



JESUS THE HEALER

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH – VANCOUVER, BC

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Coverphoto by Justin K. Kim

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“My child, be attentive to my words;
incline your ear to my sayings.

Do not let them escape from your sight;
keep them within your heart.

For they are life to those who find
them, and healing to all their flesh.”

- Proverbs 4:20-22

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“Surely He has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted Him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the punishment that made us whole, and by His bruises we are whole.”

– Isaiah 53:4-5

^{4:23} And He went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. ²⁴ So His fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought Him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, epileptics, and paralytics, and He healed them. ²⁵ And great crowds followed Him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

^{9:35} And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. ³⁶ When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸ therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

^{10:1} And He called to Him His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.

Study 1 - Preaching, Teaching and Healing Matthew 4:23-25; 9:35-10:1

Study 1- Preaching, Teaching and Healing

Have two people read Matthew 4:23-25; 9:35-10:1

1. As you meditate on the passage, take a moment to share what 'leaps out' at you. What questions do you have?

2. Why do you think these passages (Matt. 4:23; 9:35) hold teaching, preaching, and healing so closely together in Jesus' ministry? What do these three aspects reveal to us about the Kingdom of God?

3. How does the Gospel writer describe the crowd's response to Jesus' ministry? Is something deeper being said here?

4. What images are used in 9:36-38 to describe Jesus' relationship with the people? What does this reveal to us about Jesus?

5. Why are these passages about Jesus good news for us today? How should they shape and inform how we live as Christ-followers? Focus particularly on v. 10:1.

6. Last Sunday, Darrell explained a diagram titled *Framework for Prayer*.

Take a moment to recreate a sketch in the space provided below and discuss the diagram together as a group.

Boundary points:

- Healing at Multiple Levels
- The 'Already, Not Yet'
- Jesus the Shepherd
- Jesus the King

^{8:1} When He came down from the mountain, great crowds followed Him.

² And behold, a leper came to Him and knelt before Him, saying, "Lord, if You will, You can make me clean."

³ And Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

⁴ And Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a proof to them."

It may be a helpful reminder to recall that we can't tell Jesus what to do, but He has invited us to tell Him our heart's desire. Take some time for members of the group to share their heart's desires, as they feel comfortable. Conclude the study with a time of group prayer.

Study 2 - If You Are Willing . . .

Read Matthew 8:1-4 together.

1. As you meditate on the passage, take a moment to share what 'leaps out' at you. What questions do you have?

2. How would you describe the leper's attitude towards Jesus? How might this shape the way we pray?

3. What is Jesus' attitude toward the leper?

4. In what ways does Jesus offer more than just physical healing in this encounter? (e.g. touching the leper, instructing him to show himself to the priest and follow the Jewish custom of ritual cleansing)

4. How may God's healing sometimes take a different form than what we are specifically asking for? Share times when you have experienced this in your own life.

5. Are there areas where you want to ask Jesus for healing? Do you believe He is willing? Are you open to receive the healing Jesus wants to give? Are you willing to receive life change beyond what you may be asking for? If appropriate, take some time to pray for each other.

Study 3 - He Takes and Carries

Have someone read Matthew 8:14-17

1. As you meditate on the passage, take a moment to share what 'leaps out' at you. What questions do you have?

2. How does Peter's mother-in-law respond to Jesus after He touches her? What is the significance of her immediate response to Jesus?

3. What are the different types of healing which Jesus demonstrates in this passage?

^{8:14} And when Jesus entered Peter's house, He saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve Him.

¹⁶ That evening they brought to Him many who were oppressed by demons, and He cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases."

Study 3 - He Takes and Carries Matthew 8:14-17

4. Read Isaiah 53 together. As you reflect on Jesus' life, share the parts of this passage that stand out to you.

5. Why does the Gospel writer Matthew specifically mention Isaiah 53:4? What does this reveal to us about Jesus and His ministry?

6. If you come to Jesus with your sickness, He will carry it. We can't be certain what He will do with it, but He'll carry our illnesses and diseases. You can come to Him with your filth, need, sickness—He takes it all. In light of this truth, take some time to pray for each other.

If you have time, read *Ragman* together.

Ragman

Walter Wangerin, Jr.

I saw a strange sight. I stumbled upon a story most strange, like nothing in my life, my street sense, my sly tongue had ever prepared me for. Hush, child. hush now, and I will tell it to you.

Even before the dawn one Friday morning I noticed a young man, handsome and strong, walking the alleys of our City. He was pulling an old cart filled with clothes both bright and new, and he was calling in a clear tenor voice: 'Rags!' Ah, the air was foul and the first light filthy to be crossed by such sweet music.

'Rags! New rags for old! I take your tired rags! Rags!'

'Now this is a wonder,' I thought to myself, for the man stood six-feet-four, and his arms were like tree limbs, hard and muscular, and his eyes flashed intelligence. Could he find no better job than this, to be a ragman in the inner city?

I followed him. My curiosity drove me. And I wasn't disappointed.

Soon the ragman saw a woman sitting on her back porch. She was sobbing into a handkerchief, signing, and shedding a thousand tears. Her knees and elbows made a sad X. Her shoulders shook. Her heart was breaking.

The Ragman stopped his cart. Quietly, he walked to the woman, stepping round tin cans, dead toys, and Pampers.

'Give me your rag,' he said gently. 'and I'll give you another.'

He slipped the handkerchief from her eyes. She looked up, and he laid across her palm a linen cloth so clean and new that it shined. She blinked from the gift to the giver.

Then, as he began to pull his cart again, the Ragman did a strange thing: he put her stained handkerchief to his own face; and then he began to weep, to sob as grievously as she had done, his shoulders shaking. Yet she was left without a tear.

'This is a wonder,' I breathed to myself, and I followed the sobbing Ragman like a child who cannot turn away from mystery.

'Rags! Rags! New Rags for old!'

In a little while, when the sky showed grey behind the rooftops and I could see the shredded curtains hanging out black windows, the Ragman came upon a girl whose head was wrapped in a bandage, whose eyes were empty. Blood soaked her bandage. A single line of blood ran down her cheek.

Now the tall Ragman looked upon this child with pity, and he drew a lovely yellow bonnet from his cart.

'Give me your rag,' he said, tracing his own line on her cheek, 'and I'll give you mine.'

The child could only gaze at him while he loosened the bandage, removed it, and tied it to his own head. The bonnet he set on hers. And I gasped at what I saw: for with the bandage went the wound! Against his brow it ran a darker, more substantial blood -- his own!

'Rags! Rags! I take old rags!' cried the sobbing, bleeding, strong, intelligent Ragman.

The sun hurt both the sky, now, and my eyes; the Ragman seemed more and more to hurry.

'Are you going to work?' he asked a man who leaned against a telephone pole. The man shook his head. The Ragman pressed him: 'Do you have a job?'

'Are you crazy?' sneered the other. He pulled away from the pole, revealing the right sleeve of his jacket -- flat, the cuff stuffed into the pocket. He had no arm.

'So,' said the Ragman. 'Give me your jacket, and I'll give you mine.'

So much quiet authority in his voice!

The one-armed man took off his jacket. So did the Ragman -- and I trembled at what I saw: for the Ragman's arm stayed in its sleeve, and when the other put it on, he had two good arms, thick as tree limbs; but the Ragman had only one.

'Go to work,' he said.

After that he found a drunk, lying unconscious beneath an army blanket, an old man, hunched, wizened, and sick. He took that blanket and wrapped it round himself, but for the drunk he left new clothes.

And now I had to run to keep up with the Ragman. Though he was weeping uncontrollably, and bleeding freely at the forehead, pulling his cart with one arm, stumbling for drunkenness, falling again and again, exhausted, old, old, and sick, yet he went with terrible speed. On spider's legs he skittered through the alleys of the City, this mile and the next, until he came to its limits, and then he rushed beyond.

I wept to see the change in this man. I hurt to see his sorrow. And yet I need to see where he was going in such haste, perhaps to know what drove him so.

The little old Ragman -- he came to a landfill. He came to the garbage pits. And I waited to help him in what he did but I hung back, hiding. He climbed a hill. With tormented labor he cleared a little space on that hill. Then he signed. He lay down. He pillowed his head on a handkerchief and a jacket. He covered his bones with an army blanket. And he died.

Oh how I cried to witness that death! I slumped in a junked car and wailed and mourned as one who has no hope -- because I had come to love the Ragman. Every other face had faded in the wonder of this man, and I cherished him; but he died. I sobbed myself to sleep.

I did not know -- how could I know? -- that I slept through Friday night and Saturday and its night too.

But then, on Sunday morning, I was wakened by a violence.

Light -- pure, hard, demanding light -- slammed against my sour face, and I blinked, and I looked, and I saw the first wonder of all. There was the Ragman, folding the blanket most carefully, a scar on his forehead, but alive! And, besides that, healthy! There was no sign of sorrow or age, and all the rags that he had gathered shined for cleanliness.

Well, then I lowered my head and, trembling for all that I had seen, I myself walked up to the Ragman. I told him my name with shame, for I was a sorry figure next to him. Then I took off all my clothes in that place, and I said to him with dear yearning in my voice: 'Dress me.'

He dressed me. My Lord, he put new rags on me, and I am a wonder beside him. The Ragman, the Ragman, the Christ! girl whose head was wrapped in a bandage, whose eyes were empty. Blood soaked her bandage. A single line of blood ran down her cheek.

Now the tall Ragman looked upon this child with pity, and he drew a lovely yellow bonnet from his cart.

Study 4 - Healing Communities

Read Matthew 9:1-8.

^{9:1} And getting into a boat He crossed over and came to His own city. ² And behold, some people brought to Him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven."

³ And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming."

⁴ But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? ⁵ For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? ⁶ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—He then said to the paralytic—"Rise, pick up your bed and go home."

⁷ And he rose and went home. ⁸ When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

1. Take some time to read and meditate on the passage - share what 'leaps out' at you. What questions do you have?

2. Imagine being one of the paralytic's friends in this scene. What are your thoughts/feelings? What about the owner of the house? What about the Pharisees? What about the paralytic man?

Study 4 - Healing Communities Matthew 9:1-8

3. What does this passage have to teach us about the role of community in Jesus' healing ministry?

3. What is surprising about Jesus' immediate response to the paralytic man?

Why may this be different than what was expected?

4. Why was Jesus' response in v. 2 offensive to the Pharisees who were present? What was Jesus claiming through His words?

5. Why is it easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' than 'Rise and walk'?

6. How does Jesus prove that He has the authority He claims for Himself in v. 6?

7. What is different about the healing which Jesus offers here, compared to other passages we have looked at in Matthew?

Take some time to pray together. Reflect on how God might be calling this community to partake in His healing ministry?

Study 5 - Cosmic Healing

Read Matthew 8:28-34.

1. Take some time to read and meditate on the passage - share what 'leaps out' at you. What questions do you have?

2. What is the immediate response of the demons (spoken through the two men) towards Jesus?

What may be surprising about how they address Jesus?

4. What does the demons' follow-up exchange with Him (v. 31) reveal to us about their attitude towards Jesus?

^{8:28} And when He came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met Him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way.

²⁹ And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?"

³⁰ Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. ³¹ And the demons begged Him, saying, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs."

³² And behold, He said to them, "Be gone."

So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. ³³ The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴ And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw Him, they begged Him to leave their region.

Study 5 - Cosmic Healing Matthew 8:28-34

5. In Scripture, the word 'behold' often signifies a place of unexpected events or surprise. What surprises do the 'beholds' found in vv. 29, 32, 34 reveal?

6. In v. 32, Jesus emphatically says, "Be gone!" What does Jesus' response reveal to us about who He is and what He is about?

7. Discuss the town's response in v. 34. Why may this be surprising?

8. How may this passage challenge our attitude towards the battle against the demonic?

How is demonic illness potentially a complicated or misunderstood issue in the church today?

Discuss how we ought to respond to God's power over the demonic. Pray together as the Holy Spirit leads.

Bring a copy of the chapter 'The Strong Man' from Darrell's book "Who is Jesus?". If you have time, read it together. Email the FBC CG Ministry if you would like a copy emailed to you.

Study 6 - Mercy in the Extreme

Read Matthew 9:18-26.

^{9:18} While He was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before Him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her, and she will live." ¹⁹ And Jesus rose and followed him, with His disciples.

²⁰ And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His garment, ²¹ for she said to herself, "If I only touch His garment, I will be made well." ²² Jesus turned, and seeing her He said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly the woman was made well.

²³ And when Jesus came to the ruler's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, ²⁴ He said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at Him. ²⁵ But when the crowd had been put outside, He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. ²⁶ And the report of this went through all that district.

1. As you read and meditate on the passage, share what 'leaps out' at you. What questions do you have?

2. What are some of the parallels in this passage between the 'ruler' and his daughter, and the bleeding woman? Why might these two accounts be paired together?

3. What does the ruler's behaviour in v. 18 reveal about his attitude towards Jesus?

What is Jesus' response to the ruler?

Study 6 - Mercy in the Extreme Matthew 9:18-26

4. What is the bleeding woman's attitude towards Jesus in vv. 20-21?

Under Jewish laws of purity, a woman with constant bleeding would have been deemed perpetually unclean. What is Jesus' response to the woman? What does His acknowledgement of her show us about His heart for those who look to Him in faith?

5. What role does *touch* play in these two healings?

6. There is a sense of escalation in these two healings (bleeding and death) - up till now, there hasn't been healing this extreme in Jesus' ministry. What can we learn from account of the ruler and the woman in this passage? How may we emulate their faith in our own lives?

Together, pray for Jesus' healing touch on the lives of those we know who are suffering.

Study 7 - Have Mercy on Me . . .

Read Matthew 9:27-34 together.

1. As you read and meditate on the passage, share what 'leaps out' at you. What questions do you have?

2. What different types of healing do we see in this passage?

3. Why is the title by which the blind men address Jesus significant (vs. 27)? What does this signify about Jesus?

^{9:27} And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David."

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

They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."

²⁹ Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you."

³⁰ And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, "See that no one knows about it." ³¹ But they went away and spread His fame through all that district.

³² As they were going away, behold, a demon-oppressed man who was mute was brought to Him. ³³ And when the demon had been cast out, the mute man spoke. And the crowds marveled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." ³⁴ But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons."

Study 7 - Have Mercy on Me . . . Matthew 9:27-34

3. Discuss Jesus' response in v. 29. What might this imply about the relationship between faith and healing?

4. Share areas of suffering/blindness in your own life in which Jesus may be asking you, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?"

^{9:35} And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.

³⁶ When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸ therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

^{10:1} And He called to Him His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.

Study 8 - Joining Jesus the Healer Matthew 9:35-10:1 (Acts 3)

Pray together that you would be given increased faith to answer "Yes, Lord."

Study 8 - Joining Jesus the Healer

Have three people read Matthew 9:35-10:1; Acts 3.

1. As you read and meditate on the passage, share what 'leaps out' at you. What questions do you have?

2. Review (from Study 1) the images used in this passage that shed light on who Jesus is, and what He has come to do.

3. What are the needs which Jesus identifies in vv. 35-38?

3. How does Jesus meet these needs?

In what way does Jesus invite His followers to be an integral part of His healing ministry?

4. Verse 10:1 states, 'He gave them authority . . .'

What does it look like to join Jesus the healer?
What does it mean to be a church with a healing ministry?
Share personal experiences in this area.

Pray that God would empower and enable each individual, the Connection Group and the church community to live in the reality of this authority.

^{95:1} Oh come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
² Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise!
³ For the Lord is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
⁴ In His hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are His also.
⁵ The sea is His, for he made it,
and His hands formed the dry land.
⁶ Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!
⁷ For He is our God,
and we are the people of His pasture,
and the sheep of His hand.
Today, if you hear His voice,
⁸ do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,
as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,
⁹ when your fathers put Me to the test
and put Me to the proof, though they had seen My work.
¹⁰ For forty years I loathed that generation
and said, "They are a people who go astray in their heart,
and they have not known My ways."
¹¹ Therefore I swore in My wrath,
"They shall not enter My rest."

Study 9- Witnessing Kingdom Healing

Read Psalm 95 together.

1. As you read and meditate on the passage, share what 'leaps out' at you. What questions do you have?
2. Why do the people of God sing thankful praises in this psalm? What has He done for them?
3. What characteristics of God do we see identified in this psalm?

Study 9 - Witnessing Kingdom Healing Psalm 95

4. Are there any parallels with what we have seen of Jesus' ministry in Matthew?

5. What warnings are included in this psalm?
(It may be helpful to look at the account of Meribah in Numbers 20:2-13).

6. Identify areas in your own life where you are in danger of hardening your heart towards God's voice?

7. How may this impact how we seek for and receive His healing?

8. What are some ways we serve as witnesses to Jesus' healing ministry in our own lives? In our church community? In our city and world?

9. What are some things that impede us from serving as a witness to Jesus' healing ministry in these various areas of our lives?

Ask God for opportunities to serve as a witness to the healing ministry of Jesus Christ - ask for discernment and courage as individuals, as a group and as His church to share about the power of His healing ministry.

^{95:1} Oh come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
² Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise!
³ For the Lord is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
⁴ In His hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are His also.
⁵ The sea is His, for he made it,
and His hands formed the dry land.
⁶ Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!
⁷ For He is our God,
and we are the people of His pasture,
and the sheep of His hand.
Today, if you hear His voice,
⁸ do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,
as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,
⁹ when your fathers put Me to the test
and put Me to the proof, though they had seen My work.
¹⁰ For forty years I loathed that generation
and said, "They are a people who go astray in their heart,
and they have not known My ways."
¹¹ Therefore I swore in My wrath,
"They shall not enter My rest."

Study 10 - Praying for Kingdom Healing

Psalm 95

Study 10 - Praying for Kingdom Healing

Read Psalm 95 together.

1. As you read and meditate on the passage, share what 'leaps out' at you. What questions do you have?
2. Take some time to share and reflect on the things that the psalmist is thankful for and the characteristics of God that the psalmist highlights.
3. How can you be enabled to more fully live in this reality in your own life?

4. Take some time to share some things you are thankful for. Share some characteristics of God that have been recently apparent to you in your life circumstances.

5. What does it look like to pray for Kingdom healing in your own life? In your Connection Group? In the life of the church? In the city and world?

“O Lord my God,
I cried to You for help,
and You have healed me.”

- Psalm 30:2

6. We have now come to the conclusion of the *Jesus the Healer* series. Take a moment to share with the group what has been the most significant part of the study for you.

Take some time to pray that we would, as individuals and as a community, seek to more fully live in the reality of Jesus' healing ministry.

