

## 18. Jesus, the Healer

January 16, 2011

On Wednesday, January 12th, my daughter Michelle was going through a long 12 hour labor. While I was helplessly watching her in labor pain, I wanted to take that pain for her. I know, I know, I know what you ladies are thinking, "You would be dead. You men cannot handle any pain." Oh, that is so true. We, men, are totally wuss when it comes to pain. But I was speaking as her daddy, I just wanted to help my daughter somehow even though I knew that there was nothing I could do.

For that labor pain, moms have every right to tell their kids, "I brought you into this world and I can take you out of this world."

I've heard that the worst thing that can happen to parents is burying their children due to their early death. As a chaplain of the Pima County Sheriff's Department, I had to do death notifications of young people to their parents sometimes. The deputies are glad that I do it since they really hate to do that kind of things. It usually happens at night. I ring their door bell and a dad opens the door. There he sees me with two uniformed deputies behind me. His heart sinks and mom cries hysterically.

I once have read an article that was written by a father who lost his son in a mountain-climbing accident. He wrote that he looks for his son's face in a group of college students who were at his son's age. He was not there. Only his absence.

According to that father, he often checks his mailbox somehow hoping that his dead son would write him a letter or postcard; sometimes he even stares at the telephone and hoping that his son would call him. Now only silence. Absence and silence. Though the parents know that they would see him again in heaven, there is that "Neverness" of their son's earthly presence and voice.

This morning, we will meet a father who could order just about anything he wanted and got it because he was a royal official, noble man, didn't want to have that "Neverness" of his beloved son. He rushed to Jesus, the miracle worker from Galilee with a desperate plea, not as a king's man, but a crying father. What this father didn't know was that he was talking to the Life Giver of the universe, God Himself.

### A. THE NOBLE MAN IN CANA

*John 4:46-47 So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. 47 When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.*

The reputation of Jesus had traveled fast and before Him to Capernaum. This father whose son had been sick for sometime and now he was about to die, was willing to do anything. He heard that Jesus was in Cana which was less than twenty miles from Capernaum where he was.

'Nobleman' is 'basilikos' in Greek which means 'royal official' or 'king's man'. Obviously he was a person of prestigious rank and wealth, this man is probably one of Herod's trusted officers. Probably the royal official tried all the earthly means to heal his son, yet nothing prevailed. This time he didn't turn to king Herod, rather he turned to Jesus.

The word 'implore' is 'erotao' in Greek with the nuance of continuous action. In other words, this desperate father was continuously begging Jesus to come over to his house and heal his son. He could have been careless about his royal dignity or other people's stares. The only thing that mattered to him was the life of his son. He was helpless.

Although we can understand his urgency, we should not overlook two things from him:

- 1) The father told Jesus how to handle his need.
- 2) The father presented the need before presenting himself to Jesus.

How much better it would have been for him to simply lay himself and his problem at the feet of Jesus and allow Christ to handle it HIS WAY!

We need to learn something very important here. We all face trials and tribulations by our own faults or by attacks of Satan with permission from God or by God Himself for our training. If we try to solve problems with our own way and tell God what to do, we are no different than this father. And worst of all, we end up prolonging the trials, because we would not learn what God wants us to learn during the trials by forcing our will over God's. We should ask the Lord to lead the way so that we may follow Him closer than ever before.

### **B. ISN'T THAT TOO HARSH, JESUS?**

*John 4:48 Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe."*

Before we say, "Isn't that too harsh, Jesus?" we must understand that a circus atmosphere was developing around Jesus by now. Wherever He went, people were following and wanting to see the next miracles of Jesus. He was not much more than a traveling sideshow. This comment was our Lord Jesus' lament at the spiritual condition of the people in general. Whenever I come across Benny Hynn's programs on TBN, I think of this very verse.

Listen, miracles of God can lead a person towards belief in Him and can validate a heavenly messenger. But God is not the only one who can perform miracles. Satan also can do that.

*2 Thessalonians 2:9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders*

Miracles from our Lord are obviously good things, but they should not form the foundation of our faith. We should not depend on them to prove God to us. In themselves, miracles cannot change people's hearts. The Israelites saw incredible signs of God's presence at Mount Sinai and even heard the very voice of God, yet a short time later they worshiped a gold calf. People tend to seek miracles over the miracle Giver. It shouldn't be.

### **C. FROM CRISIS FAITH TO CONFIDENT FAITH**

*John 4:49-50 The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!" 50 Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives." So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.*

This broken father wouldn't take "No" for an answer. The Galilean Miracle Worker finally told him to go home, because his son would live. I'd love to have seen this father's face at that moment.

Though no one called him or texted him about his son at that moment, the father took the word of Jesus as was.

This man began with crisis faith: hoping that Jesus would come to his home and touch his son in person. After the word from the Lord, the nobleman's crisis faith became confident faith: he believed the Word and had peace in his heart. He was even able to delay his trip home, knowing that the boy was out of danger.

Why didn't Jesus go to Capernaum with the father who probably brought an extra horse for Jesus to ride? I am almost sure that the Lord wanted to stretch this man's faith.

#### **D. FROM CONFIDENT FAITH TO CONFIRMED FAITH, THEN TO CONTAGIOUS FAITH**

*John 4:51-54 And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, "Your son lives!" 52 Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." 53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household. 54 This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.*

In v50, we thought the father was on his way back to his home in Capernaum after Jesus told him that his son would be fine. But according to v52, we can see that the father spent a night in Cana instead of hurrying back to his home. He was so confident that his son would be healed by the word of Jesus. His confident faith became confirmed faith by the report of his servants.

I am sure that there was a great joy at the home of this nobleman in Capernaum. As soon as he arrived at his home, he told everyone in the house about Jesus, the Miracle Worker and they put their faith in Him. His confirmed faith now became contagious faith in Jesus.

Many Bible scholars believe that the people in this story were related to the group in another story:

*Luke 8:1-3 Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, 2 and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities--Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, 3 and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.*

Could Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward be the wife of this nobleman from John 4? A possibility. We will find out when we get to heaven.

#### **E. WHAT ABOUT NOT SO HAPPY ENDING?**

OK, that was a happy ending story, you almost can hear nice background music with a narrator speaking, "They lived happily ever after."

But what about not so happy ending with children's death? I know at least two of church family members have experienced this. Are they chopped livers for God or something? No, thousand times no.

In our society, there are people who wake up in the morning and think about the way to harm others for their own selfish gain – monetary way or perverted sexual self-gratification. In many cases, they harm innocent children. Or it can be illness that bring death to children.

Instead of grown children burying their age-old parents, the parents often bury children. We find the first couple of mankind, Adam and Eve also lost their second child Able who was murdered by his own brother Cain.

I am sure that you all have heard this kind of question from unbelievers, or even believers:

"If God is good, how can He let all these evil things happen around the world?" Instead of 'evil things' you can insert your situation that God should have taken care of according to your way.

The question sounds logical, but there are two major flaws:

1) The question said, "If God is good". According to the context of this question, it sounds like the person who is asking this question is the one who decides what is good or not. The fact is that God is good whether we agree or not.

*Matthew 19:17 So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."*

2) The intention of the question is to prove that either God is not very good since bad things happen to people or God is good but not all powerful enough to keep the bad things from happening. Either way, it has a negative notion against God in the background.

When God created heaven and earth and mankind, there was no sin, no death, and no illness until Adam and Eve knowingly decided to sin against the Lord.

C.S. Lewis said, "The problem of pain is atheism's most potent weapon against Christian faith."

If you are still looking for my answer for the reason why bad things happen to good people, I have it for you now. You might want to write down this profound answer in the margin of your Bible. You all ready? Here it is in three words – "I don't know." There are many things that are beyond our understanding. We don't need to know the reason for everything. God is good without a question, He knows what He is doing in the midst of all the miseries of the world. He doesn't need our opinions, nor does He ever ask for one.

But I do know one thing: God loves all of us, period. If the human father of this morning's study loved his son so much that he could care less about his royal dignity, how much more does our Father in heaven love us.

## **F. APPLICATIONS**

### **1) A faithful father isn't too independent to admit his needs.**

This father sought help from Jesus when he faced a critical situation. How vulnerable are you? How honest are you about your needs with yourself? With God? With your wife? With others?

**2) A faithful father isn't too busy or too macho to know his children.**

This father didn't send his wife to Jesus. He went himself. Get yourself involved in your children's lives with the guidance from the Word of God.

Dads, grandpas, moms, and grandmas, listen, children grow up fast. They may not remember how fancy their home is when they are growing up, but they will remember what they do with their parents in that home. They may not remember what a luxury car they have, but they will remember what kind of conversations they have with mom or dad.

**3) A faithful father isn't too proud to believe God's Word.**

Are you a pacesetter in spiritual things? Are you a good example for your children to follow? I didn't say, "Perfect example." If you goof up, admit your fault and ask your children to forgive you. There is no one more forgiving than your children when you apologize sincerely.

**4) A faithful father isn't too logical to walk by faith.**

Are you praying for your family's spiritual needs? When your family members need counsels – not orders from the family drill sergeant, because we, fathers can act that way often, do you seek God's help in prayers together with them?