

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
Sunday Sermon

Date: March 7, 2021

Text: Matthew 9:1-17

Scripture Reading: Matthew 9:1-17

Subject: Palsied Man; Call of Matthew; Jesus answers the Pharisees

In the preceding message from Matthew 8:19-34, we considered:

1. Our Lord rebuffing a scribe who said: "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," by tell him that "Foxes have holes; birds have nests, but the son of man hath not to lay his head."

2. The Lord commanded a disciple to whom he had said, "Follow me." The disciple wanted to bury his father first, but Jesus said, "Let the dead bury their dead."

3. We saw our Lord calm the wind and waves of the sea with his word when the disciples cried out, Lord, "Save us: we perish."

4. We considered the Lord's casting out devils from two men who had lived in the tombs. Jesus sent the demons into a herd of swine which, having received the devils, ran violently down a steep place into the sea and were choked.

Let us now proceed to chapter 9, verses 1 through 15.

Matthew 9:1 (KJV) *And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.*

Jesus entered into a ship (possibly the same one in which he crossed the sea), and passed over, (that is, passed over the Sea of Galilee). And came into his own city which is Capernaum. His own city is not Bethlehem where he was born, nor is it Nazareth where he was brought up, but Capernaum where he spent so much time

and did many wonderful works. Besides, after crossing the sea, Mark tells us that Jesus entered into Capernaum.

Matthew 9:2-8 (KJV) *And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. 3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. 4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? 5 For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? 6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. 7 And he arose, and departed to his house. 8 But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.*

Here are Mark and Luke's accounts of this incident with the man sick of the palsy and his being healed.

Mark 2:1-12 (KJV) *And again he entered into Capernaum, after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house. 2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. 3 And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. 4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. 6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, 7 Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? 8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so*

reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? 9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? 10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) 11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. 12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

Luke 5:18-26 (KJV) *And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him. 19 And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. 20 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. 21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? 22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? 23 Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? 24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house. 25 And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. 26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.*

Reading all three accounts, what can we say happened here?

- A man in his bed was sick of the palsy and was carried by four others who obviously had great concern for his illness. They could not find a way to get into the house because so many people were gathered there, so with wonderful resolve and imagination, they broke up the roof and let the sick man and his bed down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus.
- Then Jesus seeing the faith of those who had borne the man with the palsy, *“said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.”* The Lord undoubtedly saw the efforts by those who carried the palsied man. It is obvious they believed that if they could get him to Jesus, that he would be healed of his palsy.
- *“But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? (Mark 2:6-7).* The thoughts of the scribes and Pharisees betrayed what they really thought of Jesus, God’s only begotten Son. It is certain they did not think of him as the son of God.
- But Jesus knew their inward thoughts and said to them, *Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.*
- Moreover, we see that Jesus, having said these words to the sick of the palsy, *“And he arose, and departed to his house. 8 But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.”* What a blessing this was for the man with the palsy who was carried there by four others – then who, at Jesus’ words, arose, took up his bed, and went to his house! Praise the LORD!

Matthew 9:9 (KJV) *And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.*

Let's consider the record of Mark and Luke.

Mark 2:14 (KJV) *And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.*

Luke 5:27-29 (KJV) *And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. **28** And he left all, rose up, and followed him. **29** And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.*

In this verse from Matthew and the accounts of Mark and Luke, we have the record of Jesus' call of Matthew as he was sitting at the receipt of custom. Matthew (also called Levi, son of Alphaeus) was a publican and was receiving custom (Tribute, toll or tax; that is, cost or charge paid to the public.) But at Jesus' words, Follow me, Matthew arose, and followed him. Matthew followed Jesus without any hesitation just as four of the other disciples who would ultimately be apostles did, namely Peter, Andrew, James and John. Levi, a publican, like Zacchaeus was undoubtedly a rich man because it seems that immediately after the Lord has called him to follow him, Levi held a feast for the LORD in his own house.

Matthew 9:10-13 (KJV) *And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. **11** And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with*

publicans and sinners? 12 But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. 13 But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Mark 2:15-17 (KJV) *And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him. 16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? 17 When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

Luke 5:29-32 (KJV) *And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them. 30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners? 31 And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. 32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

As Jesus dined in the house of his recently called disciple, Levi, many publicans and sinners also came and saw down with Jesus and his disciples. Then the Pharisees who saw the publicans and sinners sit down with Jesus and the disciples, spoke against it.

It was not the least of our Lord's sufferings, that he *endured the contradiction of sinners against himself*. None was more quarreled with by men, than our Lord Jesus Christ who came to settle the great quarrel between God and man. He, suffering the reproach and contradiction of sinners also taught us to expect and prepare for

reproach, and to bear it patiently. Notice that the Pharisees who spoke against him were a proud generation of men, conceited of themselves, and critical of others. The Pharisees were much like many in the days of the prophets who said, *Stand by thyself, come not near me; I am holier than thou*. The Pharisees were very careful to avoid *sinners*, but not in avoiding *sin*. They had great zeal for the *form* of godliness, but were greater enemies to the *power* of it. Please notice that they brought their criticism, not to Christ himself; they had not the courage to face him with it, but to his disciples. The disciples were in the same company, but the quarrel was not with the disciples but with their Master.

But our Lord heard their overcritical question and answered them directly and ***said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.*** What did he mean by that? Jesus was saying, "The publicans and sinners are sick, and they need one to help and heal them, which you, the Pharisees think they do not."

Then Jesus continued: "***But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.***" These critical Pharisees who thought themselves righteous, and were not, ought to have remembered the scripture concerning mercy and sacrifice from the Old Covenant. To reprove them, and to vindicate his own conduct, he appealed to a passage of Scripture with which they ought to have been acquainted: "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice."

Hosea 6:6 (KJV) *For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.*

God takes more delight and pleasure in showing mercy to poor miserable sinners. Also, it is blessedly true that our God delights in

acts of mercy and compassion done by you and I, his children to fallen creatures in distress, whether for the good of their bodies, or for the welfare of their souls. He delights in that far more than he does even in sacrifices, and in any of the rituals of the law.

The substance of our Lord's reasoning is, that since his eating with publicans and sinners was an act of mercy and compassion to their souls and designed for their spiritual good; it must be much more pleasing to God, than had he attended to the traditions and customs of the of the Pharisees which they were so fond of. In eating with publicans and sinners in the house of Levi, our Lord demonstrated the purpose of his coming into this world, to seek and to save that which was lost. Consider his words again - ***For I am not come to call the righteous,*** that is, those who are swelled in an opinion of their own righteousness, as the outwardly religious Pharisees were. No, he did not come to call such persons, ***but*** (sensible) ***sinner to repentance:*** -- first to repentance, then to the receiving remission of sins through Jesus Christ, and eternal life.

Now, let us consider verses 14 through 17 which record the disciples of John coming to Jesus with a question about fasting.

Matthew 9:14-17 (KJV) *Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? 15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast. 16 No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. 17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and*

the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

Mark 2:18-22 (KJV) *And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days. 21 No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse. 22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.*

Luke 5:33-39 (KJV) *And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink? 34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? 35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days. 36 And he spake also a parable unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old. 37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. 38 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. 39 No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.*

Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? – Good question from the disciples of John. Doubtless it was bewildering to them that they should fast (and the Pharisees also), but not the disciples of Jesus Christ. So, the Lord answers them in the next verse.

And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? – The children of the bridechamber were and are the disciples of Christ in the church. While the master was with them, there was great cause for rejoicing and jubilation. During the time the children of the bridechamber were with the bridegroom (who the disciples were with the bridegroom (Jesus is the bridegroom) they had very little care and trouble: this was their rejoicing time, and there was a great deal of reason for it; they had no occasion to fast and mourn. Besides, we believe the disciples saw the Lord Jesus Christ as the bridegroom to whom the church is betrothed as a chaste virgin. Even John the Baptist, who was undoubtedly not a member of the first church at Jerusalem knew that Jesus Christ was and is the bridegroom who has the bride (the church).

John 3:28-29 (KJV) [Words of John the Baptist] *Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. 29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.*

but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast. – Their time with their bridegroom was short lived. Jesus' personal ministry with his disciples lasted only about three years, then his hour was come and

he went to the cross to die. **and then shall they fast** and mourn, and be in great distress, as John's disciples now were, on account of their master being imprisoned and near to being beheaded. Can we now imagine the sorrow of Jesus' disciples when he was taken from them and crucified by the Roman Soldiers?

John 16:16-22 (KJV) *A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. 17 Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? 18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith. 19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? 20 **Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. 21** A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. 22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.*

Let's consider verses 16 & 17. Let's remember this is spoken in the context of our Lord answering the question about fasting. As we read this, all of us can see the meaning of the parable literally. New patches on old garments take from the garment so that the torn place is made to appear worse. Speaking of wine and bottles, we need to remember that

in Bible times wine was put in skin bottles, not in glass or earthen bottles in the modern sense. When the new wine was put in new skin bottles, the new bottle allowed the wine to expand so that the bottle didn't break, whereas if new wine were put into old bottles which had become rather stiff and inflexible, the expanding wine would burst the bottle.

16 No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. 17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

What did our Lord mean by this parable? First, let me say that I believe I learned long ago from some very wise men who told me that I ought never to try and make a parable "go on all fours," that is to make every point apply to the situation at hand. This is certainly true of these two difficult statements. I believe John Gill has the correct understanding of this and I agree with him. Let's read his comments: "These words are, by [Lu 5:36](#) called a "parable", as are those in the following verse; ...nor were the disciples unable to bear such severities as fasting, who very probably had been trained up in them, and been used to them before their conversion; and could now could now as well have bore them as John's disciples, or the Pharisees, had they been proper and necessary. But the true reason why they were not required of them, was not their weakness, or danger of falling off, and perishing, of which there were none; but because it was unsuitable to their present situation, the bridegroom being with them.

What joy it was for the sorrowing disciples after Jesus was taken from them – and they saw him alive after his resurrection! How about you? Do you think it a thing incredible that God should raise the dead? If the resurrection be true (and it is), then is Christ raised? And today, we

stand here to be sure you hear the gospel – the good news that Jesus Lives!

- Jesus stands as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world
- Jesus came to live among us in a perfect, sinless human body to keep all of God's law perfectly, then –
- To die on a cruel Roman cross while suffering for all the sins of those who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world.
- Therefore, it is blessedly true that he suffered for all those who believe in him as their lord and savior, because their belief proves they are among God's elect.
- God has wonderfully promised, under the provisions of the New Covenant that he will remember the sins and iniquities again of those who are saved by Jesus Christ.
- Therefore, Jesus Saves the believer from his sins and from all condemnation. None can ever lay anything to the charge of God's elect. They are translated out of the kingdom of darkness into his marvelous kingdom of light. They shall never perish, nor shall they be touched by the lake of fire which is the second death, but shall reign with Christ and God in the New Jerusalem on the New Earth forever where there is no sin, no darkness, and no end!

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (KJV) *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: 5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: 6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto*

this present, but some are fallen asleep. 7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. 8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

Mark 16:15-16 (KJV) *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*