DIVING DEEPER DISCUSSION GUIDE

TEXT SUMMARY

In today's text, Matt 8:1-17, Matthew recounts several of Jesus' miracles of healing and deliverance.

INTRODUCTION (OBSERVATION):

1. Throughout His ministry, we see Jesus employing a variety of methods to heal. In our text we see two of them. What are they?

2. What instructions did Jesus give to the leper whom He had healed? (multiple answers)

3. Jesus marveled at the Roman centurion's faith. What did the centurion do to display his confidence in Jesus?

4. What prophecy of Isaiah does Matthew see Jesus fulfilling in His healing ministry? Use the footnotes in your Bible to go back to read Isaiah's prophecy in its context.

DISCUSSION (INTERPRETATION):

1. Jesus' instruction to the leper ("See that you say nothing to anyone," v. 4) is puzzling. This is not the only time we see Jesus telling people to refrain from publicizing His healings. Scholars call it the "Messianic Secret." Why do you think Jesus wanted to keep His miracles a secret?

2. How did the centurion's experience in the military provide adequate grounds for him to trust in Jesus' power?

3. How is Matthew already hinting at the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20) in the story of the healing of the centurion's servant?

SO WHAT? (APPLICATION):

1. **Tim Keller observed that in Jesus' healing ministry, He is not only authenticating His claims,** but also pointing forward to the Kingdom in which disease and demonic oppression will be forever gone. There is a "now and not yet" aspect to Jesus' miracles: the Kingdom has arrived in Christ, but it has not yet been fulfilled.

   The prosperity gospel seizes on the text quoted by Matthew (Isa 53:4) to say that believers should regard healing and prosperity as normal for those who trust in Christ. What is wrong with this interpretation of the healing ministry of Christ and the apostles?

2. **It was the centurion's own experience with the military chain of command that enabled him to recognize authority in Jesus.** The centurion knew that if he gave a command, the one receiving it would obey. He saw that same authority in Jesus, so he knew that it was unnecessary for Jesus to come to heal his servant; He need only give the command.

   This suggests a vital connection between my obedience and my faith. When I am in the habit of obeying God, I will be able more easily to trust in His power; if I am in rebellion against God, I undermine my confidence in God and will not so easily trust in His power.

   - Is there some aspect of your life in which you are in a state of disobedience which is sabotaging your confidence in God's power?
   - If so, what changes do you need to make in your life to reassert your confidence in the power of God?