

Peace be with you, listening friends. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

As most of you know, in our journey through the Holy Scriptures, we are now studying in the Gospel. This is the holy book, which relates the Good News about the Messiah who came into the world to free the children of Adam from the dominion of Satan and sin. In our last program, we read that Jesus the Messiah began to visit the towns, **teaching** the multitudes and **healing** every disease and sickness among the people. His name became famous throughout the land.

Today we continue the narrative of Jesus the Messiah to see how **His teachings and His works** were very different from all who preceded Him. Jesus did not have a wife, a house, or worldly riches. He was unique among men. Only one thing was important to Him: to do the will of the One who sent Him; to finish the work which God had given Him to do.

In the Gospel of Mark, chapter one, the Scripture says:

[Jesus and his disciples] went to [the city of] Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God!" "Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!" The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching,

and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him." News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

The teachings of Jesus were very different from the teachings of the teachers of the law. All who were listening to Jesus in the synagogue were amazed at His words because He taught them with an authority which their teachers of the law did not have.

You know about **the teachers of the law**. They were supposed to explain the Torah, the Psalms and the other books of the prophets. However, most of them could not correctly explain the Writings of the Prophets, because they did not really understand them! They knew all about their religious duties and the traditions of their ancestors, but they did not know the Word of the Lord. These religious "experts" honored God with their lips, but did not love His Word. Thus, when Jesus (who had never studied in their schools of religious training) entered their synagogue and began to explain the Scriptures with authority and clarity, these teachers were greatly embarrassed. To add to their humiliation, the people in the synagogue were totally amazed by Jesus words and works and were asking each other, "Who is this? Where does He get this new teaching? How can He teach with such authority? He even commands evil spirits, and they obey Him! We have never seen anything like this! No one has ever taught like this man! No one has ever done such things as He!"

Truly, since the day that Adam sinned until the day that Jesus began to do miracles, people had never seen anyone who was so powerful. But now they were seeing One who could speak a single word, and Satan and his demons would flee! Only the Messiah who came from heaven could do that! Did you hear what the demon possessed man said to Jesus? He cried out saying, *"What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? **I know who you are, the Holy One of God!**"* **The demons** knew exactly where Jesus came from and who He was. However,

most of **the people** did not know who Jesus really was. Satan and his evil angels greatly feared the Lord Jesus, because they knew with certainty that He was the Word by which God had created the heavens and the earth in the beginning. They knew that Jesus was the Holy One who had the authority to throw them into the eternal fire! That is why they trembled with fear at the name of Jesus.

Now then, let us continue in chapter one. The Scripture says:

[After Jesus and His disciples] left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon [Peter] and Andrew. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her. So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them. That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was. Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!" Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else, to the nearby villages, so that I can preach there also. That is why I have come." So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons. A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!"⁴² Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured.

Thus Jesus healed people of every disease and sickness, showing **compassion** to the descendants of Adam, because they were weary and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. But there was another reason for the many great miracles which Jesus did.

Jesus healed every kind of disease and drove out demons to **prove** to the children of Adam that He was the Messiah whom God had promised so long ago through His prophets. For instance, we have already read that the prophet Isaiah, hundreds of years before Jesus was even born, wrote that when the Messiah comes, *"the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy!"* With these words, the prophet Isaiah announced that the Messiah would do miracles that no one had ever done. We have already read how God gave Moses and Elijah the ability to do great miracles. But the miracles which those two prophets did were few compared to the miracles which the Messiah did. Also, Moses and Elijah did not have any power of their own to perform miracles. However, Jesus the Messiah overflowed with the power of God, because He Himself is the very power of God!

Continuing in Gospel of Mark, chapter two, the Scripture says:

*A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, **"Son, your sins are forgiven."** Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man [that is, the Messiah] has authority on earth to forgive sins..." He said to the paralytic, **"I tell***

you, get up, take your mat and go home." He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

In this narrative, we see that the power of Jesus was not limited to healing a person's **sick body**, but He also had the power to heal a person's **sinful heart**! Jesus, who is the Great Physician – the Great Healer -, knew that **the most critical problem** the lame man had was not his impotent legs, but the **sin** that was in his heart. That is why Jesus first said to him, *"Son, your sins are forgiven."*

What were the teachers of the law thinking when Jesus said this? They were saying to themselves, "Jesus is blaspheming! No one can forgive sins but God alone!" Their thoughts were partly **true** and partly **false**. It is true that **no one can forgive sins except God alone**. However, when the teachers of the law thought that Jesus was blaspheming God, they were mistaken because they did not comprehend that **Jesus was the Mediator whom God had sent down to make sinners right with God**. Jesus was the Word of God; thus when **Jesus** said *"Your sins are forgiven,"* it was **God** Himself saying, *"Your sins are forgiven!"* The Lord Jesus was the voice of God on earth! And not only that, Jesus is also the One who was born to give His life as **the perfect Sacrifice** which takes away sin forever. As a father grants his son the authority to work for him and to speak for him, so God gave Jesus the authority to forgive sins. Forgiveness of sin is found only in the Lord Jesus. But the teachers of the law did not believe this.

We only have a little time left. Therefore, let us read on a little farther in the verses that follow.

*"As Jesus went on from [the house where he healed the paralytic], he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. **'Follow me,'** he told him, and*

*Matthew got up and followed him." "While Jesus was having dinner at [Matthew's] house, many tax collectors and 'sinners' were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the 'sinners' and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: 'Why does he eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?' On hearing this, Jesus said to them, **'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'**"*

With those words, Jesus, the Great Physician, wanted to show the teachers of the law that they were **sick** before God because of their **sin**. But these religious teachers did not recognize their sin. In fact, they were criticizing Jesus because He was eating with tax collectors and those who were known as "sinners." However, to be with **sinners** and to heal them of their *sin* is the very reason for which Jesus was born!

How about you, do you realize that you were born with a terrible disease called **sin**?

The sin within you is why you must die and come before the judgment of God the Holy One. But praise God, **there is One who can heal you of the sin in your heart!** Do you know who that One is? Yes, it is **Jesus the Messiah**--the One who was without sin and who came into the world to save the children of Adam from their sins. However, before the Lord Jesus can cure your heart of sin, you must first recognize that you are sick with sin. Only those who know they are sick will go to the doctor. Likewise, only those who know they are sinners will turn to Jesus, the Savior of sinners. **Jesus did not come for those who imagine that they are righteous, but for those who know that they are sinners.** That is why He said to the teachers of the law, *"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the **sick**. I have not come to call the righteous, but **sinners**."*

This is where we must stop today. In our next program, in the will of God, we will continue in the Gospel and hear some wonderful and profound words which came from the mouth of Jesus, the Healer of sinners...

God bless you as you think about the Lord's words to the teachers of the law:

"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners!"

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