

Rev. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Matthew 15:29-31 | Giving God Glory
Sunday September 1, 2024

WELCOME:

- Please turn your Bibles to Matthew 15.
- Bibles in the back—our gift to you.
- Notes in the foyer—take home with you.

REVIEW:

After taking a detour last Sunday and learning what Scripture says about “Overcoming Fear,” we are back in our verse-by-verse study of Matthew’s Gospel.

We left Matt’s Gospel watching Jesus and the 12 take a road trip to unfamiliar territory.

They headed north to Tyre and Sidon (modern-day Turkey today) to escape the frenzy of activity in Galilee.

Why?

Jesus knows that He has about a year left with His Disciples before He is crucified.

And He still has a lot to teach them.

Now

While on this road trip, we met a distraught Canaanite mother whose little girl was possessed by a demon.

As we watched that saga unfold, we learned about the Lord’s mercy.

We learned that mercy is a gift of compassion—with an emphasis on ‘gift.’

But it’s also a gift we don’t deserve.

Because, as sinners, we deserve judgment.

↳ by NATURE

And that's what makes mercy— mercy.

God's mercy reveals His compassion on sinners who have no hope apart from Him.

We watched this poor, distraught, non-Jewish woman appeal to Jesus solely based on His mercy.

She was repentant and reverent—unlike the nation of Israel throughout the OT and the religious leaders of Jesus' day.

And finally, we watched the most fascinating thing happen.

We watched this “religious” mother with a motive (chants a formula/tries to say all the right things) thinking that all she has to do is perform—some secret handshake for Jesus to heal her daughter...

And we watched her change from all that religious superstition— to having a personal and saving relationship with the Lord Jesus Himself.

She learned that her faith is not in “religion”—not by works—^{her}not by good deeds—not by being a good person—but her faith is IN Jesus as her Lord and Savior.

That's a review.

INTRODUCTION:

It's estimated that Jesus stayed anywhere from 3-6 months in Tyre and Sidon.

So, after this break, it's time to get on the road again.

Today, Jesus and the 12 walk south to another Gentile region called the Decapolis.

The Decapolis means “ten cities” (from the Greek *deka*, “ten,” and *polis*, “city”).

These ten ancient Greek cities were formed after Pompey the Great conquered them for Roman rule.

Today, we know precisely where this region is— it's known as Golan Heights.

The Golan Heights gets its name from Deuteronomy 4:43 and Joshua 20:8

The Golan Heights is often in the news—several nations have gone to war over this area many times over the past hundred years.

France, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt have all fought with Israel over this land that Jesus and the Twelve are in today.

Archaeologists have discovered impressive ruins at Golan Heights.

Amphitheaters, countless pagan statues honoring the gods of Zeus, Aphrodite, Artemis, Hercules, Dionysus, and more.

So all that to say this— this area that were talking about today is a very real place.

This is a true Biblical account.

By the way, there's a YouTube channel called "Expedition Bible" and a TV series called "Drive Through History" on Amazon Prime that details all these places that we talk about every week.

So, how does this road trip to the Decapolis impact your faith today?

Let's find out!

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 15:29—Moving on from there, Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee. He went up on a mountain and sat there,

Matthew 15:30—and large crowds came to him, including the lame, the blind, the crippled, those unable to speak, and many others. They put them at his feet, and he healed them.

Matthew 15:31—So the crowd was amazed when they saw those unable to speak talking, the crippled restored, the lame walking, and the blind seeing, and they gave glory to the God of Israel.

These are the very words from the authoritative, inerrant, inspired, and infallible Word of Almighty God.

PRAY:

*Blessed be his glorious name forever;
the whole earth is filled with his glory.
Amen and amen. (Psalm 72:19)*

EXEGESIS:

Matthew 15:29—Moving on from there, Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee. He went up on a mountain and sat there,

First things first—where are we?

Where is the 'there' in the verse?

Today's passage is a sequel to the story of the Canaanite woman.

Two weeks ago, we studied her story.

We know that Jesus and the 12 were in enemy territory, just north of Israel in Tyre and Sidon.

These cities are just south of Beirut today.

Matthew 15:29—Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee.

So Jesus is moving on from Tyre and Sidon—Non-Jewish territory.

And walking along the coast of the Sea of Galilee.

Sounds like a beautiful scenic walk.

Can you imagine all the conversations the Twelve had with Jesus that aren't recorded in Scripture?

It would take several days for them to walk to the Decapolis.

Mark's Gospel tells us the exact way that they traveled.

Mark 7:31—*Again, leaving the region of Tyre, he went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, through the region of the Decapolis.*

When you look at the map in the back of your Bible—the west side of the Sea of Galilee is Jewish, and the east side is Gentile.

Jesus walks east to the Decapolis.

On the way, Mark says this...

Mark 7:32—*They brought (Jesus) a deaf man who had difficulty speaking and begged Jesus to lay his hand on him.*

So this man, just like the Canaanite woman, has heard of Jesus' fame.

They've all ^{know} heard how Jesus heals—the mode and the means—laying on of hands.

So, this deaf man is begging Jesus to replicate what He's done in the past—similar to the Canaanite woman from two weeks ago.

But Jesus doesn't always do things the same way, as we see here in verse 33.

Mark 7:33— So (Jesus) took him away from the crowd in private. After putting his fingers in the man's ears and spitting, he touched his tongue.

I bet this man wasn't expecting that!

Mark 7:34— Looking up to heaven, (Jesus) sighed deeply and said to him, "Ephphatha!" (that is, "Be opened!").

EP-pah-tha

Mark 7:35— Immediately, his ears were opened, his tongue was loosened, and he began to speak clearly.

Since this deaf man had difficulty speaking, he probably and tragically went deaf as a child.

Yet, now he now speaks clearly!

Jesus perfectly heals this man—as he has done throughout the Gospels.



There is no need for speech therapy—because the Creator has opened this man's ears and loosened his tongue from its prison.

Think about this—the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus Christ did the same thing with Moses.

Jesus calls out to Moses from a burning bush and commissions Moses to lead the Israelites out of slavery.

What's Moses do? Is he excited about this new job offer?

No. He begs the Lord to choose someone else.

God chooses ~~the~~ Moses, but Moses doesn't want to be chosen.

Exodus 4:10— But Moses replied to the Lord, "Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent—either in the past or recently or since you have been speaking to your servant—because my mouth and my tongue are sluggish."

Exodus 4:11— The Lord said to (Moses), ^{foolish?} "Who placed a mouth on humans? Who makes a person mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?"

Exodus 4:12— Now go! I will help you speak and I will teach you what to say."

Isn't that interesting?

The Lord Jesus chose not to heal Moses but instead told him that He Himself (the One who creates mouths and tongues—the one who makes people mute, deaf, and blind for His reasons— will be with Moses as he speaks.)

We fast forward to our passage—and the Lord Jesus chose to heal this man by His mercy.

After Jesus heals this man...

Mark 7:36— He ordered them to tell no one, but the more he ordered them, the more they proclaimed it.

Mark 7:37— They were extremely astonished and said, "He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

This miracle causes a crowd to follow Jesus,

As He & the 12 walk toward the Decapolis.

And within that crowd are more sick people, as we'll soon see.

Matthew 15:29—He (Jesus) went up on a mountain and sat there,

We see that Jesus has a plan.

He intends to teach and preach the Good News of the Gospel.

In the first century, Jewish rabbis sat down to teach—and Jesus is going to teach people who know nothing about the One True Living God.

They are in the Decapolis, which is Roman-ruled pagan territory.

v. 29
I read the simplicity of the verse—and yet am blown away by it.

Matthew, our Gospel writer, states that Jesus—the God of the universe—Jesus, who is the face and voice of the Trinity—is sitting down on a mountain.

When we understand the Trinity, we understand that each person (The Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit) has a unique role.

The role of the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is that He is the mediator (go-between) between us and God the Father.

Matthew 15:29—He (Jesus) ... sat there...

What's the Lord of Creation sitting on? A rock. The ground?

Jesus is the same God... who:

- Spoke the cosmos into existence (Genesis 1:3).
- Breathed life into Adam's nostrils (Genesis 2:7).
- told Noah to build an ark (Gen. 6:13)
- makes a promise (covenant) with Abraham (Gen. 15)
- destroys Sodom and Gomorrah for its wickedness (Gen. 19).
- spoke to Moses from a burning bush. (Exodus 3:4)
- prescribed the plagues for Egypt during the exodus (Ex. 7).
- shows up as a warrior in front of Joshua (Josh 5:13)
- Is the Passover Lamb (Ex. 12).

- Led the Israelites through the Red Sea (Ex. 14:15).
- Provided water, manna, and quail for 40 years (Ex. 15-16).
- Gave Moses the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20).
- Is the law (Ex. 20).
- Is the ark, the table, the lampstand—the Tabernacle! (Ex. 25-26).
- Is the bronze snake (Num. 21).
- Is the festivals (Num. 28).
- Is Boaz as the kinsmen redeemer (Ruth 4).
- Is David slaying Goliath (1 Sam. 17).
- Answers Solmon's prayer for wisdom, discernment, and judgment (1 Kings 3).
- Is the Temple (1 Kings 8).
- Is the fire Elijah called down from Heaven (1 Kings 18)?
- Is the whirlwind who carried Elijah to glory (2 Kings 2).
- Is also the whirlwind that told Job to put his big boy pants on (Job 40.)
- Is the groom in the Song of Songs (SOS 1).
- Is the One seated on the throne (Isaiah 6).
- Is the One who speaks through all the prophets!
- Is the One who speaks to the apostle John in the book of Revelation.
- Is the Alpha and Omega (beginning and the end) (Rev. 21)
- Is also the rider on the white horse in Rev. 19.
 - Meaning that Jesus is returning to finish what He started.

Revelation 19:11— Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse. Its rider is called Faithful and True, and with justice he judges and makes war.

Revelation 19:12— His eyes were like a fiery flame, and many crowns were on his head. He had a name written that no one knows except himself.

Revelation 19:13— He wore a robe dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God.

Revelation 19:14—The armies that were in heaven followed him on white horses, wearing pure white linen.

Revelation 19:15—A sharp sword came from his mouth, so that he might strike the nations with it. He will rule them with an iron rod. He will also trample the winepress of the fierce anger of God, the Almighty.

Revelation 19:16—And he has a name written on his robe and on his thigh: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

That same King. That same Lord sits on a rock in our passage today—teaching, preaching, and healing people by His mercy. ☺

All of these Theophanies in the Old Testament—Theophany/Christophany is where God Himself appears to His people—before the incarnation.

Before Jesus was incarnated in human flesh, His role within the Trinity was to be God's voice and face through different modes and means.

And here in our passage—30 years after the incarnation (Christmas)—Matthew just casually says...

Matthew 15:29—He went up on a mountain and sat there,

Matthew 15:30—and large crowds came to him,

Can you imagine walking into the Lord's physical presence—knowing now what you know about His role within the Trinity?

Have you ever thought about what it was like to see God face to face?

There had to be this overwhelming, unspeakable demeanor about Jesus.

Not only is Jesus God—but He's also the perfect man.

Jesus is the Son of God AND the Son of Man.

He is entirely without sin, void of pride, and fears no one and no thing.

Jesus has nothing to prove, and he has nothing to hide.

He is the most compassionate and powerful person on the planet.

He is the Lord of lords and the King of all kings.

He is the Lamb of God who takes away our sins.

He is a prophet, the High Priest, the Mediator.

He is the light, the bread of life, and the narrow gate.

He is grace and truth!!!

And He's sitting on a rock prepared to teach, preach, and heal—not judge.

Matthew 15:30—and large crowds came to him, including the lame, the blind, the crippled, those unable to speak, and many others. They put them at his feet, and he healed them.

We know that the Decapolis is a deserted place—

So, where did all these people come from?

Well, we just learned that on the way to Decapolis, Jesus healed a deaf man, so that's partly why the crowds followed him.

However, Jesus has been planning to teach, preach, and heal on this day, at this time, at this location— for quite some time.

Do you remember the Biblical account of when Jesus cast a legion (thousands) of demons into a herd of pigs?

Do you remember where that took place? The Decapolis!

We pick up the account after Jesus heals the demon-possessed men; the pigs have jumped off the cliff...and now the townspeople are running to find out the details.

And when they find out what Jesus did...

Mark 5:17—Then they began to beg (Jesus) to leave their region.

Mark 5:18— As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged him earnestly that he might remain with him.

Mark 5:19— Jesus did not let him but told him, "Go home to your own people (the non Jews/Gentiles), and report to them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you."

Mark 5:20— So he went out and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and they were all amazed.

This man became a Gentile convert and Evangelist.

For the past year or so, this healed, whole, and saved man has been telling his miraculous testimony and preaching the Gospel just like Jesus commanded.

And now...this same Jesus he's been preaching about is back in town!

Matthew 15:31— So the crowd was amazed when they saw those unable to speak—talking, the crippled—restored, the lame—walking, and the blind—seeing,

Can't you picture our Gentile Evangelist friend saying, "I told you!"

Please notice the infirmities that are listed in verses 30 and 31.

These sicknesses are things that medical science still can't fix today.

I also want you to notice that these same infirmities are not being healed through the prosperity preachers either.

Please remember—there is one primary reason for miracles in the NT.

And that reason is to prove that what Jesus said is true.

Keypoint #1
In other words, the miracles validate His saving message.

Jesus came to bring a message from Heaven—Jesus' message is not from here—meaning it won't make sense to us—it's a supernatural message.

Mark 1:38—Let's go on to the neighboring villages so that I may preach there too. This is why I have come."

Jesus stepped down from His glorious eternal throne in Heaven to do many things, ON EARTH but it all starts with what He taught.

Jesus healing all of these people is wonderful and miraculous.

It shows that He is a God of compassion and mercy.

But the reason that His teaching and preaching are so important is because all of these people will get sick again and eventually die.

Yet, Jesus' words will never die.

Matthew 24:35—Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

So Jesus teaches, preaches, and heals all of these people.

No physical ailment or disease is too complicated for the Lord.

Matthew 15:31— ... they saw those unable to speak talking, the crippled restored, the lame walking, and the blind seeing,

In other words, Jesus healed instantly and entirely.

There was no need to “take two aspirin and call me in the morning.”

There was no need for canes, walkers, or seeing-eye dogs.

Why?
Because the people who were diseased had an encounter with the One True Living God.

And they knew it!
Those who had deformed body parts left whole.

People who were sick went away with the divine antidote.

People who had never spoken a word in their lives were now shouting praises to Jesus.

People who had never walked a step in their life were now jumping and leaping for joy.

All of those miraculous things happened in this passage.

Matthew 15:31— So the crowd was amazed...

The crowd was “struck with wonder and amazement.”

In other words, they were slapped out of their sense.

The people saw something that defied human explanation—which is way different than watching David Copperfield.

They can't believe what they saw with their own two eyes.

Jesus' miracles leave them speechless.

And when people doubt God's ability to do something—we see them rebuked in Scripture.

because of old age

When Abraham doubted that he and Sarah would ever have a child, the Lord asked...

- You think your age prevents me from fulfilling my promise to you

Genesis 18:14—Is anything impossible for the Lord?

Moses doubted the Lord when He said the Israelites would eat meat.

Numbers 11:23—The Lord answered Moses, "Is the Lord's arm weak?"

...to Isaiah—

Isaiah 50:2—Is my arm too weak to redeem?
Or do I have no power to rescue?

Isaiah 59:1—Indeed, the Lord's arm is not too weak to save,
and his ear is not too deaf to hear.

...to Ezekiel

Ezekiel 12:25—But I, the Lord, will speak whatever message I will speak,
and it will be done.

The angel Gabriel told Mary...

Luke 1:37—For nothing will be impossible with God.

Jesus told His Disciples...

Matthew 19:26—With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

And we can bet our lives that all things are possible in Christ.

But we want to make sure we're placing our bets on the perfect will of Almighty God...rather than our version of who we think God is because God is not a "cosmic genie" for our comfort and entertainment.

W/ God All things are possible.

Back to our Gospel story...it was God's will that Jesus heal all those people that day.

Look at the response...

Matthew 15:31—and they gave glory to the God of Israel.
Glory - weight/heaviness *divine quality - only God has glory.*

This is ironic because the 'they' are non-Jews.

The 'they' are Gentiles.

The irony stems from these people being enemies of Israel.

Yet The Gentiles knew their pagan gods could not perform these miracles, so....they gave glory to the God of Israel.

PREACH:

After studying this Biblical account this morning, an appropriate question for us is:
Do we see ourselves in today's passage?

Do you see yourself, apart from Jesus, as *spiritually* lame?

Do you realize that apart from Jesus, you can do nothing?

You breathe His air, you eat His food, and you spend His money—which have all been given to you as a gift.

Apart from Jesus—at best, all we do is limp along—hobbling through this life trying to make the best of things—and our best efforts only make things worse.

Do you see yourself as *spiritually* blind?

Do you understand that the world's wisdom on spiritual matters is a joke/ foolishness to God?

Do you see yourself [apart from the Lord Jesus Christ] as *spiritually* mute and deaf?

- We All have an apt.

That in the presence of the Lord—you will be speechless—if He is not your Savior.

You will be speechless because you were deaf to the Gospel—and have no excuse for your sin?

You have made yourself your savior - bad plan

Do you see yourself as *spiritually* crippled?

Apart from the Lord Jesus Christ, we are all spiritual beggars who can't help ourselves.

Which one are you? Correct answer is - all of them.

Today's passage reveals why all these people gave God glory.

There is one reason—

God's mercy through the Lord Jesus Christ made them whole.

What about us today? How do we give God glory today?

Four things:

We give God glory by doing first things first.

Jesus commanded us to ***“Repent, for the Kingdom of God is near.”***

Second, we are to pick up our cross and follow Jesus.

Third, we are to commit to the only thing that matters—the local church.

Fourth, we are to *Share Jesus Day-By-Day.*

Eternal
People
matter

That's how we give God glory—at least, it's a start.

PRAYER

LORD'S SUPPER:

BENEDICTION

May the Lord bless you and protect you; may the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; may the Lord look with favor on you and give you peace.” ’ (Num. 6:25)

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