

Lessons From the Ministry of Jesus

by Timothy Tow

Jesus' ministry of preaching and healing in Galilee serves as a pattern and blueprint for the Church to follow, emphasizing the importance of repentance, faith, and medical missions in expanding the Kingdom of Heaven.

Scripture: Isaiah 64:6, Matthew 4:16, Matthew 4:23, John 9:32, Acts 20:21

Topics: "Jesus Ministry", "Discipleship Training"

Description

Timothy Tow emphasizes the importance of following Jesus' example in ministry, particularly in preaching the message of the Kingdom of Heaven and calling people to repentance. He highlights the need for pastors to deliver God's Word faithfully to nourish the souls of believers. Tow also stresses the significance of training and equipping disciples to continue the work of spreading the Gospel, as seen in Jesus' selection of the twelve apostles. Additionally, he discusses the role of healing ministries in the context of modern medical facilities and the potential impact of medical missions in areas like Cambodia.

Transcript

Text: Matt 4:12 -25

The Four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles are not only a record of sacred history but also a pattern and a blueprint for the Church to follow. Here, we see our Lord launching His ministry of preaching and healing into the backward regions of His country, viz. the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim, Galilee of the Gentiles. "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."

It is human nature to follow the line of least resistance in God's work. A missionary to a foreign country is more likely to choose a place of convenience than another in the backwoods. Not our Lord. "To the hardest of places, I must go, I must go" urges A.B. Simpson, founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Our Korean missionaries who have gone to Cambodia have set us the example, particularly Jonathan Lee.

And what is Jesus' thrust in His ministry? It is preaching, declaring the message of God to a lost mankind. What is the work of the Church? The greatest part is also preaching. Do you pray for your pastors that they may weekly deliver God's Word afresh to feed hungry souls?

Jesus' message is the message of the Kingdom of Heaven . This is what we the children of earth, yea, even the children of hell, needs to hear. Christ came to save us from a perishing earth and a people doomed to fiery destruction, to His heavenly Home.

And what is our response? Repent! It is not enough to say I believe in Jesus without showing the other side of the coin, I repent. Paul says how he testifies to both Jews and Greeks the need of "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). To repent is to turn away from our old sinful ways. The Chinese count these four sins to top the list: Womanising, gambling, drinking and smoking. How about mahjong, four digits, idolatry, witchcraft, drugs, prostitution, pornography and every false religion? Even the righteous-ness of Confucianism? You cannot earn your way to Heaven by good works or behaviour, for the Bible says, "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa 64:6). If you have believed, you need to be baptised and to publicly confess your sins to the Saviour.

The importance of preaching and continuing to preach the Word of the Kingdom of Heaven is seen in our Lord's training 12 men to carry on the job. Here we see Him in the process of calling the apostles who should learn from Him in the next three years. At Pentecost when Peter the chief apostle preached, 3,000 were saved.

Thus it behoved us from the beginning of the founding of Life Church to seek a way to establish a Far Eastern Bible College. This came to fruition in 1962, twelve years after the Church. Today, after 38 years, Far Eastern Bible College has graduated over 350. 65 were ordained as ministers of the Bible Presbyterian Church. This is how God has greatly multiplied us, so that in Singapore and Malaysia we have established 60 and 20 congregations respectively. This is how the Kingdom of Heaven on earth is expanded.

The second part of Jesus' ministry is the healing of the sick. Why then does Life Church not launch into building a hospital and a clinic to take care of the sick? We need not do this, because in an enlightened country such as Singapore , we have full medical facilities.

Neither are the healing ministries of the Charismatics needed. For to have a healing session of the sick is redundant. I can dispense Panadol, and their pain will go away in half an hour. Two tablets of Decolgen will take away their 'flu and headache. Even eye ailments can easily be taken care of by the eye surgeon. All the healing claims of the Charismatics are for self-gain and glory. If the Charismatics' claim that they can open the eyes of the blind and cause the lame to walk is true, Jesus has lost His job! But they keep on believing a lie. (Read John 9:32.)

In this connection, insofar as our work in Cambodia is concerned, it is to God's glory if we can send medical missionaries. When the Gospel came to South China, to Swatow and Amoy , to our ancestors, the effectualness of medical missions seemed to outstrip the purely evangelistic endeavours. The Gospel came to Swatow in 1856. By 1863 the English Presbyterians had established a hospital. With the bringing in of good medicine hundreds were healed and a good proportion converted. The District Officer and his family were healed of various diseases. The District Officer was so grateful for his salvation that he offered 50 cents to all who would go to Church with him.

For the moment it seems hard for any doctor to step out of affluent Singapore to go to the slums of Cambodia . But we have seen the good results of two medical missions hitherto sent to Cambodia wherein well over a thousand cases have been happily dealt with each time.

Lately we have entered Pailin, the stronghold of Pol Pot, who butchered 2 million souls to death. If we can send two medical missions a year to Pailin it will be in the footsteps of Jesus who went about "healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matt 4:23).

"Who will go for us?"

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