반적인 규칙에는 한 가지 예외가 있습니다. 인간은 신이고 자연의 법칙을 완전히 통제할 수 있다면 물 위를 걸을 수 있습니다. 이것은 우리가 지난 시간 갈릴리 바다 위를 걸으신 예수님의 기적을 생각할 때 보았던 것입니다. 이제 지난 주에 공부한 내용을 상기해 봅시다.

Review

We picked up the story immediately following the feeding of the 5000. This amazing miracle cemented in many of the crowd's minds that Jesus was indeed somebody special. Perhaps He was the one they had long awaited, the one to lead them to overthrow their Roman overlords. Therefore some were determined to take Jesus by force if necessary and make Him their king. The Lord Jesus did not come to establish a political kingdom here on earth. He came instead to bring a spiritual kingdom. He therefore had no desire to be made an earthly king. So either to protect His disciples from any possible uprising, or to discourage them from joining this movement Jesus sends them away. They are to travel by boat to Bethsaida. Presumably He told them that He would join them there later. At the same time He also sends the large crowd away. Although He always had great love and compassion for people the Lord Jesus needed a time of peace and solitude. He wanted to find a quiet place to be in prayerful communication with God the Father.

So the disciples depart by boat, the crowd disperses and the Lord Jesus goes up into the mountains. Mark then moves the narrative along to a point later in the evening. Jesus has been praying for some time and the disciples have been making very slow progress across the sea. The Lord Jesus we are told sees the disciples struggling against the strong wind. It was by this time the fourth watch of the night. Mark remember was writing to Gentile believers in Rome, so he uses the Roman system of dividing the night into four parts or watches. The fourth watch means a time between 3 and 6 am. At this time Jesus determines to go to His disciples. They are remember in the middle of the sea. So the only way to reach them is to walk across the water. I spoke last time about how some liberal scholars try to explain away this miracle. They claim that Jesus was just walking along the shore, or on a sandbar just under the water. These feeble attempts do not explain the facts. We must just accept that this was a supernatural event. It cannot be explained with naturalistic explanations.

We might expect Jesus to go directly to the disciples struggling in the boat. This however does not seem to be what He does. Mark tells us that He was about to “pass them by.” As I said last time Mark here is making a theological point. One of the key concerns in his gospel is highlighting the identity of Jesus. In the Old Testament we find a number of passages that talk of God “passing by” His people. This was done to reveal to them something of His majesty and glory. So Jesus here is actually revealing to the disciples His true divine nature. It had not been long before when they had seen Jesus calm the storm (Mark 4:35-41). Their question on that occasion had been;

“Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!”

우리는 5000 명을 먹인 직후 이야기를 들었습니다. 이 놀라운 기적은 많은 군중의 마음에 예수님이 참으로 특별한 분이라는 사실을 확고히 했습니다. 아마도 그분은 그들이 오랫동안 기다려온 사람이었으며, 그들의 로마 대군주를 타도 하도록 그들을 이끄실 분이었을 것입니다. 그러므로 어떤 사람들은 필요하다면 예수를 강제로 데려다가 그들의 왕으

[illegible]

Here the Lord Jesus is providing an answer. Who has the power to supersede the natural laws of the universe? Only the one who created and upholds them; God Himself.

When the disciples see Jesus walking across the water they are greatly afraid. Their natural superstitions take over, and they think they are seeing a ghost or a spectre of some kind. As I mentioned last time the Jews often associated water with chaos and evil spirits. In fact many Jews believed that the sea was the home of forces of evil including demons and sea monsters. We can probably understand this kind of thinking. Large bodies of water hold a certain mystery. They are dark and unknowable.

So when the disciples see this spectral figure moving across the surface of the water their natural reaction is to think it is something evil coming for them. Immediately Jesus sets their minds at ease. He tells them to have courage and not be afraid. He then reveals to them His true identity. He does this by telling them, “It is I.” This is *ego emi* in the Greek. It is of course highly significant here. Jesus could have introduced Himself in a number of different ways, so why choose this expression? The reason is that it reflects the way God introduced Himself to Moses in the Old Testament. When Moses encountered God at the burning bush he asked God what His name was. God introduced Himself in the following way

And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” (Exodus 3:14)

So again Mark is showing us how Jesus is revealing to His disciples, and us His true identity.

Jesus then is brought aboard the boat and the strong winds instantly die down. True peace and tranquillity comes only from having Jesus alongside you in the boat. How often we want to row and steer the boats of our lives without having the Lord Jesus present. The world is full of darkness and chaos but when we are with Jesus that chaos falls away or no longer controls us. The account ends with Mark telling us that the disciples were amazed and marvelled at what they had seen. What's surprising here, and what Mark is emphasising is the lack of comprehension shown by the disciples. How dense, or to be frank stupid they often seem. They should not have been shocked or amazed. Not because what had happened wasn't awesome, it was awesome. As we have seen human beings cannot walk on water and calm storms. The reason they should not have been awed was because of what they had already witnessed.

[illegible]

Let me give you an example of what I mean here. Usain Bolt the Jamaican sprinter holds the world record for the 100 metres. His record stands at 9.58 seconds. From a young age Bolt was interested in sports. He was a naturally gifted sportsman. He particularly liked cricket and soccer. He did well in these sports but his school coaches steered him towards track and field. They recognised early on that he was very fast and could truly succeed in running. Now perhaps these coaches did not know how fast he would become. They could only guess at what his potential might be. Perhaps they could not anticipate that he would win many Olympic gold medals and set the world record time. But, and here's my point. They would not have been amazed to learn that he was a very fast runner.

This is Mark's point here. Just think what the disciples had witnessed Jesus doing. Healing the sick, casting out demons, calming a storm and feeding the 5000. Therefore in exactly the same way that

Usain Bolt's coaches should not have been amazed that he ran fast the disciples should not have been surprised that Jesus could walk on water and calm the wind. He had shown them on numerous occasions that He had power and authority over the natural world.

□□□□□ □□□□ □□ □□ □□ □□□□□ . 자메이카의 우사인 볼트는 100m 세계 기록을 보유하고 있습니다. 그의 기록은 9 초 58 이다. 어릴 때부터 볼트는 스포츠에 관심이 많았습니다. 타고난 스포츠맨이었다. 그는 특히 □□□□□□□ □□□□□□□ . 그는 이 스포츠에서 잘했지만 그의 학교 코치는 그를 육상으로 이끌었습니다. 그들은 일찍이 그가 매우 빠르게 진정으로 달리기 성공할 수 있다는 것을 인식했습니다. 이제 아마도 이 코치들은 그가 얼마나 빨리 될지 몰랐을 것입니다. 그들은 그의 잠재력이 무엇인지 짐작할 수 있을 뿐이었습니다. 아마도 그들은 그가 많은 올림픽 금메달을 획득하고 세계 기록을 세울 것이라고 예상하지 못했을 것입니다. 그러나 여기 내 요점이 있습니다. 그들은 그가 매우 빨리 달리는 사람이라는 사실을 알고도 놀리지 않았을 것입니다. 이것이 Mark 의 요점입니다. 제자들이 예수께서 행하시는 것을 목격한 것을 생각해 보십시오. 병자를 고치고 귀신을 쫓아내며 풍랑을 잔잔케 하고 5000 명을 먹이신 것. 바람. 그분은 자신이 자연계에 대한 권능과 권세를 가지고 있음을 여러 차례 그들에게 보여 주셨습니다.

53 When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret and anchored there.

So with the wind now calmed the disciples and Jesus cross the sea and arrive on the western shore. Remember that they had been heading towards Bethsaida, the wind prevented them from reaching shore and Jesus met them whilst they were at some point toward the middle of the sea.

Mark tells us that they come to the land of Gennesaret. This was a very rich and fertile plain measuring approximately 3 to 4 miles long and 1 to 2 miles wide located between Capernaum and Tiberias. Even today it is a beautiful area rich in farmland.

You may also be interested to learn that one of the other names of the Sea of Galilee was the Lake of Gennesaret. This is how Luke mentions it in his gospel.

So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, (Luke 5:1)

In Jesus day the areas beauty and fertility was well known. The Jewish historian Josephus talks in glowing terms about this region. He says that the soil was rich and the temperature ranged from hot to temperate. There was plenty of water for irrigation. Many streams came down from the surrounding hills and there were also some natural springs. As a result there were many trees and wild flowers. It also was an important agricultural area. Crops such as grapes, figs, olives, walnuts, rice, wheat, vegetables and melons grew abundantly here. Does it sound nice? In fact Rabbi's at the time spoke about the plain as being "the garden of God," or "Paradise."

As you would expect such a beautiful and productive area attracted people. It was then heavily populated. Let us read on.

바람이 세게 불어 제자들이 잔잔해지고 예수께서 바다를 건너 서쪽 해안에 도착하셨습니다. 그들이 벳새다로 향하고 있었다는 것을 기억하십시오. 바람이 그들을 해변에 닿지 못하게 막았고 그들이 바다 한가운데에 있을 때 예수께서 그들을 만났습니다. 마가는 그들이 게네사렛 땅에 왔다고 말합니다. 이것은 가버나움과 티베리아스 사이에 위치한 길이 약 3-4 마일 폭 1-2 마일의 매우 비옥하고 비옥한 평야였습니다. 오늘날에도 농자가 풍부한 아름다운 지역입니다. 당신은 또한 갈릴리 바다의 다른 이름 중 하나가 게네사렛 호수였다는 사실에 관심이 있을 것입니다. 이것이 누가의 그의

복음서에서 그것을 언급하는 방법입니다. 무리가 하나님의 말씀을 듣고자 어유싸일 때에 예수께서 게네사렛 호숫가에 서서(눅 5:1) 예수 시대에 그 지역의 아름다움과 다산은 잘 알려져 있었습니다. 유대인 역사가 요세푸스는 이 지역에 대해 빛나는 용어로 이야기합니다. 그는 토양이 비옥했고 기온이 덥거나 온화했다고 말했습니다. 관개를 위한 충분한 물이 있었다. 많은 시냇물이 주변 언덕에서 내려왔고 일부 천연 샘물도 있었습니다. 그 결과 나무와 야생화가 많았다. 또한 중요한 농업 지역이었습니다. 포도, 무화과, 올리브, 호두, 쌀, 밀, 야채, 멜론과 같은 작물이 이곳에서 풍성하게 자랐습니다. 좋게 들립니까? 사실 당시 랍비는 평야를 "신의 동산" 또는 "낙원"이라고 말했습니다. 예상대로 아름답고 생산적인 지역은 사람들을 매료시켰습니다. 그런 다음 인구가 많았습니다. 계속 읽어 보시다.

54 And when they came out of the boat, immediately the people recognized Him, 55 ran through that whole surrounding region, and began to carry about on beds those who were sick to wherever they heard He was.

Upon exiting from the boat Jesus and perhaps the disciples are instantly recognised. Today we are very used to knowing where and when celebrities are going to be. For example fans of particular K-pop groups know when their idols will be arriving at the airport. They can be there to welcome them and take pictures. Things were different in Jesus day of course. There was no digital social media and no way to exchange visual images of Jesus. So we might wonder how it is that He was so quickly recognised.

In answering this we should remember that this region is very close to Capernaum. It's only around 3 miles from the town of Gennesaret to Capernaum. It's highly probable that Jesus or some of the disciples on their trial missionary trips had visited this area before. So perhaps when it says they "recognised" Him it means they recalled seeing Him before. Even if Jesus had not visited before it is certain that news had reached the people about the Lord Jesus and the amazing things He was able to do. Probably local people may have visited Capernaum and seen Jesus and then returned home and reported what they had seen. What Jesus was doing was big news.

Not surprisingly then the people rush from every part of that area to reach Jesus. However as we have seen before this clamour to see Jesus was focused on what Jesus could do for them, rather than on hearing and learning from Him, or attempting to discover who He was. We know this because Mark tells us that they brought, literally carried their sick to find Jesus and seek His healing. We are not told that they sought Jesus out to hear what He had to say and learn from Him. I like what Matthew Henry says on this verse.

"It is sad to think how much more concerned most men are about their bodies than about their souls."

But perhaps we should not be too hard on them. Here was a once in a lifetime opportunity to get healing for the sick and disabled.

If we had been there at that time with a sick or crippled relative wouldn't we have tried to find Jesus! The Lord Jesus then began a process of being a travelling or itinerant preacher and healer. He went from town to town, or place to place preaching and healing as He went.

As soon as the people learned where He was they flocked to Him. Let us read on.

배에서 내리면 예수님과 아마도 제자들이 즉시 알아볼 것입니다. 오늘날 우리는 유명인들이 언제 어디서 있을 것인지를 아는 데 매우 익숙합니다. 예를 들어 특정 K-pop 그룹의 팬들은 아이돌이 언제 공항에 도착할지 알고 있습니다. 그들은 그들을 환영하고 사진을 찍을 수 있습니다. 물론 예수님 시대에는 상황이 달랐습니다. 디지털 소셜 미디어도 없었고 예수님의 시각적 이미지를 교환할 방법도 없었습니다. 그래서 우리는 그가 어떻게 그렇게 빨리 인식되었는지 궁금할 것입니다. 이에 답할 때 우리는 이 지역이 가바나움과 매우 가깝다는 것을 기억해야 합니다. 게네사렛 마을

에서 가버나움까지는 약 3 마일 정도 떨어져 있습니다. 이 지역은 이전에 예수나 사함 전도 여행을 하던 제자들 중 일부가 방문했을 가능성이 매우 높습니다. 그래서 아마도 그들이 그분을 “인식”했다고 말할 때 그것은 그들이 전에 그분을 본 것을 기억했다는 것을 의미합니다. 비록 전에 예수께서 오시지 않았더라도 주 예수와 그가 행하신 놀라운 일들에 대한 소식이 사람들에게 전해졌음은 확실합니다. 아마도 그 지역 사람들은 가버나움을 방문하여 예수님을 본 다음 집으로 돌아와 그들이 본 것을 보고했을 것입니다. 예수님께서 하신 일은 큰 뉴스였습니다. 당연히 사람들은 그 지역의 모든 지역에서 예수께로 몰려들었습니다. 그러나 우리가 이전에 보았듯이 예수님을 보고자 하는 이 소란은 그분에게서 듣고 배우거나 그분이 누구인지 발견하려는 시도가 아니라 예수님이 그들을 위해 무엇을 할 수 있는지에 초점이 맞춰져 있었습니다. 우리는 마가가 그들이 예수님을 찾고 그분의 치유를 구하기 위해 병자들을 데려왔다고 말했기 때문에 이것을 압니다. 우리는 그들이 예수가 말해야 할 것을 듣고 그에게서 배우기 위해 예수를 찾았다는 말을 듣지 못했습니다. □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ "대부분의 사람들이 자신의 영혼보다 자신의 몸
에 얼마나 더 많은 관심을 갖고 있는지 생각하면 슬프다." 그러나 아마도 우리는 그들에게 너무 가혹해서는 안 됩니다. 병들과 장애가 있는 사람들이 치유를 받을 수 있는 일생일대의 기회였습니다. 그때 우리가 아프거나 불구가 된 친척과 함께 그곳에 있었다면 우리는 예수님을 찾으려고 애쓰지 않았을 것입니다! 그런 다음 주 예수님은 여행하거나 순회하는 설교자이자 치유자가 되는 과정을 시작하셨습니다. 그는 마을에서 마을로, 또는 그가 가면서 설교하고 치유하는 장소로 장소를 옮겼습니다. 사람들은 그분이 계신 곳을 알게 되자마자 그분께 모여들었습니다. 계속 읽어 봅시다.

56 Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well.

Mark here paints a very vivid picture of what things were like. The people brought their sick, infirm or lame and laid them in prominent public areas. Marketplaces in the ancient world, just like today are the focal point for small towns. They are usually central and easy to find. They are places in which people gather and in which business takes place. Clearly this would be the place that a passing preacher or public speaker would choose as a place to speak. If you wanted to see such a public figure this is where you would go. So the hope for the people is that as Jesus passes by He will have mercy upon them and heal them of their infirmities.

Mark also tells us that they believed that Jesus had such power and authority that merely touching the hem of His tunic would be enough to bring healing.

Probably what is in view here are the fringes or the tassels on the four corners of the garments men wore to remind them of God's commandments (Num 15:37-41; Deut 22:12).

When we read about this notion of touching the hem of Jesus garment we are reminded of the woman with the 12-year flow of blood. She too held this superstitious belief that simply touching Jesus clothing would be sufficient to heal her.

As I have said before these were deeply superstitious times. The people firmly believed in an unseen realm that they thought could impact or influence their lives. They saw Jesus then as possessing “magical powers.” This power extended beyond Jesus' words and included even His attire. Therefore simply touching His clothing could activate these magical powers and bring about a healing. Clearly this is not what Jesus wanted people to think. He wanted the people to understand that He was the one with the power to bring about a healing. I think one of the reasons why Jesus so often varied His healing techniques was because He didn't want people to fall into the wrong idea about His healing. He was not able to heal because He followed a particular process or could tap into some secret occult knowledge or force. He could heal because He was God and had power as the creator to affect His creation.

Despite the wrong view that many held about Jesus healing authority and power, the Lord Jesus had compassion and mercy on the people. As a result as many as touched His clothing received the healing they desired. This is a good reminder to us that the gospel writers are highly selective. They do not record for us every miracle healing the Lord performed. We read about a few, but many hundreds perhaps are not recorded for us. Doesn't that wonderfully demonstrate God's grace. He has mercy upon and heals those who as yet are unsure or confused about who He really is.

Next time Lord willing we will begin chapter 7. We will see how the Pharisees challenge the Lord Jesus and how he masterfully responds.

여기에서 Mark 는 사물이 어땠는지에 대한 매우 생생한 그림을 그립니다. 사람들은 병자, 허약자, 절름발이를 데려다 가 눈에 잘 띄는 곳에 두었습니다. 오늘날과 마찬가지로 고대 세계의 시장은 작은 마을의 중심이었습니다. 그들은 일반적으로 중앙에 있고 쉽게 찾을 수 있습니다. 사람들이 모이는 곳이자 장사를 하는 곳이다. 분명히 이곳은 지나가는 설교자나 대중 연설자가 말하는 장소로 선택할 장소일 것입니다. 그런 공인을 보고 싶다면 여기로 가세요. 그러므로 사람들의 희망은 예수님이 지나가실 때 그들에게 자비를 베푸시고 그들의 병을 고치실 것이라는 것입니다. 마가는 또한 그들이 예수께서 단지 그의 옷자락을 만지는 것만으로도 치료를 받을 수 있는 그런 능력과 권위를 가지고 있다고 믿었다고 말합니다. 아마도 여기에서 보이는 것은 남자들이 하나님의 계명을 상기시키기 위해 입는 옷의 네 귀퉁이에 있는 술이나 술일 것입니다(민 15:37-41; 신 22:12). 우리가 예수님의 옷자락을 만진다는 개념에 대해 읽을 때 우리는 12 년 동안 혈루증을 앓는 여인을 생각합니다. 그녀 역시 단순히 예수님의 옷을 만지는 것만으로도 그녀를 치유하기에 충분할 것이라는 미신적인 믿음을 가지고 있었습니다. 전에 말했듯이 지금은 매우 미신적인 시대였습니다. 사람들은 자신의 삶에 영향을 미칠 수 있다고 생각하는 보이지 않는 영역을 굳게 믿었습니다. 그때 그들은 예수가 “마법의 능력”을 소유하고 있는 것으로 보았습니다. 이 권능은 예수님의 말씀을 넘어서 그분의 옷차림까지 포함했습니다. 그러므로 그분의 옷을 만지는 것만으로도 이러한 마법의 힘이 활성화되어 치유될 수 있습니다. 분명히 이것은 예수께서 사람들이 생각하기를 원하신 것이 아닙니다. 그분은 사람들이 자신이 병 고침의 능력을 가진 분임을 이해하기를 원 하셨습니다. 저는 예수님이 치유 방법을 자주 다양하게 바꾸신 이유 중 하나는 사람들이 자신의 치유에 대해 잘못된 생각에 빠지는 것을 원하지 않으셨기 때문이라고 생각합니다. 그분은 특정한 과정을 따르거나 어떤 비밀스러운 오컬트 지식이나 힘을 활용할 수 있기 때문에 치유할 수 없었습니다. 그분은 하나님이고 그분의 창조물에 영향을 미칠 수 있는 창조주로서의 능력을 가지고 계셨기 때문에 치유하실 수 있었습니다. 많은 사람들이 예수님의 치유 권세와 능력에 대해 가지고 있는 잘못된 견해에도 불구하고 주 예수님은 사람들에게 긍휼과 자비를 베푸셨습니다. 그 결과 그분의 옷을 만진 자마다 원하는 치유를 받았습니다. 이것은 복음서 저자들이 매우 까다롭다는 것을 우리에게 상기시켜 줍니다. 그들은 우리를 위해 주님이 행하신 모든 기적을 기록하지 않습니다. 우리는 몇 가지에 대해 읽었지만 아마도 수백 가지가 우리를 위해 기록되지 않았을 것입니다. 그것은 하나님의 은혜를 놀랍게 나타내지 않는가. 그분은 자신이 진정 누구인지 아직 확신하지 못하거나 혼란스러워하는 사람들에게 자비를 베푸시며 치유해 주십니다. 다음 사건에는 주님의 뜻대로 7 장을 시작하겠습니다. 우리는 바리새인들이 주 예수께 어떻게 도전하고 그분이 능숙하게 응답하시는 지 보게 될 것입니다.

Things to think about

I have two comments to make on today's passage of scripture.

1 The true gift of healing

I recently read a story about a man visiting a faith healer. The man was an elderly Christian gentleman who lived in a cabin in the woods. He was a very devout and committed Christian. He had no TV and His great pleasure in life was sitting in his rocking chair to read his bible. However with age his eye-sight had greatly deteriorated. He could no longer see clearly enough to read. Then he heard that a famous faith healer was coming to town. He was very excited. He applied to be one

of the people chosen to be healed and was accepted. On the day of the healing he was shown up onto the stage. A large crowd had gathered to see this faith healer perform “miracles.” The faith healer stepped forward pulled off the old man's glasses and stamped on them. He then handed the old man a large print bible. Under the bright lights and with the words bigger than normal the old man found could now read. The crowd cheered at the “miraculous healing” and the old man was delighted. However when he got home he had a problem. His glasses had been broken, and he could not read his old small print bible at all. Greatly distressed he returned to the faith healer and told him that there was a problem. Do you know that the faith healer told him? Something very wicked and evil. He told him that the reason the healing had not “stuck” was because the man lacked faith.

In today's account all who touched the hem of Christ's garments were healed. God in His grace extended His mercy to these people. The Lord Jesus was the real deal. His healings “stuck” unlike the charlatan faith healer in the story I just gave. However we need to understand that although God can cure any sickness He does not always do so. We must simply accept that He always knows what is best, and for reasons we cannot always fathom may choose not to heal. This doesn't mean that God does not love and care about us. It doesn't mean that God had not heard our prayers or has forgotten us. Far from it. You see God has already saved us. He has already healed us from the disease that kills us. When the Lord Jesus Christ died upon the cross He took our sins upon Himself. He healed us from the sickness of sin that brings only death. So, we might suffer and live in pain here on earth but what is that when measured against eternity. May we never forget the wonderful gift of healing that the Lord Jesus has given us.

[illegible]

2 The danger of placing body over soul

It is I suppose only natural that as human beings we place more emphasis on the material rather than the immaterial. It is easier to think about things that we can see and touch rather than concepts or ideas that reside in the mind. This was certainly true for the people we read about today seeking out the Lord Jesus. They were sick, crippled, diseased or impaired in some way. They wanted a physical healing from this condition and to be restored to wholeness. Can we blame them? I think not, none of us wants to live our lives being impaired. However there is a problem when all our focus and attention is directed onto the physical, and we neglect the spiritual. As you know we are not just flesh and blood creatures, we have a soul. An immaterial component to our existence. When we neglect one aspect of our being it atrophies and becomes weaker. It's a little like people working out in a gym. Men in particular want big bulging biceps. So they spend all their time performing arm curls in order to get big arms. They frequently ignore other muscle groups entirely. So you often see men with large well-developed upper bodies supported on under-developed chicken legs.

So we need to think about, feed and develop both our physical and our spiritual sides. It was fine for the people to seek healing from Jesus first, but then they should have desired to hear Him preach and teach. After all it's no good having a fit and healthy body if your soul is filthy and diseased. Your fit and healthy body will be of no use if you are cast forever into hell.

We all know how to care and maintain our physical sides.

We eat healthily, avoid too many sugary or fatty foods and drinks and exercise regularly. How do we care for and build up our spiritual sides? It also takes discipline and effort.

We need to devote time and energy to reading God's Word, praying regularly, meditating on scripture and fellow shipping with other believers.

If our bodies are strong and healthy we notice and feel the benefits. We can climb the stairs without puffing and panting. We can bend, lift and carry things easily. When we are spiritually strong we also experience many benefits. We are walking more closely with God. We are better attuned to what He wants. We are more effective in our witness. We feel greater joy and happiness. Let us then be careful to focus not only on our bodies but also remember our souls.

[illegible]

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