

Matthew 9

Jesus does the thing...

Jesus does the thing here that Jesus does...

He comes to the places and sees the thing that needs done, and then he admits that he cannot do a thing, or there seems to be kind of limit in terms of what Jesus feels he can do.

So there is the story of the blind men - crying out for him, with that kind of desperation which only Jesus can help with. It is this utter conviction that Jesus can be the one that they need, that marks them out. They follow him to the house, going after him, desperate that he can do something.

Jesus asks them the question "Do you believe that I can do this?" - and it would be really easy to say yes at this point, but because they have followed him all the way from the house, there is a credibility to their actions.

So this makes me ask the question - the thing I most needed, am I prepared to own that, to recognise that and to bring it to him... what is that thing to you?

Then he touches their eyes and says "According to your faith let it be done to you...." And faith here is the act of trust, the act of being willing to be open to what he is doing.

And their eyes see... and he sternly orders them to not say anything - why? Because the world is not ready for him, because he knows the healing part will be spread but not the blind part, he is determined that this isn't going to be about his own glory.

And the seeing thing - he lets you see, what is the seeing that you need - okay, here is a question - where can you not see? What is hidden from you that you would like to be able to perceive?

And they spread the news - and you worry about this - did you not get this? Or is there is something about their enthusiasm which is highly commendable.

I don't know - I kind of think that when Jesus sternly orders you not to do something, you need to know that he knows, and not do it.

Then there's the mute - I am slightly obsessed with the idea that of being mute of late, the idea of not being able to speak your voice.

It's something that bothers me in Churches, that we cannot speak

Or when people speak in a voice that does not sound to be there's

And then in this story there is there is the added thing that there is something of a demon to this - a spiritual power that prevents people speaking - I know that, I know that - they might not be able to speak because there are in a foreign country and not granted asylum, they might not be able to speak because they do not believe that anyone will listen, or they themselves cannot speak

And the power of this is demonic here, it has a spiritual element...

Can you not speak? Are you prevented from speaking?

*** Tell the story of Cooper in Flemington ****

And these stories feel like Jesus being typically Jesus, and doing the amazing things that he does - in fact that is the reaction of most of the crowd - : "nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel" and the Pharisees says that he did this because he himself has a demon - they cannot bring themselves to accept that something radically different from them, that all their confident ideas of who is in and who is out, and if you keep that way of believing then God will bless.

The Pharisees represent a view of faith that is about fear of God, and keeping God sweet, and using that for power, it is a twisted view of faith, which defines God and will not let God do the things that you do not expect, that cannot cope with Cooper, and so says that this must be a trick, this is a deception.

And then we come to the next story - Jesus goes about and he cures every disease and every sickness, and there is no apparent limit to his power

All the villages

All the towns

Every disease

Every sickness

And then he still sees the crowds, and he has compassion for them - they are helpless,

They are like those who are thrown down

There is something defeated about them,

I can only think of this reminding when I lived in Springburn - everyone seemed defeated

Perhaps it was just that in Springburn this was obvious but it is true everywhere

We are thrown down without them.

But he does not say
I'll keep walking
I am the solution here

Instead he sees that this is going to need more, this is going to need us

The harvest is plentiful and the workers are few - the word for worker is simply those who do things

The harvest is plentiful but the do-ers are few

Therefore ask the Lord of the harvest - so he has power here, these people matter to him.

We often say that the world is not the place of God

But if that is the world of the harvest, the world out there

The harassed, people without the shepherd

He calls them harvest, and calls himself the Lord of the harvest

There is a power that he has, and an ownership and an expectation that he has.

Ask him to send out...

There is a song from South America

"Sent by the Lord am I

My hands are ready now

To make the earth the place in which the kingdom comes

The angels cannot change a world of hurt and pain into a world of love

Of justice and of peace

The task is mine to do, to set the people free

Oh help me to obey

Help me to do your will"

The task is mine,

He could do everything

And now he chooses me.

We can be priests, we can be the ones,

We can do the thing that even he chooses not to do

The blind men, the mute demon possessed man

Cure every disease

Every sickness

He is remarkable in his belief in us - yes, there is a thing where you cannot do,
And he says "Yes, you can"

Into this area, where people are harassed
And cannot speak and cannot see
And there is a power to be unlocked within us
And do you believe it
I guess I am the blind man, and I do not see this,
And I am now asking to see
Give me faith Oh God
That I might see
Where you call me
And that you can give me the power to do it.

AMEN