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**BIBLE STUDY**

**Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

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**“THE POWER OF THE LORD WAS [PRESENT] TO HEAL THEM”**

**Luke 5:17-39**

***Luke 5:17 "And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was [present] to heal them."***

As Jesus’s reputation spread, he attracted the attention of the Jewish religious leaders: Pharisees and teachers of the law. Doctors were teachers of the Jewish law. Luke indicates that virtually every village had one or several. We see, here, that the Pharisees and doctors of law had heard of Jesus' fame, and they came to see if they could trap Him. They were all here to see if they could find anything wrong with what He said to see if they could accuse Him. On this particular day, Jesus’ healing power was on display and available. The word “power” here means the miraculous, wonder working power of God. The word “present” speaks of God’s divine timing. The word “heal” means to restore, cure, make whole, save. “Them” refers to the sick. Divine healing is the agency of God almighty and is only available to us at His discretion.

***Luke 4:18-21***

***18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,***

***19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.***

***20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.***

***21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.***

***Luke 5:18 "And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought [means] to bring him in, and to lay [him] before him."***

***Luke 5:19 "And when they could not find by what [way] they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with [his] couch into the midst before Jesus."***

As they were listening and watching as he taught, and some men brought a paralyzed man to him. This was nothing new. Many had been coming to Jesus for healing. But on this occasion, the men couldn’t get their friend to Jesus because of the size of the crowd. So, they carried him on top of the house in which he was teaching, made a hole in the roof, and lowered the man’s stretcher to the front row. This is determination. Palsy is a disease of the nervous system. Shaking of hands and legs is a symptom. Couch is the bed on which the man was carried. These are very good friends who will bring this helpless man to Jesus to be healed.

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***Luke 5:20 "And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee."***

In Matthew, Mark, and Luke this happening is told. This indicates this a very important lesson God wants us to learn. Luke tells us that Jesus “saw” their faith. How do you see faith? Faith is an invisible substance that is visibly seen by what it produces. New Testament faith acts in accordance with what it asserts to be true.

***James 2:18 “Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.”***

Jesus saw their actions on behalf of their friend. But he also saw what no one else could. They saw a paralyzed man who needed healing. Jesus saw a sinner who needed forgiveness. Some illness (sickness) is brought on by sin and other illness (affliction) is permitted to reveal the power of God.

***John 9:1-2***

***1 And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.***

***2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?***

***3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.***

***James 5:13-15***

***13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.***

***14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:***

***15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.***

Faith is a very important factor in getting healed and in getting forgiveness of sin (wholeness). NO man has the ultimate power to heal and forgive sins, but Jesus by divine prerogative has given certain anointed believers the privilege to use His power to heal and remit sin.

***Luke 10:1 “After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.”***

***Luke 10:9 “And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.”***

***John 20:22-23***

***22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:***

***23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.***

***Acts 2:38 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”***

Jesus lets His Godhood (Deity) show when He forgives this man's sins. The men had brought their friend for physical restoration. Jesus knew he needed spiritual restoration and those onlooking needed spiritual understanding of who Jesus was and what he came to do.

***John 10:10 “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”***

So, he said to him, Friend, your sins are forgiven. Forgiveness came first. Getting right with God takes priority over getting your circumstances right. This incident also shows the importance of having fellow believers in your life on whose faith you can piggyback in times of your own spiritual and physical weakness.

***Luke 5:21 "And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"***

When this happened, the scribes and the Pharisees started thinking. Since God alone can forgive sins, then this man speaks blasphemies. They started with the (correct) assumption that God alone could forgive sins, and they arrived at the (correct) conclusion that Jesus was making himself equal to God. For any other man, this would indeed be blasphemy. But not for the Son of God. They make a true statement, here, in that only God can forgive sin. Their error is in the fact that they do not recognize Jesus as the Son of God, their Messiah. They accuse Jesus unjustly of blasphemies. These scribes, Pharisees. and lawyers are the educated people of their day. They know the letter of the law, but do not understand the things of the spirit.

***Philippians 2:5-9***

***5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:***

***6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:***

***7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:***

***8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.***

***Luke 5:22 "But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?"***

Jesus supernaturally perceived their thoughts. Jesus didn't have to be told what they were saying. He understood their hearts. He knew the evil they were thinking. Even before they said it. Jesus being “the word made flesh”, looks into the intents of the heart. In other words, their evil hearts were planning evil. Notice that he didn’t contradict their conclusion that he’d made himself equal to God. Rather, he contradicted their conclusion that he’d committed blasphemy.

***Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”***

***Luke 5:23 "Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?"***

***Luke 5:24 "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house."***

Jesus is speaking to these scribes. lawyers, and Pharisees and says I will show you that what I said is not blasphemy. I will show you I am the Son of God by healing this man. Forgiving sins and healing a paralytic are equally impossible for mere human beings. But Jesus validated his divine authority to forgive sins in the spiritual realm by demonstrating his divine authority to heal lame legs in the physical realm. Jesus is about to show these skeptics that not only will He forgive this man's sins, but He will cause him to walk, as well. They will be even more alarmed as the man is healed before their very eyes. Then He says to the sick of the palsy, take up thy couch and go into thine house. Not only does He say the man is healed, but total strength is suddenly restored in that he cannot only walk, but carry a couch, as well.

***Luke 5:25 "And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God."***

***Luke 5:26 "And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, we have seen strange things to day."***

We see here an instant healing and restoration. The former paralytic got up and walked away. If Jesus were a blasphemer, he could not have healed him. But since he healed him, he showed that he could also forgive sins. And since he could forgive sins, he should be acknowledged as the Son of Man, the Messiah. The incredible things they witnessed caused awe among the masses and led them to give glory to God. This "all" surely includes the scribes and Pharisees. It seems this miracle left them speechless. The scribes and Pharisees could have said no more for fear of being mobbed by the people. Give God the glory for it all. Fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. There was no way to humanly explain away what had happened, so they called it “strange things”.

***Luke 5:27 "And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me."***

***Luke 5:28 "And he left all, rose up, and followed him."***

***Luke 5:29 "And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them."***

Jesus had already called several fishermen to be his disciples (5:1-11). Now he called someone whom the Pharisees and scribes would really dislike. A publican was a collector of the Roman taxes. It was felt that their job was not one to be proud of. Jews who served as tax collectors for the Roman government were considered traitors by their countrymen. Moreover, they often padded their own pockets by collecting more than necessary. Publicans were a hated group, especially by the Hebrews. This one is better known as Matthew, the author of the first gospel. Levi is the same as Matthew. Rather than avoid such a sinner, Jesus told him, follow me, and Levi obeyed. Jesus called him from the seat of customs. This "Levi", or Matthew, was to be one of the twelve disciples. He never hesitated. He came immediately. Levi was evidently celebrating his new faith, and he invited former friends to share in the festivities. Then the man further demonstrated his repentant heart by hosting a grand banquet for Jesus at his house and inviting his fellow tax collectors and others to meet him. When you truly encounter Jesus, it’s not enough to follow him. You want others to know the joy of following him too.

***Luke 5:30 "But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?"***

These scribes and Pharisees Jump on the disciples. Possibly, they figure they might could win an argument with the disciples. They were disgusted and complained, why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners? The Pharisees held that it was defiling to have dealings, let alone to eat, with people like Levi and his associates. It was thought to be a sin for the Hebrews to eat with publicans and sinners. They questioned the propriety of Jesus’s association and fellowship with sinful people. But their concern confirmed that they didn’t understand Jesus’s mission, nor did they understand their own duty as supposed servants of God.

***Luke 5:31 "And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick."***

***Luke 5:32 "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."***

Even though the religious leaders were questioning the disciples, Jesus answered them. Jesus stated the obvious: sick people need doctors, not the healthy. Then he applied this truth to his ministry: I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Jesus’s mission was to invite the spiritually sick to repent and experience a restored relationship with God. He hadn’t come to simply hang out with religious people. The scribes and Pharisees, on the other hand, were the religious leaders. Yet they didn’t have enough concern for sinners to show them compassion and point them to God. Jesus is of course not dealing with the question of whether there are in fact righteous people who need no repentance. By righteous He refers to the Pharisees, who thought they were righteous, and thus felt they had no need to repent. They were truly self-righteous. Jesus questions their self-righteousness here. He says you are so righteous already I could not possibly be of any help to you. I must help those hopeless sinners. If you are already righteous, you do not need to repent and be saved.

***Luke 5:33 "And they said unto him, why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise [the disciples] of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?"***

Again, the religious leaders focus their attention on Jesus’ disciples. This is called deflection. They are trying to stir up strife between the disciples of John and Jesus' disciples. Some were observing that while John’s disciples and those of the Pharisees fasted often, Jesus’s disciples did not. The implication was that Jesus was not encouraging his disciples to practice piety toward God. The strange thing is that they respected John the Baptist, even though he plainly told them who Jesus was, but they did not believe Jesus.

***Luke 5:34 "And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?"***

***Luke 5:35 "But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days."***

Jesus informed them, just like with healing, that there is a designated time for fasting. Often fasting in the Old Testament was a solemn occasion that involved sorrow over sins or an urgent request for divine intervention (1 Samuel 7:6; 2 Samuel 12:16; Nehemiah 1:4; Esther 4:15-16; Psalm 35: 13). But this wasn’t a somber occasion; it was a time of celebration. Jesus compared it to a wedding and himself to the groom. When you attend a wedding, you don’t fast, because it’s an event of merriment and rejoicing. The Messiah had finally come; it was party time! Later, though, when the groom was taken away from them after his resurrection and ascension his disciples would have legitimate opportunities for fasting. As long as His presence is here rejoice! because, there will be a day of sickness and sorrow for His followers. Most of His followers will be so frightened and disillusioned that they will run and hide. Fasting is an extension of prayer to the utmost.

***Luke 5:36 "And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was [taken] out of the new agreeth not with the old."***

***Luke 5:37 "And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish."***

***Luke 5:38 "But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved."***

***Luke 5:39 "No man also having drunk old [wine] straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better."***

To illustrate what he was explaining to them, Jesus used a parable, a word picture. You can’t take a patch that’s new and put it on an old garment. Not only will the two not match, but the new patch will shrink and tear the garment. Similarly, you can’t put new wine into old wineskins. The brittle containers will burst, and you will lose both the wineskins and the wine. Jesus was bringing a new covenant. As the author of Hebrews says, Jesus has a “superior ministry” and is the “mediator of a better covenant, which has been established on better promises”. Everything about him is superior. The scribes and Pharisees wanted their old ways to stay the same. They scorned the “newness” of Jesus and the kingdom he was proclaiming. But no one who truly welcomes the King and his teaching who tastes and sees “that the Lord is good” would say, The old is better. This is speaking of how incompatible the law for the Jews and grace for the Christians are. It is so difficult for the Jews, who do not believe Jesus is Messiah; and Christians, who believe Jesus is Saviour, to worship together, new, and old, together are not compatible. The Jews are satisfied with the law. Christians want salvation by grace through Jesus.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Where did the Pharisees and doctors of law come from to see Jesus?

2. What was present to heal them?

3. Why were the Pharisees there?   
4. What is palsy?  
5. When He saw their faith, what did Jesus say to the man?

6. Who has the power to forgive sins?  
7. What did the scribes and Pharisees accuse Jesus of?

8. Who are these scribes, Pharisees, and doctors of law?

9. They know the letter of the law, but do not know what?  
10. Jesus healed the man to prove what to the Pharisees?  
11. What did Jesus tell the man to do when He healed him?  
12. What did the sick of the palsy do?  
13. The people were amazed and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  
14. What is the beginning of wisdom?  
15. Who was sitting at the seat of custom?  
16. What other name is he known by?  
17. What did Levi do to honor Jesus?

18. What is a publican?  
19. Who needs a physician?  
20. Who did Jesus come to call to repentance?  
21. What did John's disciples do that Jesus' disciples did not?

22. What did Jesus call Himself in verse 34?  
23. What shows the incompatibility of the law and grace?  
24. Christians do not accept just the law, but want what?