

FOR LAKE NORMAN—Week 1

Healing

January 22, 2023

1. Introduction

- a. Welcome - Guests
- b. Sanctity of Life Sunday
- c. Series Framing

i. New Beginning Opportunity

ii. Five New Beginning Questions

- 1. Who are we called to be?
- 2. Who is in our mission field?
- 3. How is our mission field changing?
- 4. Who do we hope to reach?
- 5. How can we best reach them?

iii. How did Jesus make disciples? How did he go about it? What did his mission look like?

- 1. He healed people ... “rise and walk”
- 2. He connected people ... “come follow me”
- 3. He gave people new purpose ... “I will make you fishers of men”

iv. Jesus was on a mission to bring healing, connection, and purpose to people all around Israel through his love.

v. What if we were to make Jesus’ mission our mission?

vi. To bring healing, connection, and purpose to people all around Lake Norman through the love of Jesus.

- 1. Healing: mental, emotional, physical, spiritual
- 2. Connection: to family, friends, community, God
- 3. Purpose: identity, abilities, opportunities, calling

2. **Luke 4-9 is a summary of Jesus' ministry and where we'll focus the next few weeks.**
It's representative of what's in the four gospels in its description of how Jesus carried out his mission.
 - a. Luke 4 records the beginning of Jesus' ministry after being tempted in the wilderness.
 - b. **Luke 4:18-19.** Jesus came to bring freedom from oppression & favor with God.
 - i. It is good news to the poor (people who know their need)
 - ii. It includes release for captives (people trapped in bondage of all sorts)
 - iii. It includes sight for the blind (people who can't see their way)
 1. We can see this list as descriptive of Jesus' ministry impact. It's not everything he will do, but it's the impact of things he will do.

3. **What did Jesus do? How did he carry out his mission?**

- a. **Matthew 4:23-24**

- i. Jesus went all over Galilee.
- ii. He spoke to people in their public gathering places.
- iii. He healed people of all kinds of illnesses—miraculous healings.

- b. Healing Ministry Today

- i. Two Options

1. Charismatic view of healing

- a. Miraculous healings continue in the church today as in Jesus' day so the church makes it a central focus of their ministry

2. Cessationist view of healing

- a. Miraculous healings have ceased as a normal occurrence with the full revelation of Scripture and establishment of Christianity, so the church doesn't focus on healing as part of their ministry.

- b. One source estimates 2% of illnesses are healed miraculously.

- ii. A Third Option

- 1. Contextualized view of healing

- a. Jesus still has the power and heart to bring healing, but for most of us today he does it differently. To be sure, miraculous healings happen regularly around the world, but in the west it's rare. How does Jesus bring healing (freedom!) the other 98% of the time?

4. Four Kinds of Healing Modeled by Jesus

- a. *Jesus healed a demon-possessed man, showing his concern for mental & emotional health (4:33-37).*

- i. This the first miracle Luke records.

- ii. Not 1-to-1 analogous to mental & emotional health, but certainly in that category.

- 1. Verse 41 talks about demons coming out of many people. Does this suggest a prevalence of mental & emotional health challenges in Jesus' day? If so, it sounds a lot like today.
 - 2. We talk about people "fighting demons" mentally & emotionally. We don't usually mean that literally, but we know the enemy preys on people's minds and hearts. Perhaps the analogy is closer to reality than we think.

- a. **Romans 7:21-25a**

- 3. Mental & emotional health are significant issues in our day, in LKN. People are struggling in these areas and are looking for help.

- iii. Mental Health

- 1. Statistics

- a. More than 50% will be diagnosed with a mental illness or disorder at some point in their lifetime. From anxiety & depression to panic attacks to ADHD to PTSD to eating disorders to suicidal thoughts. All are on the rise.
- b. 1 in 5 Americans will experience a mental illness in a given year.
- c. 1 in 5 children, either currently or at some point during their life, have had a seriously debilitating mental illness.
- d. 1 in 25 Americans lives with a serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or major depression.

2. Common Factors Contributing to Mental Illness

- a. Early adverse life experiences, such as trauma or a history of abuse (for example, child abuse or neglect, witnessing violence, etc.)
- b. Experiences related to other ongoing (chronic) medical conditions, such as cancer or diabetes
- c. Biological factors or chemical imbalances in the brain
- d. Use of alcohol or drugs
- e. Loneliness or isolation

3. Following the mission of Jesus, we should look with compassion on people in our communities and find ways to help them find healing from mental illnesses—through companionship, church ministry, and/or clinical therapy. It’s a form of bringing freedom from oppression.

- a. **Romans 12:2**
- b. **Philippians 4:6-7**

iv. Emotional Health

- 1. **Psalm 6:2-4**
- 2. **Psalm 31:7-8**
- 3. The Cry of the Soul (Allender & Longman). Ignoring our emotions is turning our back on reality. Listening to our emotions ushers us into reality. And reality is where we meet God. ... Emotions are the language of the soul. ... However, we often turn a deaf

ear—through emotional denial, distortion, or disengagement. We strain out anything disturbing in order to gain tenuous control of our inner world.

4. Emotions are signposts of issues that must be dealt with. Anger and fear likely mean there are deeper emotions.
 - a. Grief
 - b. Disappointment
 - c. Hurt
 5. We can become controlled by our emotions. They make a good guide, but a bad boss.
 6. Backpack = cumulative weight of unprocessed emotions. Sooner or later it's too heavy to carry.
 7. STORY: My anxiety experience. Importance of counseling/therapy. My journey of emotional awareness.
- v. Jesus brought mental & emotional healing out of his love and compassion for people before they became his followers. He led with it.
1. *Are there opportunities for us to lead with a focus on mental & emotional health in LKN?*

b. Jesus healed a severely ill woman, showing his concern for physical health (4:38-39).

- i. Jesus' second miracle in Luke—a miraculous physical healing.
- ii. This is perhaps the most prominent category of Jesus' healing ministry. It served to validate his deity and establish his ministry (v 40—many healings).
 1. **Rise and walk!** One of the most memorable miracles makes this point well. Luke 5:17-26 is the story of a paralyzed man whose friends brought him to Jesus through a roof. Jesus saw their faith and declared the man's sins forgiven. Then, when the religious leaders questioned his authority to forgive, he said, "Which is

easier to say, ‘your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘**rise and walk?**’ But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins—he told the paralyzed man, “I tell you: Get up, take your stretcher, and go home.”

iii. What role does physical healing play today? How should we think about this?

1. Like mental & emotional health, physical health is almost an obsession in our culture today. Whether it’s diet, exercise, healthcare, medication, vaccination, prolonging youth, extending life, or some combination of all of it, we are inundated with worldly promises of physical health.

2. Biblical categories of physical health

a. **Ephesians 5:29-30**

b. **1 Corinthians 6:19-20**

c. 1 Timothy 4:8—bodily exercise

d. 1 Timothy 5:23—wine for stomach

e. Paul walked 300 miles a year!

f. Importance of lifestyle, MES health, medicine/treatment when needed

3. STORY: 1) Pete Scazzero’s physical symptoms, 2) my physical symptoms and need to maintain exercise today.

iv. Jesus brought physical healing out of his love and compassion for people before they became his followers. He led with it.

1. *Can a gospel-driven focus on physical health show the love of Jesus and bring opportunity to point people to their need for spiritual health?*

c. *Jesus preached the good news of the kingdom of God, showing his ultimate concern for spiritual health (4:31-32, 43-44).*

i. Teaching and preaching—explaining the good news of the kingdom—accompanied Jesus’ healing.

1. Teaching & Preaching Ministry Today

a. **2 Timothy 4:2**

- i. A primary mission of the church is to faithfully teach and preach the Bible as God’s word to us. It’s our final authority and is sufficient for all things pertaining to spiritual life.
 - ii. It’s always been central to our mission at LNBC and will continue to be. We also need to get outside our walls like Jesus did—bringing helpful, practical teaching to the community in areas of need.
- ii. Mental, emotional, and physical healing, while valuable on their own (freedom from oppression), also pointed to a deeper, invisible need—the need for favor with God.

1. We saw this in the example of the paralyzed man. He offered spiritual healing (forgiveness) first, then physical healing.

2. Spiritual Life

a. **Ephesians 2:4-5**

3. Spiritual Health

a. **Galatians 5:22-23**

b. Gospel, Community, Practices

c. Practices are a common theme in every area of health.

4. *Can we help people find spiritual healing (favor with God) through our efforts to bring mental, emotional, physical healing (freedom from oppression)?*

5. Jesus is still on a mission to bring freedom from oppression and favor with God through healing. He still heals! We need it. LKN needs it. The world needs it.

- a. Two ways to talk about our need:

- i. We need to experience healing—from brokenness to wholeness. Most of us are more broken than we think.
 - 1. Become aware of our need
 - 2. Find the courage, resources and support to pursue healing
- ii. We need to get healthier—from wholeness to fullness.
 - 1. Become discontent with the status quo
 - 2. Find the motivation, discipline and support to get healthier.

6. How can we make it our mission to bring healing to people all around LKN through the love of Jesus?

- a. Digital content focused on mental, emotional, physical & spiritual health.
- b. Outreach events focused on mental, emotional, physical & spiritual health.
- c. Teaching & Preaching in our services focused on mental, emotional, physical & spiritual health.
- d. Regular invitations in our services to receive spiritual healing by turning to Jesus in repentance & faith.
- e. Training & development in a life of spiritual practices that deepen health in all areas.
 - i. Seven practices: worship, community, serving, prayer, rest, relationships, work
- f. Compassion & hospitality

7. Where do you need healing today? Where do you need freedom from oppression & favor with God?

- a. Ask God to:
 - i. Renew your mind & heart
 - ii. Revive your body
 - iii. Restore your soul