

### **Heal!**

Jesus Christ healed.

A stunning fact. A miracle so unbelievable...it is still studied. A scar disappears. A tormented man becomes whole; a friend awakens from a tomb of death after three days.

There's a sigh of relief and a feeling of wholeness.

What he did causes people to want to shout! To tell his stories... To write his gospel down. Healing is a large part of Jesus' ministry. And his gift of healing is what we consider today.

But in order for healing to take place there must first be a wound. There must be an infirmity or illness, something that has been torn wrong...away from how God created life to be. In this reading from Matthew there are several good lessons we could hear. But it is the healing which catches our attention...because of the miracle it is.

In this ninth chapter Jesus has been very busy healing. He's healed the ruler's daughter (raised her to life...after her father begged on his knees). He has healed the woman with the hemorrhage, and two blind men.

Now, as Jesus and his followers go away from the crowd which has gathered, incredulous at his power over sickness, some of them bring to him a man who is dumb. A man who cannot speak. Maybe an emotional trauma had bound his spirit with such torment, that his feelings are crippled, and his tongue silent.

Whatever his need was, Jesus sees his trauma...and, the Bible says, "He had compassion on him."

Let's stop there for a moment. Jesus...had compassion...on him.

He was busy, like we are. But not so busy as to neglect someone hurting. He didn't just walk on by.

Here is a man lost in a world where he cannot communicate with those whom he loves. He cannot deal with life as others do....and the son of God feels his pain. And, lest we forget, let's remember that it is God who wants this healing. ....Who has such, quote, "compassion on the crowds....those like bewildered sheep". That's what the Bible says!

Then, into this silence there enters...mystery. Healing. And behold! The Greek here is "Look...you!". The words are supposed to grab us and say, "Hey folks, hey people...look at this!" Now there is a joyful noise where there had been

none. Where before there had been only a quiet, paralyzing despair...now there is a man who speaks.

Margaret Murray lives in Big Stone Gap, a little town in Virginia. And she tells a story in Guideposts of her Uncle Wilson...who needed healing also. (Jy 86) He had an intestinal tumor that was growing worse. So he went into hospital to undergo surgery.

Since the doctors could not remove it all they gave him from four to six months to live...and he moved into his niece, Margaret's home...to live out his last days. The family worked hard to make Uncle Wilson comfortable, but he was helpless and in great pain. Day after day they tried to soothe his fears, tend his needs, and pray for God to heal this good, kindly man. In July 1984 ten months had passed and Uncle Wilson took a turn for the worse. Margaret was called and, as she stood by his bed, waiting for the ambulance to come...even in all his pain he tried to communicate his thanks and love by kissing her hand. \*(Even in all his physical and emotional torment he is trying to reach out and communicate with those whom he loves.) Listen to the rest of the story in Margaret Murray's own words.

"By now I was no longer praying for his healing, but simply asking God to take my uncle to be with Him. And then, early in the morning of his third day in the hospital, my sister and I were with him when Uncle Wilson suddenly opened his eyes, and in a loud and clear voice he cried, "My God! My God! My God!" My sister and I were wonderstruck.

"Uncle Wilson died soon after, but my family was sustained by his words. My uncle you see, had been deaf and mute since birth. These words...were the first he had ever spoken."

What happens at St. E...and Bryan East....today, or in all our tomorrows, may or may not be much like this story.

But two things are sure: one is that God wants to heal us. The Lord of love desires for our spirits to be rid of whatever torment we have....that is making or keeping us...sick.

And the second thing is that we can all help. Just as Jesus had compassion on the crowds and prayed for workers to minister for the harvest...we too are part of God's healing. You and I; not just nurses or doctors, orderlies and pastors and deacons...all of us are ministers for God's healing. God's power passes through your hands...just as much as anyone's!

What can you say...or do...that will loose someone's tongue, or untie their spirit and set it free? What demons of the past: wrongs, sins, indulgences...can I ask you

to forgive? What love and laughter and tears of joy can you set free by your touch, your love? Not that anything physical might change (though it may; that still happens) but more importantly...what can you do or say that God might work...that God might heal...through the spirit...set free?

So that we might all love again...and talk and speak...and walk, and dance, and sing....in that Love?

What can you do today.....to help someone heal?

Go.....

And heal!

Amen.