

Book Study – Matthew 8:28- 9:8

Jesus heals demon-possessed men and a paralytic



Before We Begin Our Journey...

1. Why are Satan and the occult increasingly popular topics among young people?
2. What qualities do you look for in a friend?
3. What people did God use to bring you to Jesus?



Do Some Digging and Pre-planning...

4. Who met Christ and his men and what did they shout at Jesus? (8:29)
5. How did Jesus respond to the request that he cast the demons into the herd of pigs? What happened as soon as Jesus spoke? (8:32)
6. How did news of this event reach town? How did the people react to what happened? (8:33-34)
7. Upon His arrival, whom did Jesus encounter and what did they think about his declaration? (9:2-3)



Sort, Organize, Gain Understanding...

8. How does Christ's power over Satan encourage and comfort you?
9. How can we show confidence in Christ's power?
10. What experiences led up to you meeting Christ and having your sins forgiven?
11. How do you typically react when someone else becomes a Christian?



Application for the Journey...

12. What individuals in your town are in the grip of Satan and need your prayers today and every day this week?
13. How can you show your appreciation to God today for His saving work in your life?

A prayer for your journey...

"Lord Jesus, as I walk through this coming week, help me prepare for my journey by reading my Bible more regularly, seeking help as I need it from my Christian friends and focusing on the needs of others instead of myself. Help me to demonstrate my faith by stepping into the unknown, untried, and untested areas of my life." -Amen

Direction Finder...

Name any "genuine" healing that you have personally witnessed.

Have you had your own prayer for healing of another answered?

Can you heal and raise people from the dead as Christ did?

Assignment: Find scriptures that show Christ giving power to any "common" person to heal or have other powers that He possessed.

FAITH HEALING (edited here by L. Farthing. Full article follows)

Faith Healing (defined) A practice, particularly associated with the Pentecostal and charismatic movements, based on the belief that Jesus' promise of healing recorded in Mark 16:18 is for every generation of believers.

(Note that the most reliable early manuscripts and other ancient witnesses do not include Mark 16:9-20.)

Mark 16:17-18 "And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." NIV

The post-apostolic church continued the tradition of first-century believers by teaching and practicing a healing ministry to the sick. However, evidence indicates that by the 9th century prayers for the sick had fallen from regular practice.

By the twelfth century in Italy the Waldensians were practicing faith healing, and the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation brought with it a revival of prayers for the sick

The Catholic Church has maintained the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick since the eleventh and twelfth centuries, with healings reportedly taking place. Certain individuals within the Catholic tradition, such as Francis of Assisi, Bernard of Clairvoux and Patrick of Ireland were credited with the spiritual gift of healing.

The Nineteenth Century. While reports of healings have accompanied revivals and awakenings throughout the history of the Christian church, the present-day faith-healing movements look to the late nineteenth century for their immediate antecedents. This new wave of interest in faith healing eventually influenced the American revival tradition. On the other hand, conservative theologians, particularly those of a dispensationalist persuasion, maintained that the gift of healing had ceased with the apostolic age.

A. B. Simpson, a former Presbyterian pastor who claimed to have been healed of a heart condition. His writings contained numerous teachings on faith healing, and Simpson founded the Christian and Missionary Alliance on the "four-fold gospel" of Christ as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King. Healing revivalist Maria B. Woodworth-Etter, held meetings in which people fell to the sawdust floor as they received prayer for their afflictions.

The Twentieth Century. At the turn of the century, individuals within the Holiness Movement, as well as isolated evangelicals, were reporting divine healings. The Pentecostal Movement in particular, a near cousin to the Holiness Movement, was making faith healing an important part of its teachings and practices and many believed it was God's will that anyone who was sick should be healed. People should expect to be healed by faith just as they had been saved by faith.

The unfortunate result of this doctrine was that those who prayed for the sick often placed the total responsibility for successful healings on the afflicted. If the sick were not healed it was because they lacked faith—leaving them to feel guilty, sinful and unworthy of God's favor. Many preachers later modified their views and admitted they did not understand why everyone was not healed. This attitude is more prevalent today among faith healers.

Prior to World War Two evangelists such as Aimee Semple McPherson held salvation-healing meetings and attracted crowds numbering in the thousands. Following World War Two new salvation-healing evangelists appeared such as William M. Branham and Oral Roberts. They were followed by figures such as Kathryn Kuhlman and O. L. Jagers.

Dozens of giant revival tents sprung up across the American religious landscape, particularly in the South. The accent in these revivals was unashamedly placed on healing miracles. Radio and television were used to reach the masses.

By the 1960 s the charismatic movement had begun to surface in mainline denominations, bringing faith healing a newfound respectability. Catholic charismatics rediscovered the power of their church's older tradition of prayer for the sick.

The 1970 s saw the birth of the "Word" or "Faith" movement, a blend of charismatic and classical Pentecostal teachings, including a radical view of health and wealth as the rightful blessings of faith.

In 1982 Healing miracles had found their way into the curriculum of one of the tradition's foremost institutions, Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. Accompanying its more academic study of the subject of healings and miracles were "practical sessions" in which exorcism and healings were recorded in the classroom. A parallel and equally controversial development has been the growth of the Vineyard Fellowship. Founded by John Wimber, a charismatic pastor and former instructor of the Fuller Seminary course, the movement consists of a nationwide network of congregations emphasizing the miraculous gifts of the Spirit.

FAITH HEALING (full article)

Faith Healing. A practice, particularly associated with the Pentecostal and charismatic movements, based on the belief that Jesus' promise of healing recorded in Mark 16:18 is for every generation of believers.

The post-apostolic church continued the tradition of first-century believers by teaching and practicing a healing ministry to the sick. Irenaeus, Justin Martyr and Tertullian viewed passages such as Mark 16:15-18 and James 5:14-16 as the church's mandate to pray for the sick in expectation of their healing. In the third century Gregory Thaumaturgus or "Wonder Worker" (c. 213-c. 270) was credited with many miracles, among them healings. However, evidence indicates that by the ninth century prayers for the sick had fallen from regular practice.

By the twelfth century in Italy the Waldensians were practicing faith healing, and the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation brought with it a revival of prayers for the sick. Luther himself believed in praying for the sick and later Protestant groups continued this apostolic practice, including the Brethren, Mennonites, Quakers, Moravians and Wesleyans.

The Catholic Church has maintained the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick since the eleventh and twelfth centuries, with healings reportedly taking place. However, in popular medieval thinking the sacrament was regarded as a preparation for death (extreme unction) rather than a sacramental means of healing grace. Other means of miraculous healings have been recognized by the Catholic Church, whether they take place by means of sacramentals such as prayers or blessings, by healing power associated with places such as Lourdes, France, or as a result of prayers to a saint. Certain individuals within the Catholic tradition, such as Francis of Assisi, Bernard of Clairvoux and Patrick of Ireland were credited with the spiritual gift of healing.

The Nineteenth Century. While reports of healings have accompanied revivals and awakenings throughout the history of the Christian church, the present-day faith-healing movements look to the late nineteenth century for their immediate antecedents. By that time Europeans had already seen a revival of faith healing in such figures as Dorthea Trudel of Switzerland, Johannes Blumhardt and Otto Stockmayer of Germany and William Boardman in England.

This new wave of interest in faith healing eventually influenced the American revival tradition. By the late nineteenth century, religious figures such as Charles Cullis, Carrie Judd Montgomery, Maria B. Woodworth-Etter, A. B. Simpson, A. J. Gordon, R. A. Torrey, John Alexander Dowie and R. Kelso Carter were teaching and practicing faith healing in America. But among these practitioners there were differences in interpretation and practice of healing. While some taught that healing is part of the atonement and as readily available to believers as salvation, others reasoned that healing is a mercy available as a result of Christ's atonement but not a guarantee of physical well being. The latter group looked to the resurrection for the fullness of healing. On the other hand, conservative theologians, particularly those of a dispensationalist persuasion, maintained that the gift of healing had ceased with the apostolic age.

J. A. Dowie, an emigrant from Australia, held the most radical view of faith healing. Teaching that medicine and faith healing were incompatible, his theocratic community of Zion, Illinois, banned the medical profession—including veterinarians—from practicing within the city.

Much more moderate were the views of A. B. Simpson, a former Presbyterian pastor who claimed to have been healed of a heart condition. His writings contained numerous teachings on faith healing, and Simpson founded the Christian and Missionary Alliance on the "four-fold gospel" of Christ as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King. But Simpson believed that the sick should receive prayer in a private place such as a "faith home," a hostel-like refuge for the ill. In his opinion, parading the sick through public prayer lines amid loud prayers and outbursts of emotion was more like a circus than a venue fit for divine healing. Others, like healing revivalist Maria B. Woodworth-Etter, held meetings in which people fell to the sawdust floor as they received prayer for their afflictions.

The 20 th Century. At the turn of the century, individuals within the Holiness Movement, as well as isolated evangelicals, were reporting divine healings. Yet the rise of Christian Science and Pentecostalism caused some to withdraw from faith healing for fear of being associated with these new movements or extremists such as Dowie. The Pentecostal Movement in particular, a near cousin to the Holiness Movement, was making faith healing an important part of its teachings and practices. Charles F. Parham, William J. Seymour, Florence Crawford and others believed it was God's will that anyone who was sick should be healed. If healing grace was in the atonement—and they believed it was—people should expect to be healed by faith just as they had been saved by faith.

The unfortunate result of this doctrine was that those who prayed for the sick often placed the total responsibility for successful healings on the afflicted. If the sick were not healed it was because they lacked faith—leaving them to feel guilty, sinful and unworthy of God's favor. Many preachers later modified their views and admitted they did not understand why everyone was not healed. This attitude is more prevalent today among faith healers.



The JOURNEYMEN

"We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD said,
I will give it to you: come with us, and we will do you good..."

-- Numbers 10:29

Prior to World War 2 evangelists such as Aimee Semple McPherson, Raymond T. Richey, F. F. Bosworth, Charles S. Price, A. H. Argue, and three Englishmen, Smith Wigglesworth, and Stephen and George Jeffreys, held salvation-healing meetings and attracted crowds numbering in the thousands. But the following and impact of these healing evangelists could not be compared with the new wave of faith healers who burst on the scene following World War 2. Most prominent among these new salvation-healing evangelists were William M. Branham and Oral Roberts. They were followed by figures such as Kathryn Kuhlman, A. A. Allen, T. L. Osborn, Jack Coe, Gayle Jackson, O. L. Jagers.

Dozens of giant revival tents sprung up across the American religious landscape, particularly in the South. The accent in these revivals was unashamedly placed on healing miracles. Personal appearances were important in creating a following (or "partners," as they were called), and the more successful evangelists utilized the medium of radio and television to reach the masses. But with this newfound popularity came criticism. Critics claimed that if anyone were healed, the illness was psychosomatic rather than organic. Healing evangelists were commonly charged with fraud, greed and moral failure. By the 1960s the charismatic movement had begun to surface in mainline denominations, bringing faith healing a newfound respectability. Catholic charismatics rediscovered the power of their church's ancient tradition of prayer for the sick, as evidenced in Father Francis MacNutt's book *Healing* (1974).

The 1970s saw the birth of the "Word" or "Faith" movement, a blend of charismatic and classical Pentecostal teachings, including a radical view of health and wealth as the rightful blessings of faith. Teaching their followers to claim healing and prosperity rather than ask God for it, the movement has created more controversy than the salvation-healing movement of the 1950s and is rejected as extremist by many traditional Pentecostals.

In 1982 many evangelicals were surprised to learn healing miracles had found their way into the curriculum of one of the tradition's foremost institutions, Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. A center of progressive but generally Reformed evangelical thought since its founding in 1947, the seminary's respected School of World Mission had offered a well-attended course entitled "Signs, Wonders and Church Growth." Accompanying its more academic study of the subject were "practical sessions" in which exorcism and healings were recorded in the classroom.

While the course was discontinued in 1986 due to faculty controversy over its place in the seminary curriculum, its public profile caused many evangelicals to reassess their beliefs and attitudes toward faith healing. A parallel and equally controversial development has been the growth of the Vineyard Fellowship. Founded by John Wimber, a charismatic pastor and former instructor of the Fuller Seminary course, the movement consists of a nationwide network of congregations emphasizing the miraculous gifts of the Spirit.

See also CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT; FAITH MOVEMENT; PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT.

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Faith defined and explained

— Faith is in general the persuasion of the mind that a certain statement is true (Phil 1:27; 2 Thess 2:13). Its primary idea is trust. A thing is true, and therefore worthy of trust. It admits of many degrees up to full assurance of faith, in accordance with the evidence on which it rests.

Faith is the result of teaching (Rom 10:14-17). Knowledge is an essential element in all faith, and is sometimes spoken of as an equivalent to faith (John 10:38; 1 John 2:3). Yet the two are distinguished in this respect, that faith includes in it assent, which is an act of the will in addition to the act of the understanding. Assent to the truth is of the essence of faith, and the ultimate ground on which our assent to any revealed truth rests is the veracity of God.

Historical faith is the apprehension of and assent to certain statements which are regarded as mere facts of history.

Temporary faith is that state of mind which is awakened in men (e.g., Felix) by the exhibition of the truth and by the influence of religious sympathy, or by what is sometimes styled the common operation of the Holy Spirit.

Saving faith is so called because it has eternal life inseparably connected with it. It cannot be better defined than in the words of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism: "Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel."

(Easton's Bible Dictionary)

"...we call the reader's attention, for his Scriptural studies, to the central place of faith in Christianity, and its significance ... In its nature, not by any mere arbitrary arrangement, it is (mankind's) one possible receptive attitude, that in which he brings nothing, so that he may receive all. Thus "faith" is our side of union with Christ. And thus it is our means of possessing all His benefits, pardon, justification, purification, life, peace, glory."

(International Standard Bible Encyclopedia)

A belief in or confident attitude toward God, involving commitment to His will for one's life.

According to Heb 11, faith was already present in the experience of many people in the Old Testament as a key element of their spiritual lives. In this chapter, the various heroes of the Old Testament (Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses) are described as living by faith. In addition, the Old Testament itself makes the same point. Abraham "believed in the Lord" (Gen 15:6); the Israelites "believed" (Ex 4:31; 14:31); and the prophet Habakkuk taught that "the just shall live by his faith" (Hab 2:4).

In the New Testament, "faith" covers various levels of personal commitment. Mere intellectual agreement to a truth is illustrated in James 2:19, where even demons are said to believe that there is one God. Obviously, however, they are not saved by this type of belief. Genuine saving faith is a personal attachment to Christ, best thought of as a combination of two ideas—reliance on Christ and commitment to Him. Saving faith involves personally depending on the finished work of Christ's sacrifice as the only basis for forgiveness of sin and entrance into heaven. But saving faith is also a personal commitment of

one's life to following Christ in obedience to His commands: "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day" (2 Tim 1:12).

Faith is part of the Christian life from beginning to end. As the instrument by which the gift of salvation is received (Eph 2:8-9), faith is thus distinct from the basis of salvation, which is grace, and from the outworking of salvation, which is good works. The apostle Paul declared that salvation is through faith, not through keeping the works of the law (Eph 2:8,9).

Finally, in the New Testament, faith can refer to the teachings of the Bible, the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). In modern times, faith has been weakened in meaning so that some people use it to mean self-confidence. But in the Bible, true faith is confidence in God or Christ, not in oneself.

(Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

FAITH (Grk. *pistis*). Belief or trust-especially in a higher power. The fundamental idea in Scripture is steadfastness and faithfulness.

Scripture's Use of the Word. The word is used in Scripture (1) most frequently in a subjective sense, denoting a moral and spiritual quality of individuals, by virtue of which men are held in relations of confidence in God and fidelity to Him; and (2) in an objective sense, meaning the body of truth, moral and religious, which God has revealed-that which men believe. Examples of this use of the word are not numerous, though they occur occasionally, as in Phil 1:27; 1 Tim 1:19; 6:20-21; Jude 3,20.

The word occurs only twice in our English version of the OT, the idea being expressed by other terms, such as "trust," etc.

Theological. Faith in the theological sense contains two elements recognized in the Scriptures: there is an element that is intellectual and also an element, of even deeper importance, that is moral. Faith is not simply the assent of the intellect to revealed truth; it is the practical submission of the entire man to the guidance and control of such truth. "The demons also believe, and shudder."

Indispensable as is the assent of the intellect, that alone does not constitute the faith upon which the Scriptures lay such emphasis. The essential idea is rather that of fidelity, faithfulness, steadfastness. Or, as has been well said, "Faith, in its essential temper, is that elevation of soul by which it aspires to the good, the true, and the divine." In illustration may be cited particularly John 3:18-21; Rom 2:7; 4:5; Heb 11:1; James 2:14-26.

(The New Unger's Bible Dictionary)

Instances of Faith in Christ

Matt 9:1-2: Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." NIV

Matt 9:20-22: Just then a woman who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak. She said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed." Jesus turned and saw her. "Take heart, daughter," he said, "your faith has healed you." And the woman was healed from that moment. NIV

Matt 9:27-30: As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" "Yes,

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Lord," they replied. Then he touched their eyes and said, "**According to your faith** will it be done to you"; and their sight was restored. NIV

Mark 10:49-52: Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see." "Go," said Jesus, "**your faith has healed you.**" Immediately he received his sight... NIV

Luke 17:11-19: Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him — and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Rise and go; **your faith** has made you well." NIV

Mark 6:56: And wherever he went — into villages, towns or countryside — **they placed the sick** in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and **all who touched him** were healed. NIV (faith?)

Luke 5:18-20: Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. When Jesus saw **their faith**, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven." NIV

Matt 15:22-28: A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession." Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said. He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs." "Yes, Lord," she said, "but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered, "**Woman, you have great faith!** Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed from that very hour. NIV

Luke 7:44-50: Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven — for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little." Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" Jesus said to the woman, "**Your faith has saved you;** go in peace." NIV

John 4:39-42: Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. 41 And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world." NIV

Acts 8:9-13: Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is the divine power known as the Great Power." They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic. But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw. NIV