

Introduction:

1. “When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him” (Matthew 8:1).
  - a. Why? Why did they follow Him? In part, it was because of the unique teaching they had heard from Him, Matthew 7:28-29. They had heard many teachers, but none like this.
  - b. But they also followed Him because of what He had done. Note what is recorded just before He went up on the mountain to teach, Matthew 4:23-25.
  - c. They followed Him because of what He had done, what He had taught, and what He was about to do. Matthew chapter eight opens a section of scripture that is profuse with miracles. It is as if Matthew is saying, “Just look at all the things this man Jesus did!”
2. But, what about you? Do you follow Jesus? If you had been there among those multitudes, why would you have followed Him? Our study finds us in Matthew chapters eight and nine.
  - a. In these two chapters, Jesus gives us good reason to follow Him and to be devoted to Him.
  - b. Will you personally examine yourself and ask if you are a true follower of Jesus? Then ask the “why” question about your level of devotion. Are you really devoted to Him? More than to fun, more than to your boyfriend/girlfriend, more than to anything?
  - c. Why be devoted to Jesus? Because there is truly no one like Him. There is no one else who can do what He did. There is no one else who is what He is. There is no one else who can do for us what He can do for us! He is the Son of God with power to save our souls.

The Lesson:**I. Jesus and the leper, Matthew 8:1-3.**

- A. Leprosy was a dreaded disease that manifested itself in many ways before bringing death.
  1. It is unlikely that any of us have ever seen a person with leprosy. Many countries, even in our modern world, have leper colonies, where they are separated from the rest of society.
  2. This fearful ailment turns the skin white and scaly. Sores erupt all over the body. Fingers and toes fall off. Eyelids are pierced with holes.
- B. Can you do anything about leprosy? Neither can I. Jesus can and did.
  1. Jesus reached out His hand and touched the man. Nobody touched lepers for fear of contracting this contagious disease. But Jesus was unafraid. Not only would He not get the disease, He was about to take this man’s disease away from him. He healed the man and did so immediately. It did not take weeks or months for this man to get better.
  2. Jesus was able to do this because He is the Son of God.
  3. The purpose of His miracles was to demonstrate His identity, John 20:30-31.
- C. He is the Son of God and that’s why you need to be devoted to Him.

**II. Jesus and the paralyzed servant, Matthew 8:5-9.**

- A. In this unusual story Jesus never saw the man who had the problem. The paralyzed man never saw Jesus. The paralyzed man was a servant to an officer in the Roman army.
  1. The centurion came to Jesus and told Him about his servant. The man was paralyzed; he could not move his limbs. Have you ever seen a person who was paralyzed? Though this man was disabled, his ability to feel pain had not left him. He was tormented by his pain.
  2. This centurion seems to be a good man. He was a caring man and had compassion on his servant. He could have just turned him out to the street to die. Instead, he is concerned about his well being and seeks help for him through Jesus.
  3. Furthermore, this centurion has high respect for Jesus. Being a centurion, he knows what authority is. He is used to ordering his soldiers and servants. He says “Go” and expects them to go. He knows that Jesus is a man of authority. He believes that all Jesus must do is speak the word, “Tell the paralyzed condition to go” and it will go! And he is right!
  4. Finally, the centurion is a humble man. He knows who Jesus is and he knows who he is! He says that he is not worthy that Jesus should even come into his house. Wouldn’t it be good if everybody knew who Jesus is, and everybody knew who they themselves are?
- B. Can you do anything about a paralyzed man? Neither can I. Jesus can and did.
  1. And, as the centurion said, Jesus did not have to go to the man’s house to heal him.

2. Jesus spoke the word and the miraculous deed was done, Matthew 8:13. Once again, there was no delay. This was a miracle. This was an act of the Son of God.
  3. This was prompted by a Gentile Roman centurion—not a man we might expect to have faith in Jesus. Jesus said He had not found so great faith even in Israel.
  4. What kind of faith does Jesus find in you? Do you truly believe He is the Son of God? That's why He worked these miracles—so you would know who He was, John 3:2.
- C. He is the Son of God and that's why you need to be devoted to Him.

### III. **Jesus and the storm, Matthew 8:23-27.**

- A. The Sea of Galilee is one that is subject to sudden and terrible storms.
1. The men in this boat were experienced fishermen and sailors. They know what a bad storm is like. They know that this storm is a killer. The sky blackened, the wind howled, the waves rose up like mountains and then broke over the boat. The small fishing boat is filling with water. Death by drowning is almost a certainty. Sailors died every year on the Sea of Galilee. More names are about to be added to the roster of those lost at sea.
  2. But Jesus seems to be totally unconcerned. He is asleep in the boat. Not pretending to be asleep—but actually asleep in the midst of this storm. Incredible!
- B. Can you do anything about a terrible storm? Why didn't you do something when Rita or Ike punished our community? You did nothing because you could do nothing. Neither can I. But Jesus was able to stop the storm on the Sea of Galilee.
1. For a third time in our study Jesus spoke the word. He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea—and there was a great calm. No more black skies. No more waves like mountains. No more wind or rain. No more danger. Jesus said, "Peace, be still" and just as suddenly as the storm had come up, there was peace and stillness on the Sea of Galilee.
  2. Jesus was disappointed with His disciples. "Why are you fearful?" Could they believe God would let His Son perish in a storm in the sea? Could they believe that Jesus would let the apostles die by drowning when He had been preparing them to preach the gospel to the whole world? His words to them indicate that everything is going to be fine. And it was!
  3. The disciples marveled at Him, that even the wind and the sea obey Him! Why did Jesus perform such miracles? So they would know—and so you would know—He is the Son of God, John 14:11. He did this so you would know and could be His disciple.
- C. He is the Son of God and that's why you need to be devoted to Him.

### IV. **Jesus and the dead girl, Matthew 9:18, 23-25.**

- A. It is somewhat startling that Jesus is on His way to where the dead girl is, and is interrupted by a woman who has been sick for twelve years. She touched Jesus and immediately she was made well (Matthew 9:19-22).
1. When Jesus got to the ruler's house, the funeral proceedings were already underway. There was wailing and sad songs being played. Jesus found a grieving crowd there.
  2. Evidently (from Mark's account) when the father first went after Jesus, the little girl was not dead, though her condition was very bad. But now she has died and some said it was pointless to bring Jesus now. It was too late—or so they thought.
  3. It wasn't too late for Jesus. As far as Jesus was concerned, the little girl was only sleeping. When the crowd heard Jesus speak that way, they made fun of Him. But their ridicule would not last.
- B. Can you do anything about a little child who has died? Neither can I. But Jesus can and did.
1. Even the girl's father--the ruler of the synagogue—couldn't do anything. But then Jesus made everyone leave except the mother and father. He took the dead girl by the hand and said, "Little girl, arise." And she did. She arose immediately and walked.
  2. The family was overcome with amazement. Why did Jesus do this? So they would know—and so you would know—that He is the Son of God, John 20:30-31.
- C. He is the Son of God and that's why you need to be devoted to Him.

#### Conclusion:

1. Are you devoted to Him in worship, in your speech, your actions, in how you treat others?
2. If He is the Son of God—and not just an ordinary man—what devotion does He deserve from you?