CRAWFORD BIBLE COMMENTARY

BIBLE STUDY

Matthew Chapter 8 — Miracles of Healing and Authority

A Verse-by-Verse Bible Study from the Crawford Standard Bible

Introduction

Matthew Chapters 5 through 7 recorded the Sermon on the Mount.

At the end of that sermon, the crowds were amazed.

Jesus taught with authority.

Now, in Matthew Chapter 8, Jesus comes down from the mountain.

And He shows that His authority is not only in His words.

It is also in His works.

In the sermon, Jesus spoke with authority.

In the miracles, Jesus acts with authority.

Matthew 8 and 9 contain ten miracles.

Matthew 8 records several of them.

Jesus touches a man with leprosy, and he is made clean.

Jesus speaks a word from a distance, and a Roman soldier's servant is healed.

Jesus touches the hand of Peter's mother-in-law, and her fever leaves.

Jesus drives out demons with a word and heals all who are sick.

Then Jesus speaks about the cost of following Him.

Following Jesus is not easy or comfortable.

Then Jesus gets into a boat.

A furious storm comes up.

The disciples are terrified.

But Jesus rebukes the wind and the waves, and they become completely calm.

Finally, Jesus meets two violent men controlled by demons.

The demons recognize Him as the Son of God.

With one word, Jesus sets the men free.

Matthew 8 shows that Jesus has authority over:

Disease.

Distance.

Nature.

Demons.

But it also shows two very different responses.

A Gentile soldier shows great faith.

A whole town begs Jesus to leave.

Matthew 8 therefore asks every reader the same question the disciples asked in the boat:

"What kind of man is this?"

The central truth of Matthew 8 is:

Jesus has complete authority over sickness, nature, and the spiritual world, and He uses that power with compassion for those who come to Him in faith.

I. JESUS COMES DOWN FROM THE MOUNTAIN

Matthew 8:1 — Large Crowds Followed Him

"When Jesus came down from the mountain, large crowds followed Him."

Jesus had finished the Sermon on the Mount.

Now He came down.

Like Moses coming down from Mount Sinai, Jesus came down to the people.

Large crowds followed Him.

They had heard His words.

Now they would see His works.

Jesus did not stay on the mountain.

He went to where the hurting people were.

Cross References

Mark 3:7

> Jesus went away with His followers to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed Him.

Luke 6:17

> Jesus came down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of His followers was there, and many people came from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coast of Tyre and Sidon.

Exodus 34:29

> When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two stone tablets in his hands, he did not know that his face was shining because he had been talking with the LORD.

Spiritual Principle

Truth heard on the mountain must be lived in the valley.

Key Truth

Jesus' teaching and His miracles go together.

His words show who He is, and His works prove it.

II. A MAN WITH LEPROSY

Matthew 8:2 — “If You Are Willing”

“A man with leprosy came and bowed before Him, saying, ‘Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.’”

In the Bible, leprosy included a number of serious skin diseases.

It was one of the most feared conditions of the ancient world.

A person with leprosy was considered unclean.

He had to live outside the town, away from family and friends.

He had to wear torn clothes and call out, “Unclean! Unclean!”

No one would touch him.

Yet this man came to Jesus.

He bowed before Him.

He called Him “Lord.”

And he said something remarkable:

“If You are willing, You can make me clean.”

He did not doubt Jesus' power.

He only wondered about Jesus' willingness.

Cross References

Mark 1:40

> A man with a skin disease came to Jesus. He got on his knees and begged Him, “If You are willing, You can make me clean.”

Luke 5:12

> A man covered with a skin disease saw Jesus. He bowed with his face to the ground and begged Him, “Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.”

Leviticus 13:45

> A person with a skin disease must wear torn clothes and let his hair hang loose. He must cover the lower part of his face and call out, “Unclean! Unclean!”

Spiritual Principle

Humble faith trusts both the power and the will of God.

Key Truth

No one is too unclean to come to Jesus.

III. “I AM WILLING”

Matthew 8:3 — Jesus Touched Him

“Jesus reached out His hand, touched him, and said, ‘I am willing. Be clean!’ Immediately, the man was healed of leprosy.”

Jesus could have healed this man with only a word.

But He did something no one else would do.

He touched him.

This man may not have felt a human touch in years.

Under the law, touching a leper made a person unclean.

But when Jesus touched the leper, Jesus did not become unclean.

The leper became clean.

Then Jesus answered the man's question.

“I am willing.”

And the healing was immediate.

Cross References

Mark 1:41

> Jesus felt deep compassion for him. He reached out His hand, touched the man, and said, “I am willing. Be clean!”

Luke 5:13

> Jesus reached out His hand and touched him. He said, “I am willing. Be clean!” Right away the skin disease left him.

2 Kings 5:14

> So Naaman went down and dipped himself in the Jordan River seven times, as the man of God had told him. His skin became healthy again, like the skin of a young child, and he was clean.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus' holiness is stronger than our uncleanness.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus is not only able to make us clean — He is willing.

IV. SHOW YOURSELF TO THE PRIEST

Matthew 8:4 — As a Testimony

“Jesus told him, ‘See that you don’t tell anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift Moses commanded as a testimony to them.’”

Jesus gave the man two instructions.

Do not tell anyone.

Jesus did not want crowds coming only to see miracles.

He also knew that too much excitement could get in the way of His mission.

Go to the priest.

The Law of Moses required a healed leper to be examined by a priest.

The priest would declare him clean, and the man would offer sacrifices.

Then he could return to his family and community.

Jesus honored the law.

And the healed man would be a testimony to the priests that God was at work.

Cross References

Mark 1:44

> “Don't tell anyone about this. Go show yourself to the priest, and offer the sacrifices Moses commanded for people who are made clean. This will prove to them what has happened.”

Luke 5:14

> Jesus ordered him, “Don't tell anyone. Go show yourself to the priest, and offer a gift for your cleansing, as Moses commanded. This will prove to them what has happened.”

Leviticus 14:2

> These are the instructions for a person who had a skin disease on the day he is made clean: He must be brought to the priest.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus restores not only the body, but also the person's place in the community.

V. A CENTURION COMES TO JESUS

Matthew 8:5 — Pleading in Capernaum

“When Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading,”

Jesus returned to Capernaum, His home base.

A centurion came to Him.

A centurion was a Roman army officer in charge of about one hundred soldiers.

He was a Gentile.

He was part of the foreign army that ruled over Israel.

Many Jews would have hated him.

But this man came to Jesus pleading.

Luke tells us he loved the Jewish people and had even built their synagogue.

Cross References

Luke 7:2

> A Roman officer had a servant who was very important to him. The servant was so sick he was about to die.

Luke 7:3

> When the officer heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to Him. He asked them to have Jesus come and heal his servant.

John 4:46

> There was a royal official in Capernaum whose son was sick.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus welcomes anyone who comes to Him in humble need.

VI. MY SERVANT IS PARALYZED

Matthew 8:6 — In Terrible Pain

“Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed and in terrible pain.”

The centurion did not come for himself.

He came for his servant.

In that culture, servants were often treated as property.

Many masters would not have cared about a sick servant.

But this centurion cared deeply.

His servant was paralyzed and in terrible pain.

Notice also how he speaks to Jesus.

“Lord.”

A powerful Roman officer called a Jewish teacher “Lord.”

Cross References

John 4:47

> When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to Him and begged Him to come and heal his son, who was close to death.

Psalm 30:2

> LORD my God, I cried out to You for help, and You healed me.

Mark 2:3

> Some people came to Him, bringing a paralyzed man carried by four of them.

Spiritual Principle

Love for others brings us to Jesus on their behalf.

Application

Like the centurion, we can come to Jesus for:

- Family members.
- Friends.
- Coworkers.
- Neighbors.
- People who cannot come for themselves.

VII. “I WILL COME AND HEAL HIM”

Matthew 8:7 — Jesus Responds

“Jesus said, ‘I will come and heal him.’”

Jesus answered immediately.

“I will come.”

Jesus was willing to go into the home of a Gentile.

Many Jewish teachers would not enter a Gentile's house.

They believed it would make them unclean.

But Jesus was not limited by these barriers.

He was ready to go wherever He was needed.

Cross References

Luke 7:6

> So Jesus went with them. When He was getting close to the house, the officer sent friends to say to Him, “Lord, don't trouble Yourself, because I am not worthy to have You come into my house.”

Psalm 107:20

> He sent out His word and healed them. He saved them from the grave.

John 4:50

> Jesus told him, “Go home. Your son will live.” The man believed what Jesus said and left.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus is willing to come into any home that welcomes Him.

VIII. “I AM NOT WORTHY”

Matthew 8:8 — Just Say the Word

“The centurion replied, ‘Lord, I am not worthy to have You come under my roof. Just say the word, and my servant will be healed.’”

The centurion's answer shows two great qualities.

Humility.

“I am not worthy.”

This was a powerful man.

Others probably called him worthy.

But he knew he was not worthy of Jesus.

Faith.

“Just say the word.”

He believed Jesus did not need to be present.

He did not need to touch the servant.

Jesus' word alone was enough.

Cross References

Luke 7:7

> That is why I did not think I was worthy to come to You myself. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.

Genesis 32:10

> I am not worthy of all the kindness and faithfulness You have shown to me, Your servant.

Luke 15:19

> I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired workers.

Spiritual Principle

Great faith often grows in humble hearts.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The person who knows he is unworthy is the person ready to trust Jesus completely.

IX. A MAN UNDER AUTHORITY

Matthew 8:9 — Go, Come, Do This

“For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

The centurion explained his faith using his own experience.

He understood authority.

He was under the authority of his commanders.

And he had soldiers under his authority.

When he gave an order, it was obeyed.

He did not have to be there in person.

His word was enough.

He recognized that Jesus had that same kind of authority, but over sickness.

If Jesus gave the order, the sickness would have to obey.

Cross References

Luke 7:8

> I am a man under the authority of others, and I have soldiers under me. I tell one soldier, “Go,” and he goes. I tell another, “Come,” and he comes. I tell my servant, “Do this,” and he does it.

Romans 13:1

> Everyone must obey the people who rule over them. All authority comes from God, and those who have authority have been given it by God.

John 19:11

> Jesus answered, “You would have no authority over Me at all if it had not been given to you from above.”

Spiritual Principle

Faith understands that Jesus' word carries all authority.

X. GREAT FAITH

Matthew 8:10 — Jesus Was Amazed

“When Jesus heard this, He was amazed and said to those following Him, ‘Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.’”

Only twice in the Gospels are we told that Jesus was amazed.

Once He was amazed at the unbelief of His hometown.

Here He is amazed at the faith of a Gentile.

Jesus turned to the crowd following Him.

These were mostly Jewish people.

They had the Scriptures.

They had the promises.

They had the temple.

Yet Jesus said He had not found such great faith in all of Israel.

This Roman soldier understood more about Jesus than many religious people did.

Cross References

Luke 7:9

> When Jesus heard this, He was amazed. He turned to the crowd following Him and said, “I tell you, I have not found faith this great even in Israel.”

Mark 6:6

> He was amazed at their lack of faith.

Hebrews 11:6

> Without faith it is impossible to please God. Anyone who comes to God must believe that He is real and that He rewards those who truly look for Him.

Spiritual Principle

Faith pleases Jesus.

Key Truth

Great faith is not measured by religious background but by trust in Jesus' word.

XI. FROM THE EAST AND THE WEST

Matthew 8:11 — At the Table with Abraham

“I tell you, many will come from the east and west and will sit with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.”

Jesus used this moment to teach something important.

The centurion was a Gentile.

And he would not be the last.

Many would come from the east and west.

This means people from all nations.

They would sit at the great feast in God's kingdom.

And they would sit with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the fathers of Israel.

God's kingdom would include people from every nation who trust in Christ.

Cross References

Luke 13:29

> People will come from the east, west, north, and south and will sit down at the feast in the kingdom of God.

Isaiah 49:12

> Look, people will come from far away — some from the north, some from the west, and some from the land of Sinim.

Malachi 1:11

> “From where the sun rises to where it sets, My name will be great among the nations,” says the LORD who commands armies.

Spiritual Principle

God's kingdom is for people from every nation who come by faith.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The table of God's kingdom is long enough for the whole world.

XII. THROWN INTO OUTER DARKNESS

Matthew 8:12 — Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth

“But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Now Jesus gives a serious warning.

The subjects of the kingdom refers to many in Israel who expected to be in the kingdom because they were Abraham's descendants.

But they rejected Jesus.

And so they would be thrown into outer darkness.

The great feast of the kingdom is pictured as a bright, joyful banquet.

Outside is darkness.

Weeping shows sorrow.

Gnashing of teeth shows anger and regret.

This is one of Jesus' descriptions of hell.

Cross References

Matthew 25:30

> Throw this useless servant outside into the darkness, where people will cry and grind their teeth with pain.

Luke 13:28

> You will cry and grind your teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves are thrown out.

Romans 11:20

> They were broken off because they did not believe, and you stand only because you believe. Do not be proud, but be afraid.

Spiritual Warning

Religious privilege does not guarantee a place in God's kingdom.

Key Truth

Being near the truth is not the same as believing it.

XIII. AS YOU HAVE BELIEVED

Matthew 8:13 — Healed at That Very Moment

“Then Jesus said to the centurion, ‘Go. It will be done just as you believed.’ And the servant was healed at that very moment.”

Jesus gave the word the centurion asked for.

“Go.”

“It will be done just as you believed.”

And the servant was healed at that very moment.

Jesus never went to the house.

He never saw the servant.

He never touched him.

He simply spoke, and it was done.

Distance is no problem for Jesus.

Cross References

Luke 7:10

> The men who had been sent went back to the house and found the servant well again.

Mark 7:29

> Then Jesus told her, “Because you gave this answer, you may go. The demon has left your daughter.”

John 4:53

> The father realized this was the exact time Jesus had told him, “Your son will live.” So he and everyone in his house believed.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus' word is powerful even when He seems far away.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus does not need to be in the room to change what is happening in the room.

XIV. PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW

Matthew 8:14 — Lying in Bed with a Fever

“When Jesus entered Peter’s house, He saw Peter’s mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever.”

Jesus now goes into Peter's house in Capernaum.

This verse tells us that Peter was married.

Paul later mentions that Peter took his wife with him on his travels.

Peter's mother-in-law was sick with a fever.

Luke, the doctor, says it was a high fever.

In those days, a fever could be very dangerous.

Notice that Jesus saw her.

He noticed the need.

Cross References

Mark 1:30

> Simon's mother-in-law was lying in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her right away.

Luke 4:38

> Simon's mother-in-law was sick with a high fever, and they asked Jesus to help her.

1 Corinthians 9:5

> Don't we have the right to bring a believing wife with us when we travel, as the other apostles, the Lord's brothers, and Peter do?

Spiritual Principle

Jesus notices the needs in our homes.

XV. SHE GOT UP AND SERVED

Matthew 8:15 — The Fever Left Her

“He touched her hand, and the fever left her. She got up and began to serve them.”

Again, Jesus healed with a touch.

The fever left her.

Usually, a person recovering from a fever is weak for days.

But this healing was complete.

She got up immediately.

And she began to serve them.

Her first response to being healed was service.

Cross References

Mark 1:31

> So He went to her, took her by the hand, and helped her get up. The fever left her, and she began to serve them.

Luke 4:39

> He stood over her and ordered the fever to leave, and it left her. Right away she got up and began to serve them.

John 12:2

> They gave a dinner there for Jesus. Martha served the food.

Spiritual Principle

Those Jesus touches are raised up to serve.

Key Truth

The best way to thank Jesus is to serve Him and others.

XVI. THAT EVENING

Matthew 8:16 — He Healed All Who Were Sick

“That evening, many who were demon-possessed were brought to Him. He drove out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick.”

Mark tells us this was the Sabbath.

When the Sabbath ended at sunset, people were free to carry their sick to Jesus.

Many came.

Some were demon-possessed.

Jesus drove out the spirits with a word.

No long rituals.

No special formulas.

Just His word.

And He healed all who were sick.

Not some.

All.

Cross References

Mark 1:34

> Jesus healed many who had all kinds of diseases, and He forced many demons to leave.

Luke 4:40

> When the sun was going down, the people brought to Jesus everyone who was sick with different diseases. He put His hands on each one and healed them.

Acts 10:38

> God gave Jesus of Nazareth the Holy Spirit and power. Jesus went everywhere doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with Him.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus' power over evil is complete.

XVII. HE TOOK OUR SICKNESSES

Matthew 8:17 — Fulfilling Isaiah

“This fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: ‘He took our sicknesses and carried our diseases.’”

Matthew quotes Isaiah 53:4.

Isaiah 53 describes the suffering Servant of the LORD.

It is one of the clearest prophecies of Jesus' death on the cross.

Matthew shows that Jesus' healing ministry was part of this prophecy.

Jesus came to deal with the whole problem of sin.

That includes the sickness, suffering, and death that came into the world because of sin.

His healings were a preview of what His cross would accomplish.

One day, because of the cross, God's people will have bodies that never get sick again.

Cross References

Isaiah 53:4

> Surely He took our sicknesses and carried our pain.

1 Peter 2:24

> Christ carried our sins in His body on the cross, so that we would stop living for sin and start living for what is right. By His wounds you have been healed.

Isaiah 53:5

> But He was wounded because of our wrongs. He was crushed because of our sins. He was punished so that we could have peace, and by His wounds we are healed.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus carries the weight of human suffering.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Every healing Jesus performed pointed to the cross, where He would carry our greatest sickness — sin.

XVIII. CROSSING TO THE OTHER SIDE

Matthew 8:18 — Leaving the Crowds

“When Jesus saw the large crowds around Him, He gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake.”

The crowds were growing larger.

But Jesus did not stay to enjoy His popularity.

He gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake.

The other side of the Sea of Galilee was mostly Gentile territory.

Jesus was moving toward people in need who had not yet heard Him.

He also needed time away from the crowds.

Cross References

Mark 4:35

> That evening Jesus said to His followers, “Let's go across to the other side of the lake.”

Luke 8:22

> One day Jesus and His followers got into a boat. He said to them, “Let's go across the lake.” So they started across.

Mark 5:1

> They went across the lake to the area of the Gerasenes.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus is not driven by crowds but by His Father's purpose.

XIX. “I WILL FOLLOW YOU WHEREVER YOU GO”

Matthew 8:19 — A Teacher of the Law

“A teacher of the law came to Him and said, ‘Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go.’”

A teacher of the law came to Jesus.

This was a scribe, an expert in the Scriptures.

Most scribes opposed Jesus.

But this one wanted to follow Him.

He made a bold promise.

“I will follow You wherever You go.”

His words sounded good.

But Jesus knew his heart.

He knew this man did not understand what following Jesus would cost.

Cross References

Luke 9:57

> As they were walking along the road, someone said to Jesus, “I will follow You wherever You go.”

Luke 9:61

> Another man said, “I will follow You, Lord, but first let me go and say goodbye to my family.”

Ruth 1:16

> But Ruth said, “Don't ask me to leave you. Wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.”

Spiritual Principle

Quick promises must be tested by real commitment.

XX. NO PLACE TO LAY HIS HEAD

Matthew 8:20 — The Son of Man

“Jesus replied, ‘Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head.’”

Jesus told the man the truth.

Even animals have homes.

Foxes have dens.

Birds have nests.

But Jesus had no home of His own.

Following Him meant giving up comfort and security.

This is the first time Jesus calls Himself “the Son of Man” in Matthew.

It was His favorite title for Himself.

It comes from Daniel 7, where the Son of Man receives an everlasting kingdom.

The King of glory lived like a homeless traveler.

Cross References

Luke 9:58

> Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes to live in, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to rest His head.”

John 1:11

> He came to His own people, but His own people did not accept Him.

2 Corinthians 8:9

> You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was rich, but for your sake He became poor, so that by His poverty you could become rich.

Spiritual Principle

Following Jesus may cost us comfort.

Key Truth

Jesus does not hide the cost of following Him.

XXI. LET ME FIRST BURY MY FATHER

Matthew 8:21 — Another Disciple

“Another disciple said to Him, ‘Lord, first let me go and bury my father.’”

A second man spoke.

He was already called a disciple.

He wanted to follow Jesus.

But he wanted to do something first.

“Let me go and bury my father.”

This sounds very reasonable.

Burying one's parents was an important duty in Jewish life.

But many Bible teachers believe the father may not have died yet.

The man may have been saying, “Let me wait until my father dies and I receive my inheritance. Then I will follow You.”

Either way, he wanted to put something else ahead of Jesus.

Cross References

Luke 9:59

> Jesus said to another man, “Follow Me.” But the man said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”

1 Kings 19:20

> Elisha left his oxen and ran after Elijah. He said, “Please let me kiss my father and mother goodbye, and then I will follow you.”

Genesis 50:5

> My father made me promise him, saying, “I am about to die. Bury me in the tomb I prepared for myself in the land of Canaan.” So please let me go and bury my father. Then I will come back.

Spiritual Warning

The word “first” can reveal what we truly put first.

XXII. LET THE DEAD BURY THEIR OWN DEAD

Matthew 8:22 — Follow Me

“But Jesus told him, ‘Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead.’”

Jesus' answer sounds harsh.

But He was making a powerful point.

“Let the dead bury their own dead.”

Let those who are spiritually dead take care of earthly matters.

Following Jesus must come first.

Jesus was not against honoring parents.

He taught people to honor their father and mother.

But nothing, not even family, can come before following Him.

Luke adds that Jesus told the man to go and preach the kingdom of God.

Cross References

Luke 9:60

> But Jesus said to him, “Let the people who are dead bury their own dead. You must go and tell about the kingdom of God.”

Luke 9:62

> Jesus said, “Anyone who starts to plow a field and keeps looking back is not fit for the kingdom of God.”

Philippians 3:13

> I forget what is behind me and reach toward what is ahead.

Spiritual Principle

Following Jesus cannot wait for a more convenient time.

Application

Common reasons people delay following Jesus:

- “Let me first finish school.”
- “Let me first get my career started.”
- “Let me first have some fun.”
- “Let me first take care of my family.”

- “Let me first get my life in order.”

Jesus still says, “Follow Me.”

XXIII. INTO THE BOAT

Matthew 8:23 — His Disciples Followed Him

“Then He got into the boat, and His disciples followed Him.”

After speaking about the cost of following Him, Jesus got into the boat.

And His disciples followed Him.

This is a picture of what following Jesus means.

They went where He went.

They got into the boat because He did.

And they were about to learn that following Jesus does not mean avoiding storms.

Cross References

Mark 4:36

> Leaving the crowd behind, the followers took Jesus with them in the boat He was already in. Other boats were with Him too.

Luke 8:22

> One day Jesus and His followers got into a boat. He said to them, “Let's go across the lake.” So they started across.

Jonah 1:3

> But Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish. He found a ship going there, paid for the trip, and went aboard.

Spiritual Principle

Following Jesus sometimes leads us straight into a storm.

Key Truth

Jonah was in a storm because he ran from God.

The disciples were in a storm because they followed Jesus.

XXIV. A FURIOUS STORM

Matthew 8:24 — But Jesus Was Asleep

“Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was asleep.”

The Sea of Galilee lies about seven hundred feet below sea level.

It is surrounded by hills and mountains.

Cold winds can rush down suddenly and create violent storms.

This storm was furious.

The Greek word is the word used for an earthquake.

The waves swept over the boat.

Several of the disciples were experienced fishermen.

They knew this storm was deadly.

But Jesus was asleep.

This shows His true humanity.

He was exhausted after a long day of ministry.

It also shows His perfect peace and trust in His Father.

Cross References

Mark 4:37

> A very strong wind came up on the lake. The waves were coming over the sides of the boat, and it was almost full of water.

Luke 8:23

> While they were sailing, Jesus fell asleep. A very strong wind came down on the lake. The boat began to fill with water, and they were in danger.

Jonah 1:5

> The sailors were afraid... But Jonah had gone down into the lowest part of the ship, lain down, and fallen into a deep sleep.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus is at peace even when we are in a panic.

XXV. LORD, SAVE US!

Matthew 8:25 — We Are Going to Drown!

“The disciples went and woke Him, saying, ‘Lord, save us! We are going to drown!’”

The disciples were terrified.

They woke Jesus.

Their prayer was short and desperate.

“Lord, save us!”

It is one of the shortest prayers in the Bible.

But it was the right prayer.

They went to the right Person.

Even in their fear, they knew Jesus was their only hope.

Cross References

Mark 4:38

> Jesus was in the back of the boat, sleeping on a cushion. His followers woke Him and said, “Teacher, don't You care that we are going to drown?”

Luke 8:24

> The followers went to Him and woke Him, saying, “Master! Master! We are going to drown!” Jesus got up and gave a command to the wind and the waves. They stopped, and everything was calm.

Psalm 107:28

> Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and He brought them out of their distress.

Spiritual Principle

When we do not know what else to do, we can cry out to Jesus.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

A short prayer to the right Person is better than a long prayer to no one.

XXVI. COMPLETELY CALM

Matthew 8:26 — He Rebuked the Winds and the Waves

“He replied, ‘Why are you afraid, you of little faith?’ Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it became completely calm.”

Notice the order.

Jesus spoke to the disciples first.

Then He spoke to the storm.

“Why are you afraid, you of little faith?”

They had some faith.

They called on Jesus.

But their faith was small.

They thought they would die even though Jesus was in the boat.

Then Jesus rebuked the winds and the waves.

The word means to command sharply.

And it became completely calm.

Normally, even after the wind stops, the waves continue for a long time.

But this calm was immediate and complete.

Cross References

Mark 4:39

> Jesus stood up and gave a command to the wind. He said to the water, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind stopped, and the lake became completely calm.

Luke 8:25

> He said to His followers, “Where is your faith?” They were afraid and amazed and said to each other, “Who is this? He commands even the wind and the water, and they obey Him!”

Psalm 107:29

> He made the storm quiet, and the waves of the sea became calm.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus calms the storm in our hearts before He calms the storm around us.

Key Truth

The storm was no match for the One who made the sea.

XXVII. WHAT KIND OF MAN IS THIS?

Matthew 8:27 — Even the Winds and the Sea Obey Him

“The men were amazed and asked, ‘What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the sea obey Him!’”

The disciples were amazed.

They had been afraid of the storm.

Now they were in awe of Jesus.

Their question is one of the most important questions in the Bible.

“What kind of man is this?”

In the Old Testament, only God rules the sea.

Only God commands the wind.

The disciples were beginning to understand that Jesus was more than a teacher.

More than a prophet.

More than a miracle worker.

He was doing what only God can do.

Cross References

Mark 4:41

> The followers were very afraid and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey Him!”

Psalm 89:9

> You rule over the raging sea. When its waves rise up, You calm them.

Job 38:11

> I said to the sea, “You may come this far, but no farther. Your proud waves must stop here.”

Spiritual Principle

The answer to “What kind of man is this?” is the most important answer we will ever give.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The One who sleeps in the storm is the One who rules the storm.

XXVIII. TWO DEMON-POSSESSED MEN

Matthew 8:28 — Coming Out of the Tombs

“When Jesus arrived on the other side in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met Him, coming out of the tombs. They were so violent that no one could pass that way.”

Jesus calmed the storm on the sea.

Now He faced a storm in human lives.

The region of the Gadarenes was on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee.

It was a Gentile area.

Two men met Jesus.

They were demon-possessed.

They lived among the tombs.

Tombs were considered unclean places.

These men were so violent that no one could travel that road.

Mark and Luke focus on one of the men, probably the more well-known of the two.

Matthew tells us there were two.

Cross References

Mark 5:3

> This man lived in the burial caves, and no one could keep him tied up, not even with a chain.

Luke 8:27

> When Jesus got out of the boat, a man from the town who had demons in him came to Him. For a long time he had not worn clothes or lived in a house. He lived in the burial caves.

Isaiah 65:4

> They sit among the graves and spend their nights in secret places. They eat the meat of pigs.

Spiritual Principle

No one is too far gone for Jesus.

Key Truth

Satan's goal is to destroy people.

Jesus' goal is to restore them.

XXIX. SON OF GOD

Matthew 8:29 — “Have You Come to Torture Us?”

“They shouted, ‘What do You want with us, Son of God? Have You come here to torture us before the appointed time?’”

The demons knew exactly who Jesus was.

They called Him “Son of God.”

The disciples were still asking, “What kind of man is this?”

But the demons already knew.

They also knew their future.

They asked if Jesus had come to torture them “before the appointed time.”

They knew a day of judgment was coming.

They knew they would be punished.

They were afraid of Jesus.

Cross References

Mark 5:7

> He shouted in a loud voice, “What do You want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You in God's name, don't torture me!”

Luke 8:28

> When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down in front of Him. He shouted, “What do You want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, don't torture me!”

James 2:19

> You believe there is one God. Good! But even the demons believe that, and they shake with fear.

Spiritual Warning

Knowing who Jesus is does not save a person; even demons know.

Spiritual Principle

The powers of darkness tremble before Jesus.

XXX. A HERD OF PIGS

Matthew 8:30 — Feeding Some Distance Away

“A large herd of pigs was feeding some distance away.”

Pigs were unclean animals under the Law of Moses.

Jews did not eat them or raise them.

But this was a Gentile region.

Mark tells us there were about two thousand pigs.

This was a large and valuable herd.

Cross References

Mark 5:11

> A large herd of pigs was feeding on a hill nearby.

Luke 8:32

> A large herd of pigs was feeding on the hill. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into the pigs, and He allowed them to do this.

Leviticus 11:7

> The pig... is unclean for you.

Key Truth

This detail sets the stage for what would show the people's real values.

XXXI. SEND US INTO THE PIGS

Matthew 8:31 — The Demons Begged

“The demons begged Jesus, ‘If You drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs.’”

The demons knew they had to leave.

They did not question whether Jesus could drive them out.

They only begged Him for where they would go.

Luke tells us they begged Him not to send them into the bottomless pit.

The demons had to ask Jesus' permission.

They could do nothing without it.

Cross References

Mark 5:12

> The demons begged Jesus, “Send us into the pigs. Let us go into them.”

Luke 8:31

> The demons begged Jesus not to send them into the bottomless pit.

Job 1:12

> The LORD said to Satan, “All right, everything Job has is in your power. But do not touch Job himself.”

Spiritual Principle

Satan and his demons are under God's authority.

Key Truth

The enemy is powerful, but he is on a leash held by God.

XXXII. “GO!”

Matthew 8:32 — The Herd Rushed into the Sea

“He said to them, ‘Go!’ So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down a steep bank into the sea and drowned in the water.”

Jesus spoke one word.

“Go!”

That was all it took.

The demons came out of the men.

They went into the pigs.

And the whole herd rushed down a steep bank into the sea and drowned.

This shows how destructive demons are.

What they did to the pigs, they wanted to do to the men.

The men were set free.

The pigs were destroyed.

This also gave clear, visible proof that the demons had truly left.

Cross References

Mark 5:13

> Jesus allowed them to do this. The evil spirits left the man and went into the pigs. Then the herd of about two thousand pigs rushed down the hill into the lake and drowned.

Luke 8:33

> The demons came out of the man and went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the hill into the lake and drowned.

Exodus 14:28

> The water came back and covered the chariots and horsemen. The whole army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea was covered. Not one of them survived.

Spiritual Principle

One word from Jesus is stronger than a legion of demons.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

Jesus values one human soul more than a whole herd of pigs.

XXXIII. THE TOWN HEARS THE NEWS

Matthew 8:33 — The Herdsmen Ran

“Those tending the pigs ran off, went into the town, and reported all this, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men.”

The men who were tending the pigs ran to town.

They reported everything.

The pigs had drowned.

And the two violent men had been set free.

Luke tells us the people came out and found one of the men sitting at Jesus' feet, dressed and in his right mind.

Cross References

Mark 5:14

> The men who took care of the pigs ran away and told about this in the town and the countryside. People went out to see what had happened.

Luke 8:34

> When the men who took care of the pigs saw what had happened, they ran away and told about it in the town and the countryside.

Luke 8:35

> People went out to see what had happened. They came to Jesus and found the man the demons had left. He was sitting at Jesus' feet, dressed and thinking clearly. And the people were afraid.

Spiritual Principle

A changed life is powerful evidence of Jesus' power.

XXXIV. THEY BEGGED HIM TO LEAVE

Matthew 8:34 — Rejecting Jesus

“Then the whole town went out to meet Jesus. When they saw Him, they begged Him to leave their region.”

This is one of the saddest verses in the Gospels.

The whole town came out.

They saw Jesus.

They saw the men who had been set free.

And they begged Him to leave.

Why?

They were afraid.

And they cared more about their pigs than about the two men.

They cared more about their business than about the Savior.

They preferred their comfort to Jesus' power.

And Jesus left.

He does not force Himself on people who do not want Him.

Cross References

Mark 5:17

> Then the people began to beg Jesus to leave their area.

Luke 8:37

> All the people of the Gerasene area asked Jesus to leave, because they were very afraid. So Jesus got into the boat and went back.

Luke 5:8

> When Simon Peter saw this, he fell down at Jesus' knees and said, “Go away from me, Lord. I am a sinful man!”

Spiritual Warning

It is possible to see Jesus' power and still ask Him to leave.

Spiritual Principle

Jesus will not stay where He is not wanted.

Key Truth

Peter said, “Go away from me,” but then he followed Jesus.

The townspeople said, “Leave,” and they let Him go.

XXXV. SEVEN GREAT LESSONS FROM MATTHEW 8

1. Jesus Has Authority Over Disease

With a touch or a word, He heals every sickness.

Principle:

No sickness is beyond the reach of Jesus.

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2. Faith Pleases God

The centurion's faith shows that trusting Jesus' word is greater than relying on signs.

Principle:

Faith takes Jesus at His word.

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3. Jesus Carries Our Burdens

He fulfills prophecy by taking on our sicknesses and weaknesses.

Principle:

Jesus does not stand at a distance from our pain; He carries it.

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4. Following Jesus Has a Cost

True discipleship requires sacrifice and full commitment.

Principle:

Jesus must come first, not later.

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5. Jesus Rules Creation

Even storms and seas obey His command.

Principle:

The Creator is in the boat with His people.

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6. Jesus Has Power Over Demons

Spiritual forces fear Him and cannot resist His authority.

Principle:

The enemy trembles at the name of Jesus.

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7. Not All Will Welcome Him

Some, like the townspeople, would rather keep their comfort than embrace His power.

Principle:

Jesus' power always calls for a response — welcome Him or send Him away.

XXXVI. FOUR AREAS OF JESUS' AUTHORITY

Matthew 8 shows that Jesus has authority over every area of life.

Authority Over Disease

He healed leprosy, paralysis, and fever.

Authority Over Distance

He healed the centurion's servant without going to the house.

Authority Over Nature

He calmed the wind and the waves.

Authority Over Demons

He drove out evil spirits with a single word.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

There is no area of life where Jesus is not Lord.

XXXVII. THREE WAYS JESUS HEALED

Jesus did not heal in only one way.

By His Touch

He touched the leper and Peter's mother-in-law.

By His Word

He spoke from a distance for the centurion's servant.

By His Command

He rebuked the storm and ordered the demons out.

Key Truth

The method changed, but the power was always the same — the power of Jesus Himself.

XXXVIII. FAITH AND FEAR IN MATTHEW 8

Matthew 8 shows a contrast between faith and fear.

The Leper's Faith

He believed Jesus could make him clean.

The Centurion's Great Faith

He believed Jesus' word alone was enough.

The Disciples' Little Faith

They called out to Jesus but were still afraid.

The Demons' Fear

They knew who Jesus was and trembled.

The Townspeople's Fear

They saw Jesus' power and asked Him to leave.

Spiritual Principle

Faith runs toward Jesus; fear without faith runs away from Him.

XXXIX. WHAT MATTHEW 8 TEACHES ABOUT JESUS

Matthew 8 presents Jesus as:

The Compassionate Healer

He touched the untouchable.

The Lord of All Nations

He welcomed a Gentile's faith.

The Suffering Servant

He took our sicknesses and carried our diseases.

The Son of Man

He had no place to lay His head.

The Lord of Creation

The winds and the sea obey Him.

The Son of God

Even the demons recognized Him.

The Deliverer

He sets captives free.

Crawford Bible Study Principle

The Jesus who touched the leper, calmed the storm, and freed the captives is the same Jesus who comes to us today.

XL. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR PERSONAL STUDY

Question 1

Why was it so remarkable that Jesus touched the man with leprosy?

People with leprosy were considered unclean.

No one would touch them.

Touching a leper made a person unclean under the law.

But when Jesus touched him, the leper became clean instead.

Question 2

Why did Jesus tell the healed leper not to tell anyone?

Jesus did not want people to follow Him only for miracles.

Too much excitement could also hinder His ministry.

He wanted the man to go to the priest as the law required, as a testimony.

Question 3

What made the centurion's faith so great?

He was humble, saying he was not worthy.

He believed Jesus did not need to come to his house.

He understood that Jesus' word carried authority over sickness.

Question 4

What did Jesus mean when He said many would come from the east and west?

He meant that people from all nations would be part of God's kingdom.

Gentiles who trust in Jesus will sit at the feast with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Question 5

Who are “the subjects of the kingdom” who will be thrown out?

They are those who expected to be in God's kingdom because of their religious background but rejected Jesus.

Religious privilege does not save.

Only faith in Christ does.

Question 6

What did Peter's mother-in-law do after she was healed?

She got up and began to serve.

Her healing was complete and immediate.

Her response to Jesus' touch was service.

Question 7

How does Matthew 8:17 connect Jesus' healings to Isaiah 53?

Isaiah 53 describes the suffering Servant who would carry our sicknesses and sins.

Jesus' healings showed that He came to deal with all the effects of sin.

They pointed ahead to the cross, where He would carry our sin.

Question 8

What did Jesus teach the teacher of the law who wanted to follow Him?

Jesus told him that following Him would cost comfort and security.

Even foxes and birds have homes, but Jesus had no place to lay His head.

Question 9

What did Jesus mean by “Let the dead bury their own dead”?

He meant that following Him must come first.

Those who are spiritually dead can take care of earthly matters.

Nothing should be allowed to delay following Jesus.

Question 10

Why was Jesus asleep during the storm?

He was truly human and was tired from ministry.

He was also at perfect peace, trusting His Father completely.

Question 11

What does the calming of the storm teach about Jesus?

It shows that He has authority over nature.

In the Old Testament, only God rules the wind and the sea.

Jesus did what only God can do.

Question 12

Why did the townspeople ask Jesus to leave?

They were afraid of His power.

They also seemed to value their pigs and their way of life more than the men who were set free.

They chose their comfort over Christ.

Question 13

What should Matthew 8 change about the way Christians live today?

Matthew 8 should cause believers to live:

- Confident that Jesus is willing to help.
- Humble like the centurion.
- Trusting Jesus' word even without signs.
- Serving others after Jesus touches them.
- Counting the cost of following Him.
- Calling on Jesus in every storm.
- Trusting His authority over every power.
- Welcoming Jesus instead of sending Him away.

XLI. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Matthew 8 asks several important questions.

Do I Believe Jesus Is Willing to Help Me?

The leper knew Jesus could. Do I believe Jesus wants to?

Do I Feel Too Unclean to Come to Jesus?

Jesus touched the untouchable.

Do I Trust Jesus' Word, Even When I Cannot See Him Working?

Who Am I Bringing to Jesus?

The centurion came for his servant.

How Have I Responded to Jesus' Touch?

Am I serving Him and others?

What Is My “Let Me First”?

What am I putting ahead of following Jesus?

What Storm Am I Facing Right Now?

Have I cried out, “Lord, save me”?

Is My Faith Big or Little?

Do I panic even though Jesus is in the boat?

Is There Anything I Value More Than Jesus?

Like the townspeople and their pigs.

Have I Welcomed Jesus, or Asked Him to Leave?

XLII. A CRAWFORD BIBLE STUDY PRINCIPLE

“Jesus Is in the Boat”

The disciples did everything right.

They followed Jesus.

They got into the boat because He did.

And then the storm came.

The waves crashed over the boat.

They were sure they would drown.

And Jesus was asleep.

But He was there.

He was in the boat.

The storm was real.

The danger was real.

But Jesus was more real than both.

And with one word, the storm was gone.

This creates a powerful principle.

Following Jesus does not mean we will never face storms.

It means we will never face them alone.

The question is not whether the storm will come.

The question is who is in the boat with us.

Principle:

When Jesus is in the boat, the storm cannot have the final word.

XLIII. FINAL APPLICATION

Matthew Chapter 8 shows Jesus coming down from the mountain and walking into human need.

A man covered with disease bows before Him.

Jesus touches him.

A Roman officer pleads for his servant.

Jesus speaks, and the servant is healed.

A woman lies sick with fever.

Jesus takes her hand, and she rises to serve.

The sick and the oppressed are brought to Him.

He heals them all.

Then the storm comes.

The disciples panic.

Jesus speaks, and the sea becomes calm.

Then two violent men run out from the tombs.

Jesus speaks one word, and they are free.

In every scene, the same truth shines:

Jesus has authority.

Over disease.

Over distance.

Over nature.

Over demons.

And in every scene, He uses that authority with compassion.

Matthew 8 therefore reminds us:

No one is too unclean for Jesus to touch.

No one is too far away for His word to reach.

No storm is too strong for Him to calm.

No bondage is too deep for Him to break.

But it also reminds us:

Following Jesus has a cost.

And it is possible to see His power and still send Him away.

The chapter asks the same question the disciples asked:

“What kind of man is this?”

The answer is:

The Healer.

The Lord of creation.

The Son of God.

The One worth following, whatever it costs.

The same call still stands:

Come to Him in faith.

Trust His word.

Serve Him gladly.

Follow Him first.

Call on Him in the storm.

Welcome Him into every part of your life.

And until He returns:

Keep trusting.

Keep following.

Keep calling on Him.

Keep welcoming Him.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for Jesus, who came down from the mountain to meet us in our need.

Thank You that He touched the untouchable and made the unclean clean.

Lord Jesus, we come to You like the man with leprosy.

We know You are able.

Thank You that You are also willing.

Make us clean.

Give us the humble faith of the centurion.

Help us trust Your word even when we cannot see You working.

Teach us to bring others to You in prayer.

Thank You that You took our sicknesses and carried our diseases.

Thank You that You carried our sins to the cross.

When You touch our lives, raise us up to serve You and others.

Show us anything we are putting ahead of You.

Help us count the cost and follow You first.

Keep us from saying, “Let me first,” when You say, “Follow Me.”

When storms come, remind us that You are in the boat.

When we are afraid, grow our little faith into great faith.

Teach us to cry out, “Lord, save us,” and to trust You to answer.

Thank You that even the winds and the sea obey You.

Thank You that the powers of darkness tremble before You.

Set free those who are bound by the enemy.

Keep us from loving our comfort, our possessions, or our way of life more than You.

We do not want to ask You to leave.

We want You to stay.

Come into every part of our lives, and be our Lord.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Key Verse

“The men were amazed and asked, ‘What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the sea obey Him!’”
— Matthew 8:27

Central Truth

Jesus has complete authority over sickness, nature, and the spiritual world, and He uses that power with compassion for those who come to Him in faith.

Matthew 8 in One Sentence

Coming down from the mountain, Jesus heals a leper, a centurion's servant, and Peter's mother-in-law, teaches the cost of following Him, calms a furious storm, and frees two men from demons, showing that He has authority over all things, though not everyone welcomes Him.