

The Feet of Jesus-the Place for Helpless Misery

by Philip Bennett Power

The sermon emphasizes the feet of Jesus as a place of healing and comfort for those in helpless misery, inviting all to come with simple faith.

Scripture: Psalm 34:18, Psalm 147:3, Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 11:28, Matthew 15:30-31, Mark 9:24, John 6:37, Hebrews 4:16, 1 Peter 5:7

Topics: "Divine Healing", "Christian Suffering"

Description

Philip Bennett Power preaches on the significance of bringing our afflictions and helplessness to the feet of Jesus, where we find simple pity and healing. The scene of great crowds bringing the sick to Jesus portrays His central role as the Healer of all human misery, emphasizing the power of conscious helplessness in drawing near to Him. Jesus, the gatherer of human misery, stands ready to heal all who come to Him, rooted by His loving nature to attend to every suffering soul cast at His feet.

Transcript

"Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at His feet; and He healed them." Matthew 15:30

The head of Jesus was crowned with thorns on earth; it is crowned with glory in heaven--and in either aspect we feel that it is a subject far beyond our grasp. It moves our feelings, it excites our admiration, and we wonder and adore--where we cannot understand.

But the feet of Jesus! those feet which were weary, which were dust-soiled, which moved about the common haunts of man; perhaps we think we understand more of them. It may be that we do understand "more," but not "all." We do not understand all about any one footprint which He left on earth. There are reasons why He went to this place and to that, and why He left it, far beyond our reach. Yes; take any one footprint; see in it the earth or the dust of a fallen world, bearing the impress of the foot of the Son of God made man; why is that footmark there? What is the very first origin of it? What is the full extent of its meaning? There is no human intellect which can reach to this!

There are in this matter, hidden things which belong to God; but there are also things revealed, which belong to us and to our children--things which intertwine themselves with our present position, with our

daily need, with Christ's relationship to us, and ours to Him. It is upon such, that we desire to dwell in these chapters. We feel that we need the Spirit's guidance, to teach us so much as even the least thing about 'the feet of Jesus.'

In this great gathering, of which Matthew here speaks, we have the feet of Christ presented to us as the place for helpless misery--the place of simple pity. This scene is an epitome of the history of our Lord. Multitudes of diseased are on one side--Himself, the solitary Healer, on the other; they are cast at Jesus' feet, and He healed them. The feet of Jesus was the place for all this helpless misery; there it found simple pity; and in that pity, a supply for all its need.

When I see, then, all these people cast at the feet of Jesus, and lying there, the thoughts which I have are these--

1. I see Him, the well-defined center of a circle, with an undefined circumference. I am glad that we are not told exactly how many were healed, and that we have not a perfect catalogue of the diseases under which they were suffering. I like to think what a vast number that "many others" may include--to think that from north, south, east, west, the miserable people all came. So large is the circle of human misery that, no human mind can even imagine its outer limits. We think, perhaps, that we know a good deal of deep heart-sinkings and sorrows ourselves; but, ah! others have some far deeper than ours; they are exercised on subjects and in ways that we have not an idea of; and in the vast sweep of all this misery stands Jesus the Healer--His feet are in the center.

"Many others" were cast down at His feet. There is great beauty and use in the indefiniteness of Scripture, "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." "Come unto me, all you who labor and are heavy laden." It is meant to bring to the feet of Jesus, all people however so far off--people who otherwise never would have imagined that they might venture. The feet of Jesus is the place for all helpless misery--yours and mine, and "many others'.

But, in the matter of Christ, it is above all things necessary that everything should be very precise, "Come unto ME." Therefore the sick were cast at His very feet. Christ entered the circle of misery for a purpose--that He might draw the miserable to Him. He stands, He sits, He walks in it--that He may be near people. His holy feet are down in our earth-dust, that creeping, or lying helpless, or cast down almost in despair, we may be near some part of Him; and to be near any part of Jesus is to be near healing and life. That woman who touched the hem of His garment bent close to His foot, and even there, found all that she required.

2. I think that Jesus is a gatherer-in of human misery. It was to be such a gatherer, that He came on earth--that was His one object; to fit Himself for that, He became man, and lived, and died. And here, He was a man above men. What most desire is, to gather gain--for that they live, for that too often toil until they die. They desire to throw off misery; it is troublesome and expensive, and perhaps distressing to them. What they throw off--Jesus takes in to Himself. If we, then, are miserable in any way, and know not where to go, or on whom to lay our load--let us betake ourselves quickly of the ingatherer of sorrows. Did not His feet travel, when on earth, to the abode of illness and of death? Did they not stand still, when He was cried after? He never used those, His human feet--to run from misery; or like the priest and Levite to pass by on the other side; but He stood, and walked in misery's way.

Now we must lay this to heart. When we are miserable we must not say, "Where shall I go for sympathy? Who will pity me? Who will understand me, or my sorrow, or my case?" Behold, the ingatherer of human

misery is walking close by you; there is no path of sorrow which does not bear an imprint of His foot!

3. I have also a thought concerning the pool of Bethesda. There, a multitude were waiting, and only one could be healed. There was no eye of sympathy to look upon the afflicted, no voice to speak to them; each man, forgetful of perhaps the greater woes of others, absorbed only in his own, rushed forward, if possible, to be the first to enter into the troubled waters--and so reap the solitary blessing which the pool contained.

Here, on this mountain-side, sits Jesus. There is no troubling here; there need not be. Whatever troubling there is, is always on man's side. With Him all is calm. We see in our mind's eye the multitudes toiling up the mountain-side; the eagerness, the anxiety, the casting down at Jesus' feet; and beautifully simple is all that we have told us of what He did, "He healed them all." Those simple words, no doubt, fitly express the calm with which He wrought upon the mass of misery prostrate at His feet.

4. And I think that, in truth, there lay before Jesus, if we might be bold enough to say so--no alternative but to heal them all.

The only alternative was to get up and go away; or tell the people who brought their loved sick ones, to take them back again unhealed; but what an alternative would that have been to Him! He could never have done this!

So, then, when we cast down our sorrows, or ourselves, or our friends' sorrows, or themselves, right at the feet of Christ--let us think, 'He cannot go away from them.' This is no presumption, no lowering of Jesus, no detraction from His power; but it is a holy faith and courage to have such a thought, and it is greatly honoring to Him. What would become of us, if it had been even once recorded that Jesus was too busy to attend to such and such a person, or that He refused anyone, and sent him away unhealed? No doubt Satan would say, "Ah, that case is just like yours!" Or our own poor mistrusting hearts would be sure to fix upon it, and to feel, "So and so was sent away; ah! my experience may be the same!"

But Jesus, owing to the blessed pitifulness of His nature, cannot go on--no, not a single step--if a helpless, suffering being, willing to be healed, is cast in faith athwart His path. He is rooted and bound by misery. Such is His blessed human nature that, if He were obliged to spurn the miserable from His feet, or to go away from them--He would be miserable Himself!

In our sorrow, then, let us look at Christ tied and bound by the laws of His own loving nature; let us put the power of those laws against our own fears, and the repulsiveness of our sins; and faith will strengthen itself, and lay many people, and many sorrows at the feet of Jesus.

5. Further, I think of the helpless misery of that crowd cast down at Jesus' feet. Lying there, they suggest the thought that conscious helplessness has in itself, power with Jesus. Coming so closely in the sacred narrative, upon the impassioned entreaty of the Syro-Phoenician woman at the feet of Jesus (which has a lesson of its own,) it seems to have a special teaching. For many might say, "We cannot plead as she did." Diffident of their own earnestness and energy; and seeing how much was won by the Syro-Phoenician woman by the exercise of these qualities, they might say, "If Christ has to be so hardly entreated, then what can we hope to get--we who are feeble, who seem as though we are not wise enough to use arguments which can reach His head, or strong enough to utter cries which can pierce His heart?" We need only read on a little further--and behold the multitudes simply lying at His feet.

These sick people thus lying at Jesus' feet have a voice to us--their helplessness speaks to ours; it says, "Perhaps you cannot address arguments like the Syro-Phoenician woman to the head of Christ; or, it may be, you are dull in pleading with the affections of His heart; then do not consider that all is over--that there is nothing for you; do not depress yourself with what you cannot do; think rather of what you can do. You can lie at Jesus' feet, where he must see you. You are very close to Him--when you are at His feet."

In common, everyday life, men are frequently losing gain which they might have had--while aiming at something higher which they cannot have; so is it in the spiritual life too. While aiming at what is much higher than we at present have capacity for--we miss what is within our reach.

We must not fret ourselves that we have not attained to this or that energy of spiritual life, and shut out the comfort of knowing that we have "something"--that we are at the Savior's feet. Satan would hide from us that we are there; for he knows that none tarry long there in humble waiting, without being lifted up and given strength.

If the reader feels very helpless, let him not flee from this thought, but use it; and the way he is to use it is this. He is to lie still at Jesus' feet--not to want to move at all--not to be restless; Jesus sees him--and that is enough.

6. Now I think how beautifully simple everything is here; the few and unadorned words in which this great transaction is recorded lead us to thoughts of simplicity. There is simple TRUST on the part of the afflicted people, and those who brought them; and simple PITY on the part of Jesus.

Blessed be God for all the simplicity in the gospels; it is as little children we must receive the kingdom of heaven, and simple food suits the infancy of the soul--yes, and its ripe old age. For when many things have been learned about types and prophecies, and many speculations have been made, and systems of theology constructed; what does the soul fall back upon, when in view of eternity--but just the simple truth of "Jesus died--and rose again for us!" That was what made a prelate eminent in learning and controversy say, in extreme old age, and in his dying hours, "Don't talk to me of the cross--but of the One who hung upon the cross." This was no abstract distinction. The One who hung upon it--was what the soul needed; there were the very feet, at which it could lie.

Let us say to ourselves and to others--What is needed for healing--is not many thoughts, or high thoughts, about Jesus, or any intellectual knowledge about Him at all--but the plainest simplicity of trust; and it will be very helpful if we see that the like simplicity is in Him. Simple pity! that is what we are to look for from Jesus. We need not connect it with any theological thoughts; it is a pure uncompounded feeling; and where shall we see it exercised, as on those who are simply cast at His feet?

Let us learn, then, the value of bringing our afflicted ones to the feet of Christ, feeling we can do no more than that. We have perhaps tried many physicians with them, and they are no better--but rather the worse. Kindness has not melted them, punishment has not corrected them, discipline has not restrained them. We must now not "cast them off," but "cast them down" at the feet of Jesus. And having done this, we must not yield to desponding feelings of helplessness. We are now really nearer to being helped, than ever we were before. We are now in the right place before Christ--in the right position--that of expectancy; with the right feelings--those of self-helplessness, and yet hope. Who knows how soon you will say, "We cast them down at Jesus' feet--and He healed them!"

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/philip-bennett-power/the-feet-of-jesus-the-place-for-helpless-misery/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net