

## Lesson 11: Review of Matthew 9:18-34: "The Faith That Saves"

In the Gospel of Matthew we see saving faith illustrated by the people on the receiving end of miracles. The many and diverse miracles provide us with increased clarity so that we can see that the only reasonable object of faith is the Lord Jesus Christ! In Matthew 9:18-34 we see faith at work; a faith that finds its object in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

It is helpful to make connections when you study the Bible. And in Matthew when Jesus healed we can connect that healing to the spiritual reality of the saving of a soul. Likewise, faith in Jesus and His power to heal, cure, make clean and set free can be connected to the spiritual reality that transpires in a person who has faith in Jesus to save them from sin's penalty and power. No one was ever healed without faith in Jesus being present and active. In the same way, no one is ever saved apart from faith in Jesus.

So what constitutes saving faith? First, let us not miss a powerful biblical truth about "faith", in particular, "saving faith": Saving faith is completely dependant upon the grace of God. Faith is a gift. (see Eph. 2:8-9) Second, saving faith is applied practically only as it responds to God through faith in Jesus Christ! We see the practical application of saving faith in the following three stories found in Matthew 9:18-34.

The first illustrates the saving faith of a father whose daughter had died, and a woman subject to a debilitating illness. A man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue came kneeling before Jesus for a prolonged time. This prolonged kneeling indicates reverence and worship. He was grieving. Yet, against all hope he hoped in Jesus. Jairus had been enlightened some time before. Perhaps He he would have heard Jesus' teach in the synagogue of Capernaum (see Luke 4:18-21). At that time seeds were planted, and hope welled up as Jesus spoke! Jesus' very words produced faith Jairus, which now found its expression in this dark hour of painful crisis. What painful experiences has God used to allow faith to find its full expression in Jesus? What experiences yielded the first evidences of faith in the Lord Jesus?

As Jesus went to Jairus' house we are told in 9:20-21 that a woman reached out from behind Jesus and touched the hem of his cloak. Her faith was placed squarely on Jesus. She said to herself, "If only I can touch His cloak, I will be healed."

Turning to her, and without exchanging information, Jesus acknowledges her faith as being the kind of faith that saves: "Your faith has healed you." And she was healed at that moment. We are told in Mark's account that "power went out from Jesus" (Mark 5:30). What power? The power to save went out from Him when faith was engaged in Him, even when no words were exchanged! When you place faith in Him power comes from Him to you! This power is the wonderful working of the Spirit of Christ, transforming and renewing you through the life of Christ in you that comes through faith! That is good news.

When Jesus entered the room where the little girl was laid, Jairus' faith was rewarded! His daughter raised from death! This miracle communicates the Good News that faith in Jesus results in resurrection life in Him. It also teaches us that Jesus never refuses genuine faith in Him! Have you such faith? If not, will you ask Him to help you!

As we move to the story of Jesus' encounter with two blind men in 9:27-32 we see "Faith's Confession". Saving faith in Jesus is a confessing faith.

Two blind men call out to Jesus, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." Here they exhibit trust in that Jesus is the right person to trust because He is able to provide the kind of *mercy that provides relief* from suffering. But they also confess that He is Lord (9:28b). I believe that their acknowledgment of Jesus being the "Son of David" affirms that their confession of Jesus as Lord was a confession faith in the right person!

These formerly blind men were not told what to confess and they confessed it! We know what to confess and we often don't. Have you ever confessed Him as Lord? Perhaps you have just discovered that Jesus is the right person to trust and believe in. Who will you tell that Jesus Christ is Lord?

In our final story (9:32-34) faith springs to action. A man who was demon possessed is *brought* to Jesus. He was helpless. It may be that it was the two former blind men that brought their friend to Jesus (see KJV on 9:32). But if it wasn't the two men, someone brought this man to Jesus, by faith! Faith's confession must spill over to action! Who have you brought to Jesus? Bringing them to Jesus may mean that you bring them to Jesus through prayer. You may bring them to Jesus through reading to them from the Bible or telling them the Gospel message. But, you must bring them!

Finally, our passage concludes at a crossroads. The crowd is beginning to believe that Jesus is from God. On the other hand the Pharisees, those who were religiously serious, believed that Jesus was from the devil. You are at a crossroads right now. Who do you say Jesus is? How have you trusted Him? How have you confessed Him? How are you living for Him? Do you own Him as both Savior and Lord? Will you trust Him now? Will you confess Him? Will you call on Him now?

Questions for Matthew 9:35-10:10 “The Pain, Practicality and Pleasure of Christ-like Passion”

1. From the notes on page 1, **A)** what impressed and/or helped you? **B)** Explain “A”.

Introduction:

Our passage provides a glimpse into Jesus’ heart for His people who are yet to be saved. His people live in an upside down world: Right is wrong; good is bad; excellence is failure; holiness is dirty. Jesus sends out His closest twelve disciple with authority to work miracles and to preach. Our passage also reveals some of the pain, practicality and pleasure of having a Christ-like passion.

2. Read Matthew 9:35-36. Jesus’ compassion is aroused the more He ministered in Israel. **A)** According to 9:35 where did Jesus do His ministry? **B)** How does that challenge many of our ministry models of church work? **C)** What would be another word you could use in place of the word “went” in v.35 as found in the NIV? **D)** From 9:36, what about the condition of the people moved Jesus to compassion? Look up Ezekiel 34:1-6 and Zechariah 10:2 for help.

3. Read Matthew 9:35-10:10. Christ’s passion for people is applied in practical ways. **A)** Describe Jesus’ activity as he went through the towns and villages? **B)** Look at 9:37-38. How does Jesus describe the situation? What does He command the disciples to do to remedy the situation? **C)** What two things are we told that Jesus did in 10:1 in answer to their obedience in 9:38? **D)** What were their names? **E)** Where was their harvest field at this time? **E)** What were they to preach? **F)** Why do you think Jesus told them not to take anything with them? (see 10:9-10)

4. Read Matthew 9:35-10:10. The Pleasure of Christ-like passion. **A)** Read 9:35-36 again. Compare with John 17:2-4. What was Jesus’ greatest pleasure? **B)** Read John 8:28-29. Why do you think “pleasing God” is important in developing a Christ-like passion? **C)** Read again John 17:3 along with 2 Cor. 4:7-18. What priority had Paul established in his life that allowed him to be positive and hopeful through trials? **D)** As you consider what Jesus was calling his disciples to do in Matthew 10:5-10, do you think He intended them to experience pleasure in their obedience? Why?