

Matthew 8:5-17

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[0 : 00] Good morning everyone. So we are in Matthew chapter 8 and we have done the first four verses. And this morning we are going on to do verses 5-17 which covers two miraculous occurrences in Jesus' ministry.

! The first being the healing of the centurion's servant and the second being the healing of the peter's mother-in-law. What I want us to do this morning, first of all I put on this first slide, it's important when you chase down these accounts in other gospels you find them in different places and it's one of those stupid little things that makes people go see, see the bible's not consistent, it's not, but it is consistent you just need to know how to look for the consistency. So Matthew, Matthew's gospel is not recorded chronologically, it's recorded thematically. So Matthew picks up a theme and runs with it and he takes things that didn't necessarily happen in chronological order the way he reports them. Luke's gospel however is chronological and it's a very very reliable chronology. In fact many historians say that Luke is probably the best historian that there ever was.

Now whether that's true I don't know but people say it and he very much records a chronology through his gospel and through the acts. Mark's is written for a completely different reason. He's not trying to appeal to the Jews for one thing and both Matthew and Luke tend to appeal to the Jews. Mark, first of all, he, most scholars would agree he didn't write his own gospel, he actually wrote on behalf of Peter and so when you read Mark's gospel you're really reading Peter's gospel many would say. And the order of things is not so important because it's written to Gentiles. So all of these Jewish niceties that follow through scripture are less important which is why you see Mark's gospel is shorter and why you see him jumping on certain items and repeatedly using the word immediately. Immediately God did this and immediately Jesus did that but he doesn't necessarily follow a chronological sequence. And they all give similar accounts of much of what we're going to read. So Matthew and Luke record the healing of the centurion servant and all three gospels give an account of the healing in Peter's house. So just before we read it, the scriptures on the board are not all but you might find more. This was what I found in five or ten minutes rooting through saying which scriptures in the Old Testament prophesied that Jesus would heal people.

So it's a very common, I'm not going to study all of those, I put them up there for you to chase down in your own time if you want to. But the point, the only point I'm trying to make is that there was always an expectation that Messiah would be a healer. It was prophesied hundreds and in some places thousands of years before his birth that when he came he would heal people. And so what we've seen, we've had the sermon on the mount, he came down off the mount and he healed the leper, cleansed the leper, sent him off to do his thing with the priest who had to blow the dust off this law that had been lying around for centuries and carry out a ritual that no priest since the law was given had ever had to carry out. So there's a witness to his messiahship and then we come to this story we're going to read about today and we'll read it and then I'll go through the notes.

Matthew 8 beginning at verse 5. You will have noticed by the way if you've picked up the notes that quite often, in fact almost always, the notes contain more than I actually say because when I'm making notes I try to chuck stuff in there that I just wouldn't have time to cover while we're here in 45 minutes. Additionally, I tend to feel somewhat strangled if I follow my notes meticulously. So I tend not to and that sometimes gets me into all sorts of trouble but sometimes you will see that the notes don't exactly follow what I've said but it all seems to come together in the end.

[4 : 58] Joe's laughing. Perhaps it doesn't. Perhaps I'm all wrong. Verse 5. I'm going to break this into two parts in case I run out of time.

So verse 5. And when Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him imploring him and saying, Lord, my servant is lying paralysed at home, fearfully tormented. Jesus said to him, I will come and heal him. But the centurion said, Lord, I am not worthy for you to come under my roof but just say the word and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority with soldiers under me and I say to this one go and he goes and to another come and he comes and to my slave do this and he does it.

Now when Jesus heard this, he marveled and he said to those who were following, truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel. I say to you that many will come from east and west and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said to the centurion, go, it shall be done for you as you have believed. And the servant was healed that very moment. So we've had Jesus establishing his, or rather Matthew has been establishing Jesus' pedigree for the first four or five chapters. And then we've had the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus established his credibility by teaching with remarkable authority. And then he started confirming his Messiahship with signs following. When miracles are spoken of in the scripture, the language invariably means attesting miracles. Jesus says something and then he brings a word that attests to what he said. In other words, it confirms it or shows the truth or shows that he had the power to say what he said. You remember the healing of the man who was lowered through the roof and they said basically what are you doing forgiving sins? They muttered among themselves. And he knew what they were muttering among themselves.

And he said, what's the harder thing to do? To tell someone their sins are forgiven or to tell them to take up their bed and walk? And so the power of the miracle confirmed that he had, because he had the power to do what in their eyes was the greater thing, he would also have the power to do the other thing, usually the lesser thing. And we remember that the scribes and the Pharisees and the rabbis had taught for centuries that if someone turned up and could heal a leper, that was Messiah. So he's made a good start. But going on from that, we would expect to see more and more healing miracles. And I mentioned to you, I think two weeks ago, that there were three particular miracles that they were on the lookout for, but the Old Testament would have told them to expect many more. There are 37 miracles recorded in the New Testament, 38 if you count the cleansing of the temple, which a lot of people discount as a miracle. But when you think of the number of people one man cleared out of the temple that day, I think that was pretty miraculous, personally. So 37 or 38, depending on your view. And yet John's Gospel tells us that if all of them had been recorded, there probably wouldn't have been enough books around to record them all.

So 37 was a snapshot of Jesus' overall ministry. What we have in Matthew's Gospel is, from the Sermon on the Mount till the next bit of major teaching he did, we've got 10 miracles. So he's on this, what would you call it, campaign of miracles. And if you remember John the Baptist, if you were to look in, I think it's in Luke 7 verses 18 to 23, John the Baptist says, he sends a messenger from prison, he sends a messenger to the Lord to say, are you the one or should we be looking for someone else?

[9 : 30] And the confirmation is, Jesus says, I've written it on the board, go and report to John what you have seen and heard. The blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have the Gospel preached to them, which comes from Luke 7, 18 to 23.

He said to John the Baptist, look at the signs. The signs confirm that I am the one. Now of course there is a small problem with this, and it's one that I'm always exhorting people to be very careful about in our age today, because you have the Todd Bentleys of this world and the Kenneth Copelands and so on, putting on meetings where they are claiming all sorts of miracles.

The fact that miracles appear to be taking place, A, doesn't mean that they really are, and B, if they are, doesn't necessarily mean it's God. And if you read Exodus 7, 8 and 9, you will come across the whole scenario where the magicians of Egypt were copying God's miracles. There were some they couldn't copy.

I think they had trouble with the gnats. But even things like turning the Nile to blood, they managed to copy that miracle. So the fact that there's a miracle doesn't necessarily mean it's God, and we shouldn't take that as automatic. What we should do is test the spirits, and in testing the spirits, we apply the Bible. Is it achieving godly ends? And I'm going to, I don't know whether to do it now or later, I might do it a little bit later, but I'm going to have a bit of a rant in a minute about healing.

Alright? And it's a very deliberate rant, because I feel God might be putting his hand on us to change the way we handle this. But more of that in a moment. So, in verse 5, the centurion approaches Jesus. Now, if you just quickly flick over to Luke's Gospel, chapter 7, you'll get another account of this.

[11 : 50] Luke chapter 7, verses 1 to 10. When he had completed all this, all his discourse in the hearing of the people, he went to Capernaum.

And a centurion slave who was highly regarded by him was sick and about to die. When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking him to come and save the life of his slave.

So, Matthew only gives part of the story. This man was so in awe of Jesus, he didn't even go himself. He sent, remarkably actually, he sent a bunch of Jewish elders to get Jesus.

Now, for a Roman centurion to send a bunch of Jewish elders to do him a favour, was particularly this kind of favour. You wouldn't automatically assume that the Jewish elders were in love with that idea.

Because the centurion, and you'll find all this in the notes, but I'll just speak it off the cuff. The centurion was someone who was in charge of about 100 men.

[13 : 07] He was much feared, although normally quite highly spoken of. When the Bible talks of centurions, it doesn't criticise them. It speaks highly of the centurions.

But they were known as the rank that held Rome together. And wherever they presided, they kept the community together. And they seemed to have a sort of two-pronged job.

One was to deal with trouble if it arises. And the other was to try to make sure it didn't arise. So that actually meant being a diplomat with the Jews. But this centurion was so humble about his own position.

And the bit that I don't understand is, from where did he get his faith? Because he was sending this deputation of Jewish elders.

And the fact that it's Jewish elders, if you think back to last week, this is really important. Because they're going to enter the investigation stage of Jesus as Messiah. And Jewish elders have gone out to get Jesus to come and heal this centurion son.

[14 : 12] So there are elders who are witnesses, important Jewish religious people who are witnesses, to what's going to happen. So in a sense, Jesus himself has sparked his own investigation.

He's almost saying, come on, bring it on, investigate me. And these Jews go to Jesus and say, the centurion servant is ill.

And by the way, the servant isn't the normal word for servant, which would normally be *doulos*, or could be *diakonos*, but not in this context usually. But it's the word *pais*, which often refers to a child.

Could be male or female. It's a masculine noun. But quite often they use the same one, whether it was male or female. So this servant was young.

Could have been male or female, but much loved by the centurion. And he seems to know, because of his response where he says, I'm not worthy to have you under my roof.

[15 : 22] He knows his own position. He knows he's dealing here with divinity. I don't think he would have had the same reverence for Jews coming into his house normally. Although this is another point of interest.

This scripture is littered with little bits of scripture that make you go, huh? What? Jesus was going to enter the house of a Gentile.

A Jew would not enter the house of a Gentile. They used to pray, thank you God that I am not a woman. A Gentile, or sometimes they'd use the word dog instead.

And a servant. And it's reported that if Jewish women passed a Gentile woman giving birth on the side of the road, they wouldn't even help her.

Because such was their hatred of the Gentiles. So, the fact that Jesus was saying, I'll go and heal him and I'm going to go into the centurion's house.

[16 : 33] He's going to enter the house of a Gentile? What is this? Right? He had no regard for the man-made additions to the law. And that's what this was.

This prohibition that had sprung up that actually stopped the Jews fulfilling what they were called to do. Which was to give the gospel to the Gentiles. So he says, I'll go and heal him.

The centurion meets him on the way to his house and says, I'm not worthy to have you under my roof. Where did that faith come from?

Who preached the gospel to the centurion? Did he have an angelic visitation? We just don't know. We don't know where he got that faith from. But we do know that it was absolutely spot on.

In that any one of us could come before Jesus. And if we did, we'd say, I'm really not worthy to be here. And if Jesus came into our house, we would probably say, I'm not worthy to have you under my roof.

[17 : 32] We know that he's God. This centurion understood that that was God coming to see him. I'm not even worthy to have you in my house.

And it creates a level of humility that we are desperate for in our church. And I don't just mean in this room.

I mean the church nationally. Need that dose of humility to say, God is magnificent, wonderful, all-powerful, all-seeing, omnipresent.

And I should know my place. When I see preachers who stand up and say, I'm anointed. I'm going to heal.

I'm going to do this. And I'm going to do that. I think, you are taking glory from God. And God is a jealous God. And he does not share his glory with another.

[18 : 32] More of that in a moment. Because that demands a response from us, doesn't it? So this centurion goes out to meet Jesus on the way.

And says, just say the word and he's healed. Now apart from this being an amazing piece of discernment, you don't even have to go to him.

You just have to say he's healed and he's healed. Means the centurion understood the divine attributes of Jesus. That he didn't even have to be there to bring about the healing.

Now I had a discussion with somebody. And we never did get to the bottom of the discussion. And we're not going to now either. Because it's just beyond where my brain goes. But Jesus was incarcerated in human flesh.

And was walking about on the earth. And yet he could have an effect somewhere where he wasn't. And if we looked at John's Gospel. Chapter 4.

[19 : 34] There's a similar. Let's turn there. John chapter 4. Sometimes we save time at the expense of reading these wonderful scriptures. John chapter 4. And some people say this was the same event.

But I don't think it can be. John chapter 4 and verse 46. Therefore he came again to Cana of Galilee.

Where he had made the water wine. And there was a royal official whose son was sick at Capernaum. And when he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee.

He went to him. And was imploring him to come down and heal his son. For he was at the point of death. So Jesus said to him. Unless you people see signs and wonders.

You simply will not believe. And the royal official said to him. Sir come down before my child dies. And Jesus said to him. Go. Your son lives.

[20 : 41] And the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him. And started off. And we know that the story finishes. That when he gets there the child is well. And they report that the very self-same time.

That him and Jesus were having this conversation. The child revived. That was an 18 mile gap. From Cana to Capernaum is 18 miles.

So I'm told. So Jesus could heal someone 18 miles away. So this is kind of what you can do. If you're omnipresent. But how could he be omnipresent?

Because he was incarcerated in human flesh. I don't know. I don't understand the science. I don't get the physics of it. If it was physics. Or the biology of it. If biology had anything to do with it.

But it is a divine attribute. To be able to have an effect. Where you are not. Is a divine attribute. Was it where he was not?

[21 : 39] Or was it done because he was everywhere? Or was it done because his father was everywhere? Who knows? In a sense I don't care. I just. In a sense I don't care.

I'm just glad he can do it. But. And. For us. Application for us. We sometimes don't understand that.

God can do these things. Even though we've read it. And even though we've talked about it. That. If I take sick in the middle of New Zealand. In five weeks time. God can get to me in New Zealand. I don't have to be here.

Although he also says. I shouldn't forsake fellowshiping together. With all of you. So the chances are. I'll get in more immediate contact with God. If I'm among his people. And we have to balance all these things.

But if we start by understanding. What this centurion understood. Which was that Jesus doesn't have to be there. He just has to say the word. And even that.

[22 : 39] You'll get people who apply. Formulally to healing. And they'll say. That they have to speak a word over you. And lay hands on you.

Or you won't be healed. But then. Or you have to express personal faith. Or you won't be healed. That's another. Another trap. And the reason I say it's a trap.

Is because when you read through the scriptures. It happened always. The woman who reached out. And touched the hem of his garment. He didn't speak words over her. He felt the power go from him.

When you read Matthew's account of this healing. And when we read about. No. When we read the next account in a moment. About the healing of Peter's mother-in-law.

Matthew's gospel says. He simply touched her. And she got up. Luke's gospel says. He touched her. And rebuked the fever. So he appears to have used words in that instance.

[23 : 37] But he didn't speak any words. Over this child. That he wasn't even close to. He said to the dad. Go on your way. He'll be healed.

And he didn't speak words over the child in Capernaum. He was 18 miles away. And what we try to do.

Usually for our own ego's sake. And for the sake of our own elevation. Is we try to write a formula for healing. And then we apply that formula.

And somewhere along the line. That formula claims. I'm the anointed man. And I've got the gift of healing. And I'm going to heal you. By the force of some misappropriated scripture.

I'm going to be your healer. Now. This is not to say. That we don't believe. That Jesus heals people today. We do. I have to say though.

[24 : 35] And I'm not a cessationist. If someone arrives with the gift of healing. The first thing I'll do. Is put them in my car. Take them up to the hospital. And say right. Start clearing wards. Because Jesus put an end to sickness.

Wherever he went. It wasn't. Pray for three hours. And has the headache reduced a little bit. Right. It was. Get out of that wheelchair.

Get off those crutches. That withered arm. Needs to grow. It was. Leprosy had left a man. It was dramatic. It was total. It was immediate.

And it was powerful. And. If we read the evidence of our own eyes. We have stopped seeing that in churches.

And this is my rant. We've stopped seeing it in churches. And I would suggest that the reason we've stopped seeing it. Is because it's being used to glorify men. Men are saying.

[25 : 33] I've got the gift. I'm the anointed one. And they promise healing. And then healing doesn't come. So that puts them in a quandary. And they say. Oh well you obviously didn't have enough faith. And they blame the sick person.

For not having enough faith to get healed. It's atrocious. It's absolutely atrocious. And many sick people have lost their faith. Because of this approach.

What happens today. When it happens. Is that bodies of people like this. Pray for sick people. And ask God to heal them. And when that healing takes place. They give glory to God.

It's not because some preacher like me does it. It's not because Joe does it. It's not. Down to any one man who claims a gift. Now I'm happy if somebody claims a gift.

As long as they demonstrate that gift. Biblically. Go and empty a hospital ward or two. And then I'm listening. But mostly what happens is people say.

[26 : 31] Well I've got the gift of healing. And this has happened in a church where I was pastor. A visiting person said. I've got the gift of healing. I'll pray for you. God will heal you. God didn't.

In my estimation. That makes that word. A false prophecy. And a false prophecy. We know what the penalty for that was. They should be taken out and stoned.

But we don't do that anymore. We're too politically correct. But. My rant is this. We need to pray for the sick. And I'm the first to put my hand up and say.

I've been negligent. In the level at which. I've prayed for the sick. And we need to hold the sick. Before God. And pray for them regularly.

And whenever God puts his hand out. And heals people. We need to shout it from the rooftops. Not to big ourselves up. But to big Jesus up. I think healing will return to the church.

[27 : 27] When the church magnifies God. When these things happen. Rant over. See where I am with my notes now.

I didn't write rant in there. It's funny enough. Let's go on to the next healing. And there's a point to make here.

Jesus starts with. He comes off the mountain. He heals a leper. A societal outcast. He then goes. And heals.

A centurion's son. A Gentile's. Well not a son. A servant. A Gentile's servant. Servants. Another societal outcast.

Gentile's. Another societal outcast. If you're in Jewish society. So he's healing those. Who are societal outcasts. Being as I'm grossly outnumbered.

[28 : 31] In the room by women. At the moment. He now heals. A woman. Who in those days. Were societal outcasts. Christians. Jews used to thank God.

That they hadn't been born a woman. I don't know where they thought. They were going to get their sons from. If they didn't value their women. But. This lady.

Elderly lady. In a house. Would have had very low social value. In the community. And I cannot resist.

Just one comment. That. The Roman Catholic. First Bishop. Peter. Had a mother-in-law. So he was obviously married.

And he wasn't celibate. So. The greatest priest. They have ever had. Was not celibate. And I. I'm not even going to explore that any further.

[29 : 28] Just make the comment. That there is. There is. Some room for doubt. That that doctrine is correct. Just a bit.

So. He goes in. To Peter's. Mother-in-law. Let's read it. Oh.

I mean. Still in John's gospel. Matthew. Eight. Matthew. Matthew.

Eight. Fourteen. When Jesus came into Peter's home. He saw his mother-in-law lying sick in bed with a fever. He touched her hand and the fever left her.

He got up and waited on him. Sorry. She got up and waited on him. When evening came. They brought to him many who were demon-possessed. And he cast out the spirits with a word.

[30 : 29] And healed all those who were ill. This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet. He himself took our infirmities. And carried away our diseases. Which is from Isaiah 53.

Now. So he goes to heal a woman. That's the first thing. In this case. He seems to have touched her.

And used words. But that's not a formula. He can do it any way he pleases. And we just need to recognize that. That these people who try to put God in a box.

And you have to do it this way. I'm much mistaken about Jesus' adaptability. So we've got the king of kings. Visiting the home of a fisherman.

A man who had every right. In fact even the greatest of palaces on earth. Would have been a slum. Compared to what he was used to in heaven.

[31 : 30] And he goes to the home of a fisherman. Which is quite likely to be. Something about 12 foot square. Made of a kind of adobe kind of construction.

Very very humble dwelling. But of course. As we go through the gospels. What we learn is. Jesus didn't even own a home. He was entitled to a heavenly palace.

And he didn't even own a home. And. He. He goes in the home.

And he raises her up. And the other thing I will note here. Is there was no fuss. Quite a lot of so called healing meetings. I've been to. Are full of fuss. I don't know what your life has been like.

But I've been touched by Jesus. Once or twice. And I didn't even notice. Now I was. When I first got saved. I had quite a severe asthma condition.

[32 : 29] And God touched me. And healed that. And I'd been. I'd been using an asthma inhaler. Every night for years. And I went to sleep that night.

Normally needed to use it. Two or three times during the night. I went to sleep that night. And I woke up the next morning. Having had a full night's sleep. And I thought. That's odd.

And nobody had prayed for me. To be healed by the way. They. Prayed for me to be saved. But they hadn't addressed the asthma. And prayed for me to be healed. And I went to bed that night.

And I got up the next morning. And I still hadn't used my puffer. And I thought. That's no coincidence. So it took me. Almost three days.

To realize that God had touched me. There was no fuss. And mostly. Jesus' healings are like that. Unless. It's a deliberate strategy.

[33 : 26] To promote the gospel. And so you get Jesus healing the man at the gate. Beautiful. Which is a very public affair. And. Crowds of people were coming and going from the temple.

And it was done in front of crowds. To make a point. And to gather a crowd. To hear a sermon. After which 3,000 people got saved. So there were occasions when. Again you see.

You can't put God in the rules box. There were occasions when he applied. The rules. To impress a crowd. But mostly. It was one on one.

You know. And. And. Once again. I think we should. Pay attention to this. We're not trying to draw. Attention to ourselves. We are trying.

To put out the gospel of Jesus Christ. And I'm. This might be a point of argument. I kind of hope not. But we're pointing out the gospel of Jesus Christ. To both the saved and the unsaved.

[34 : 24] Because those of us who were saved. We're constantly reminding of it. And. And in doing that. Part of the gospel is healing. And it's the part that's missing at the moment.

Virtually. From the UK church. And there's something. There's something in my spirit.

That says that shouldn't be missing. When we go again. And again. And again. To people who are beset by sickness.

And we can't do anything about it. That doesn't seem right for the church. Of the most powerful king. That has ever. Walked the planet. Which is why.

I had the rant. So for the record. We do believe Jesus heals people today.

[35 : 24] And what we see primarily. Is not men who have a gift of healing. But men who pray and ask God. To heal people. And they don't take the glory for themselves. And I want us to do more of that.

The disciples of Jesus. Healed the sick. Just in the same way that Jesus did. And I've put some scriptures up there. I'm not going to go through all of them. Or even any of them just now. But Matthew 10 verse 1.

Luke 9 verse 1. The disciples were given the authority to heal. In the Acts of the Apostles. We see that the sick are being brought out. Onto the streets. And the Apostles healed them.

And they were trying to get. So that Peter's shadow would fall on them. So that they would be healed. There was a power invested in the Apostles. That we do not see today. That doesn't make me a cessationist.

If it happens again. I'm delighted. Do I believe it could happen again? Yes. Is it happening? Nowhere that I'm looking at the moment. Why? I suspect because the church has become so corrupt.

[36 : 24] That Jesus can't put his name to it. Which is a very sad indictment. It's an unfortunate history that the church has.

And Peter's mother was not exercising personal faith when she got healed.

He was lying on her bed. And Jesus went and rebuked the fever and got her up. She didn't say, Jesus heal me. She didn't say, if you're willing you can make me whole. He just walked in and said, come on up out of the bed.

Fever get lost. And she was raised to her feet. The centurion's servant was not exercising personal faith. He was just lying there in bed paralysed and tormented.

You could argue that the centurion was exercising personal faith. But can you exercise personal faith on behalf of someone else? I don't know. Put your hand up if you do know.

[37 : 27] In fact, when you think about it. I mean the man at the pool at Bethesda. He didn't approach Jesus. Jesus started that process.

He said, I can't get in because everybody jumps in the queue. The queue jumps me. They all jump in ahead of me. And I can't get in the water quickly enough. And Jesus healed him. And I think the central fact that is being missed in many places is.

There is only one source of this and that's Jesus Christ. And whether he comes to us or we come to him. Or other people are praying that he will come to us.

Or other people are praying that we will get convicted and come to him. Like we constantly do with the Kelly family, for example. Who have been here and they seem to be resistant to stepping over the threshold into the kingdom.

And we can hold them up in prayer. But in the end, Jesus is the one that has to move for anything to happen. And there's one final point.

[38 : 37] And that is when, and I think this is a point of personal application. And that is when Peter's mother-in-law was healed. She got up and served him.

Now, when God heals you. When you get a proper divine healing. There isn't, there doesn't appear to me to be a recovery process. Right? She didn't lay there for another few days and get better.

Or she didn't lose the fever and then spend 24 hours getting better. She got up and served him. Sick bed to serving. When God raises us up, we should be ready to serve.

Because there's a sense of relief initially, isn't there? When God answers your, when God answers your need and you get that, oh, moment. Thank you, Lord.

It's done. Now I can get back down the pub. Do you see what I mean? It's very easy to just revert to what you were doing.

[39 : 42] But what she did was she got out of her sick bed and she served Jesus. And I think there's an application for us to look for those opportunities. That when he raises us up from something, we serve him all the more vigorously.

Any questions? Yes, yes. Right. Question. What you've just said about buying and having to get out of her is true and breaking.

But when we pray to people and they get better quicker, do we give God the glory? Like, for example, somebody had an operation and told them to take three months to heal and they were better within the same three weeks.

Do we still give God the glory? I would say yes. What I am saying, I think the only point I'm... You're not claiming it's a miracle. No. I think what I'm saying is when men take on themselves these roles to which they are not entitled, they should be held to a very high standard.

Now, the fact that we've all had experience where someone was dying, miscarrying.

[40 : 59] An example from my own life is a lady in the church in Froome when I lived there. She'd been trying to get pregnant. She'd had a dickens of a job to get pregnant.

She finally got pregnant. And then she's... The medics say that she's losing the baby because she had some blood. And we started to pray for her.

And God showed me that baby was still there. And I said, you need another scan because I think that baby's still there. And sure enough, it was. And she carried that baby to term.

And that baby is now serving God, preaching the gospel as a 40-year-old adult. So... But it wasn't my miracle. No.

And the glory for that goes to God. Now, the fact that she carried... You could argue that nobody knew what that baby was going to be like until several months after the prayer took place.

[41 : 58] There wasn't an instant manifestation there. But we saw something over time that probably wouldn't have happened without divine intervention. So I don't have a problem with giving God the glory for quick healings.

But I do think that when people claim they've got a gift of healing, a biblical gift of healing, that is only evidenced by a biblical standard, which is the dead man gets up, the sick man walks without his walking sticks, whatever.

You know, it's an instant occurrence. That doesn't devalue the other occurrence where people just pray and keep praying and we see improvements that couldn't possibly happen normally.

That is... And I got better so quickly. You did, didn't you? Yeah. And I just give God the glory for it. Yeah. And I have no argument with that.

Yeah. And I'm grateful for the question, but it wasn't the issue I was trying to attack. No. And you should ask.

[43 : 07] You should always ask. I'll be the last one to discourage anybody from asking questions. But the point I was trying to make is I think healing is not happening in the church because the church has been corrupt over healing.

What they've sussed is if they can give the impression that lots of healing is happening, crowds will come. And crowds will turn up at those churches and listen to a false gospel.

So it becomes, under the banner of Christianity, it becomes a satanic gospel. And that is awful. So...

When I was in my teens, my father had an ulcer. And I knew that it could burst and he could be gone.

And I was really scared. And then one day, some people came to the house and said, George, we'd like to pray for you. And from that day, he went and he was a pastor and he was completely healed.

[44 : 13] And they were going on about, you know, we've got the thing of... Because in those days, you didn't hear people say, Oh, I've got the gift of healing or anything like that.

They just went in and prayed for you. And I said, no for us. But then my dad was faithful in us to say that it was God who healed, not man.

Yeah, we had a lady in our house group who, years and years ago, who had an ovarian cyst. And she was very sick with it. And the whole house group joined hands around her and prayed for her.

And she went very quiet. And the next week, she turned up to the meeting. She said, I went to the doctor because I wasn't feeling ill anymore.

So I went to the doctor and they can't find the cyst. You know, God does these things. But he seems to do them more readily when he's in a place where he's going to get the glory.

[45 : 13] Rather than... Because men, the heart is so corrupt that men often divert what God intends for good and use it for some...

What seems to begin with a low level of evil. Like... It even seems well intended. Gets the people in. But in actual fact, it's not the truth.

And Jesus can't have anything to do with stuff that isn't the truth.