

Lesson 8. . . Love in Action: A Sermon Comes Alive
Gospel of Matthew



Notes From the Podium
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These notes are intended to augment your own reading and study of the lesson.
Please use as an aid to help document the main message of the lecture.

Matthew 8:1-34

I. Conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount

- A. Our Lord brought His words to consummation
- B. Jesus Descended
 - 1. He descends from the mountain, much like Moses.
 - 2. He gave not the Law but the fulfillment of the Law.

II. The Power to Fulfill the Law is Given

- A. The leper
 - 1. He is drawn to Jesus. (we will see this time and time again with others who come to Jesus for healing and miracles)
 - 2. Lepers were considered to be impure (sin and disease closely united)
 - a. Ritual Impurity - Passed from the impure to the pure.
 - b. The prescriptions of the old law, such as not touching a leper, were to protect one from ritual impurity.
 - c. The word “Pharisee” means “to be set apart”.
 - 3. Jesus reverses the “flow”.
 - a. He comes to us, who are fundamentally impure, and makes us pure.
 - b. Jesus reaches out and touches and the transfer of Grace goes in the opposite direction, making us clean.
 - 4. “And He *stretched out His hand and touched him*, saying, “I will; be clean.”
 - a. Our Lord does more than is required.
 - b. He *chooses* to use the human nature as the instrument of salvation.
 - c. This is the incarnational principal.
 - d. “He could not suffer in His divinity, so He assumed a nature in which He could.” –St. Ignatius
 - e. We are trained in what will become the Sacraments.
 - i. The Sacraments are Christ continuing to do in His mystical body what He did in His physical body.
 - ii. The visible reality that we see, hear, and touch communicates the invisible reality that is Grace.
 - 5. “See that you say nothing to any one...”
- B. The Centurion
 - 1. Another who gravitates to Jesus. “Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed...”
 - 2. Again Our Lord does more than is required. “I will *come and* heal him.”
 - 3. We then hear the phrase on the lips of every Catholic at every Mass: “Lord I am not worthy to ...”.



Notes From the Podium (cont)

- a. “sub tectum meum” (Latin) – “I’m not worthy you should come under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.”
 - b. This same faith and humility was seen in St. Joseph, Our Lady, and now in the Centurion.
 - i. Faith in the goodness and power of the Son of God.
 - ii. Humility in the distancing of oneself from that goodness and power.
 - c. This coupling of faith and humility should take place in each of us as we approach Holy Communion.
 - i. A coupling of our gravitation toward Him, but at the same time recognizing our unworthiness to do so.
 - ii. The Son of God marvels at and then cultivates in us that faith and humility.
 - d. “When Jesus heard him [the Centurion], He marveled.”
4. “Go; be it done for you as you have believed. And the servant was healed at that very moment.”
- a. The immediacy was noted so that the miracle is coupled with the request.
 - b. Also to show us the immediacy of a response when we approach Our Lord with faith and humility.
 - c. Humility creates in us a vacuum that Christ longs to fill.
- III. “...Jesus entered Peter’s house...”
- A. Interesting that immediately after the Centurion acknowledges his unworthiness to have Jesus enter under his roof; Jesus enters under Peter’s roof.
 1. Peter, the one who would lead Christ’s Church.
 2. Peter, the house in which Christ dwells.
 3. Peter, the rock upon which Christ builds His Church.
 - B. Peter’s mother-in-law
 1. Jesus “touched her hand, and the fever left her.”
 2. Healing is for the purpose of rising and serving Him; hence “...she rose and served Him.”
 3. This is what should take place in us when we receive Grace from Him.
 - a. It is possible that often miracles don’t take place because we would use them in a way that would take us away from Him.
 - b. Suffering often brings us closer to Him than healing.
- IV. “He casts out the spirits with a word.”
- A. When He casts out spirits, He doesn’t touch, He just casts them out.
 - B. When He heals the sick, Jesus assumes the disease.
 1. He bears our infirmities in a very real sense, He assumes the disease.
 2. These things He bears, He brings to the cross where He bears our sins and the consequences of our sin.
 3. He bears our infirmities and we bear His life, His healing, His sight, His Grace.
 4. His love is infinite and He desires to give it away.
- V. “...the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”



Notes From the Podium (cont)

- A. He is homeless because we are homeless.
 - 1. We were expelled from the Garden of Eden, a habitation created for us.
 - a. God first creates the structure and then fills it with life. We see this pattern with the garden and with our bodies.
 - b. Now we are in exile, strangers even to ourselves.
 - c. We should realize that if nothing in this world satisfies us, then we weren't made for this world.
 - d. Eden was itself a preparatory place; a place to choose Him over self.
 - 2. So because we are homeless, our Lord makes Himself homeless in order to come to us.
- B. Anyone who follows Him must make their home in Him.
 - 1. Nothing, not family, father, mother, sister, brother, children, lands will satisfy, because they are not our true home.
 - 2. "That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his bride."
 - a. It is strange to stay at home forever.
 - b. We instinctively have to move on.
 - 3. It is human nature that we long for family and stability, but this longing cannot be satisfied in this world because we were not made for this world.
 - 4. We were not made to simply dwell with other persons, but instead were constructed to dwell IN the Divine Persons, that is our home.
 - 5. "I am going to prepare a house for you..." nothing else will satisfy.
- C. To follow Jesus we must be prepared to wander in this world and to have nowhere to lay our heads except where St. John did, upon Christ's breast.

VI. The Price of Discipleship

- A. You must actually move to follow our Lord, because He is on the move.
- B. "Come, follow me."
- C. You will often encounter physical movement in your spiritual life if you follow Him.

VII. A Great Storm at Sea

- A. Remember these are fishermen.
- B. Jesus is sleeping. For Him who has no sin, the world still as it was with Adam, is at his service.
- C. Nature serves Jesus as it does not us because we did not serve God.
 - 1. That is why man sweats and toils.
 - 2. We forsook God's dominion; the earth now rebels as we do.
- D. We are fearful of perishing.
- E. "Jesus, we are perishing..." (The name "Jesus" means "God saves")
- F. "...He rose and rebuked the wind and sea..." and there is a "great calm".
 - 1. As contrasted to the "great storm"
 - 2. Note that Jesus rebuked the disciples before rebuking the wind and sea.
 - 3. He demonstrates to them that their natural abilities will not be enough to accomplish the work they are to do. They must rely on Him.



Notes From the Podium (cont)

VIII. “And when He came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demoniacs met Him.”

- A. “Gadarenes” means “land of pigs” so this is a land of Gentiles. (Pigs were an unclean food so not kept by Jews.)
- B. Two demoniacs come out.
 - 1. “..what have you to do with us, O Son of God?”
 - 2. Jesus did not come there for them, demons, fundamentally, cannot receive Him, they have chosen not to.
 - 3. There seems to be a sadness in our Lord that there is nothing He can do for them.
 - 4. They know who and what He is and burn at His very presence.
 - 5. Jesus says but one word, “Go”, “Hupagei”. There is no ear to hear anything further.
 - 6. The demons are cast into the swine.
 - 7. The people, like the demoniacs, don’t want Jesus either and they ask Him to leave. There is no one there to receive Him so He leaves.
 - 8. It was the time of their visitation, their salvation and He left.