

AMAZING JESUS

Matthew 8:1-17

17: *Amazing Jesus* (Matthew 8:1-17)

The ministry of Jesus was amazing. His many miracles led people to listen to His fantastic claims. Today we get a glimpse of how amazing Jesus is and what amazes Him.

Catch the Context

Matthew 4:23 (NIV) Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, **proclaiming the good news of the kingdom**, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

Matthew 4:24-25 (NIV) **News about Him spread** all over Syria, and people brought to Him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and **He healed them**. Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan **followed Him**.

A Leper's Request

Matthew 8:1-2 (NIV) When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, **you can make me clean.**"

Leprosy was considered a social death sentence. Leviticus 13-14 commands the person with leprosy to go to the priest to examine and quarantine and to see if it would *heal* or *spread*. If the disease is healing, he would consider them clean, but it not...

Leviticus 13:45-46 (CSB) The person who has a case of serious skin disease is to have his clothes torn and his hair hanging loose, and he must cover his mouth and cry out, 'Unclean, unclean!' He will remain unclean as long as he has the disease; he is unclean. He must live alone in a place outside the camp.

- In order not to infect others this person could not live among the healthy and was essentially kicked out of the community. These people couldn't show up to family activities nor spiritual gatherings at the local synagogues nor Jerusalem temple.

Dr. Luke's telling of this same man says he was "covered with leprosy" (Lk 5:12). With no where else to turn, this disfigured man with open soars & dirty clothes entered the town crying 'unclean, unclean', on his knees with his face to the ground before Jesus (Mt 8:2, Mk 1:40, Lk 5:12) - his one wish was to be made **clean**. He trusted that Jesus *COULD* heal but didn't know if Jesus *WOULD* heal his deadly disease.

- This man's approach is illustrates how sinners should approach Jesus. - *humble, needy, desperate, & asking* for something that we cannot do ourselves, "**Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.**"

We see the moving Compassion of Jesus. Lepers were used to people moving *AWAY* from them, not moving *TOWARD* them.

The Compassion of Jesus

Matthew 8:3 (NIV) Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" **Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy.**

Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. *Jesus didn't have to TOUCH that guy.* But Jesus *TOUCHED* this man who likely hadn't received a healthy touch for years and years. Jesus wasn't afraid of an unhealthy infection, as **He showed healthy affection** to this needy man.

And after Jesus touches him, everyone could see that the leprosy was suddenly GONE! This man would never have to shout *UNCLEAN* again. Instead, he could shout "*I'M CLEAN!!!!*"

A Testimony of God's Healing

Matthew 8:4 (NIV) Then Jesus said to him, "See that you don't tell anyone. But go, *show yourself to the priest and offer the gift Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." * Lev 14:1-32

Don't tell anyone. *Why not?* Jesus wasn't telling the man he could *NEVER* tell others about his cleansing, but that he must first go to the priest. Here's why. First, this was to be **a testimony to the priests**, that God had healed this man - another proof that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah. Second, the Scriptures not only prescribed removing lepers from the community, but also prescribed **how to restore the healed person back into the community** (see Lev 14:1-32). Showing himself to the priest would have demonstrated that he was healed; he would be declared clean, & welcomed back into the community.

A Centurion's Humble Faith

Matthew 8:5-9 (NIV) When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a **centurion** came to him, asking for help. "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly." Jesus said to him, "Shall I come and heal him?" The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But **just say the word, and my servant will be healed.** For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

A **centurion** in the Roman army responsible for about 80 men under his authority.¹ According to Dr. Luke, *this Roman soldier is respected by Jewish elders*, whom went on his behalf to ask Jesus to heal his servant. In fact, they say *he was responsible for helping build their synagogue (Lk 7:4-5)*. It's obvious that this man's **servant** matters to him. He wants to see him healed.

I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. A Jew walking into a Gentile's home would have made him ceremonially unclean (**Acts 10:28**). This man *asks humbly...but he also trusts fully*. This is amazing faith. This man simply believes if Jesus says it, it will be done! He recognizes that *Jesus has the authority to heal simply by commanding it to be so*.

Amazing Jesus

Matthew 8:10 (NIV) When Jesus heard this, **he was amazed** and said to those following him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith."

There are many times when others are amazed at Jesus (**Mt 8:27, 15:31**), and there is a time when JESUS is **amazed** by others lack of faith (Mk 6:6), but *THIS ONE TIME...Jesus is **amazed** by this man's faith...his TRUST in Jesus*. Although this man was NOT racially nor religiously Jewish, and therefore NOT considered to be a citizen of God's Kingdom...Jesus sees him in a different light, because...

BIG TRUTH: Kingdom citizens TRUST Amazing Jesus

Since this man does trust Jesus, he is a citizen of God's Kingdom.

A Gentile Example of Faith

Matthew 8:11 (NIV) I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

The Old Testament Scriptures point to a day when *ALL NATIONS* will be a part of God's Kingdom. Here's an example.

Isaiah 19:23-25 (NIV) In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together. In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth. The Lord Almighty will bless them, saying, "**Blessed be Egypt My people, Assyria My handiwork, and Israel My inheritance.**"

Egypt and **Assyria** were the 2 superpowers of the day, at war with one another. Assyria was at war with the people of **Israel**. Yet Yahweh speaks of a day when they will be at peace, worshipping Him together - ALL belonging to Him!

Jesus notes that this Roman centurion is one of many Gentiles who will sit at the same table as the Jewish patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob.

A Warning to Untrusting Subjects

Matthew 8:12 (NIV) ...But **the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside**, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Many Gentiles will welcomed into the kingdom..because of their FAITH - their TRUST in Jesus. But...many Israelites who already considered themselves to be **subjects of the kingdom**, based on their racial heritage - will be **thrown outside** the kingdom and experience *hell* - a place of **darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth**.

❓ Are we leaning on our hope of heaven because of our family heritage - godly parents/grandparents?; our knowledge of the Bible or our church involvement, or partaking in religious rituals.

Kingdom citizens TRUST Amazing Jesus

This centurion simply believed whatever Jesus said. Oh that we would follow this man's example and take Amazing Jesus at His word - whatever He says is trustworthy & true.

Jesus Heals at a Distance

Matthew 8:13 (NIV) Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would." And **his servant was healed at that moment.**

Dr. Luke tells us that the servants left Jesus and returned home to find the servant well (**Lk 7:10**). **Amazing Jesus** can heal people without ever touching them or even seeing them!

¹ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2009), 264.

Healed People Helping Others

Matthew 8:14-15 (NIV) When Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. **He touched her hand and the fever left her**, and she got up and began to wait on Him.

When Jesus heals her, she immediately begins to serve Him! What a great example of what what we should do when Jesus heals our souls!

Amazing Jesus Keeps Healing After Dark

Matthew 8:16-17 (NIV) When evening came, many who were **demon-possessed** were brought to him, and **he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick**. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: "He took up our infirmities and bore our diseases." *Isaiah 53:4

Matthew points his Jewish audience to show that Jesus is the fulfillment of a 700 year old prophecy from [Isaiah 53:4](#) because he wants his people to know more than *WHAT Jesus can do*; he wants people to *know WHO JESUS IS!* **Amazing Jesus is the Jewish Messiah**, who has come to let the outsiders in - the living, breathing demonstration of God's truth, compassion, and sacrificial love - who invites people into His Kingdom and warns others who think they're already in because of family heritage, religious rituals, or biblical knowledge.

He calls us to become Kingdom Citizens, and...

Kingdom citizens TRUST Amazing Jesus



1. **Answer this question:** "What's the evidence that I am a **kingdom citizen**?"
2. Open the Gospels to read **WHAT JESUS SAID & DID** and **WHO JESUS IS**.
3. **Tell others about Amazing Jesus.** Tell them about what you read. Tell them about what He has/is doing in your life.

heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- * Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- * Or call our **deacons & wives:** Alan & Christy Androski (850-464-1428), Steve & Debbie Bass (850-673-7952), Freddy & Joyce Howard (850-973-0047), Tim & Joni Hughey (850-464-1156), Mark & Dot Mancil (850-253-5405), Boss & Amelia Mulkey (850-464-6717), or Tom & Martha Waddail (850-973-0011).

discussionquestions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. What challenged or encouraged you most from today's teaching? You might need to look back in your notes to help explain your answer.
2. **Read Matthew 8:1-4 and Leviticus 13:45-46.** How did skin diseases impact a person's life and why was Jesus' ability and willingness to heal so significant? If Jesus didn't need to *touch* the man to heal him, why do you think He *did* touch him?
3. **Read Matthew 8:5-10, 13 and Luke 7:1-10.** What are some evidences that this man was genuine, humble, caring, & trusting? How does Jesus respond to his faith? How does this man's faith challenge us to trust Jesus at His word? What are some things you need to trust Jesus with? As you share this, people from the group should remind each other what the Scriptures say regarding those topics.
4. **Read Matthew 8:11-12.** If you are a Gentile (non-Jew) follower of Jesus, have you ever stopped to consider how *your life* is a fulfillment of this passage? Explain your answer. Based on this passage, who is the message of Jesus for - only certain ethnicities? Why would v12 likely upset Jews who were trusting in family heritage, good works, or religious rituals?
5. **Read Matthew 8:14-17.** Have you ever thought about how much time it took to meet with all these people; what about all the gross things Jesus saw and smelled as he cared for these folks? What does this tell you about the compassion of Jesus for people who are hurting? How might the example of Jesus encourage us to treat hurting people with value?
6. **Look back at our FEET2FAITH Challenges** from today. Answer **F2F#1:** *What's the evidence that you are a Kingdom Citizen?* (If you don't know, then it's okay to talk about that!) **F2F #2:** Answer which gospel you will read from this week and why. **F2F#3:** Who is someone you need to prayerfully approach to tell about Amazing Jesus?
7. Share prayer needs and pray for one another.