

New Testament Week 10: Healing Ministry (March 10) (Home Study)
323: Healing Ministry (March 10)

Initial thoughts

Quick reading overview

Detailed overview

Discussion points

Recommendation: Always read the scriptural sections together, and in the same order each time. I personally read Mark, then Matthew, then Luke, because I think they were written in that order. So I read Mark 2-5, then Matthew 8-9. Also read in one sitting if you can. Get used to asking each other what they noticed that is distinctive in each gospel or book or passage.

Reading is Relationship.

What are the gospels? (This is a good time to check in)

Think about these levels of transmission

What Jesus said and did (late 20s)

What Jesus said and did as it was remembered

What Jesus said and did as it was transmitted orally

What Jesus said and did as it was translated into Greek (30s?)

What Jesus said and did as it was put down in writing (50s?)

What Jesus said and did as it was collected into gospels (70-100)

What Jesus said and did as it was transmitted (50-1500)

What Jesus said and did as it was translated (200-2000)

What Jesus said and did as it was remembered, transmitted orally, translated into Greek, put down in writing, collected into gospels, organized in those gospels, copied countless times by scribes, then translated into different languages.

Matthew 8-9; Mark 2-5

Mark 2

Jesus forgives, then heals the paralyzed man

Jesus calls Levi and eats with sinners

Feasting and fasting, old and new

Sabbath is for humans; Son of Man Lord of the Sabbath

Mark 3

Angry Jesus heals on Sabbath

Jesus heals

Jesus calls the twelve

Jesus' family and home town think he's crazy

Family of choice

Mark 4

Parable of the sower taught and explained

Lamps and seeds

Stilling of storm

Mark 5

Healing a man and killing pigs

Healing Jarius' daughter and the unnamed woman

Matthew 8

Jesus heals a leper

Jesus orders the Centurion's son healed

Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law (too bad we don't know anything about his wife)

Rigors of discipleship

Stilling of the storm

Healing of two men and killing pigs

Matthew 9

Jesus forgives, then heals the paralyzed man

Call of Matthew

Feasting and fasting, old and new

Healing of two blind men

Healing of the mute

Harvest is great

I was surprised by how flat Matthew felt after digging deeply into Mark (My order of preference with gospels is Luke, Mark, John, Matthew) It's ok to have favorites! We have a personal relationship with the scriptures.

Eat with sinners: Who feels comfortable around us? We choose to be around who we are comfortable with, usually people like us. How can we expand

(My friends usually tend to be overeducated and thinky; serving the imprisoned and dying has extended my ministerial reach beyond what I ever imagined)

Call sinners, not (those who think themselves) righteous. We are all sinners.

From the talk I gave in prison:

Let's come back to human nature. Yes, that disappointing, even pathetic human nature. How do we apply the atonement to our lives? How do we redeem that human nature and become more like the Savior? Paradoxically, by full inhabiting it. We practice the lessons we teach to children. We are honest, especially when we make mistakes. We admit when we are wrong. We apologize to those we have hurt. We seek forgiveness. And every day, we work to do better. I think too often we think of "doing better" as learning. Learning isn't enough. We have to *practice* every day. It literally is a spiritual workout. Living well is hard, scary work. We are constantly tempted to slip and lie and avoid. There's that human nature again. In our lazy human avoidance, we are strangers to God. Because God is about truth, about love, about freedom, about peace, about growth. And our natural human tendencies won't get us there.

Here's the miracle though. When you admit you are wrong, you are never more likely to find out what is right. When you admit you are in need, you are never more likely to get help. When you admit you are weak, you are never more likely to be made strong. That's what God means in the Book of Mormon verse Ether 12:27... it does not say "I

give unto humans weaknesses so that they can make a checklist and totally overcome each weakness one by one and then yay, they are perfect all on their own!" I know some people who try that way, but that's not what God says here. God says that we are given WEAKNESS. Singular. God gives us human limitations, why? So that we will be HUMBLE. Because when we are humble, we aren't trying to be perfect, though we do try to be better. When we are humble, we realize we won't get it right. When we are humble, we are open to learning, apologizing, forgiving. When we are humble, we give and receive grace.

As humans, we cannot right our wrongs. We cause damage we cannot correct. Thus our need for grace. The most we can do in this life is make the most of our mistakes, spend the currency of our consequences, allow our past to break our hearts, make our spirits contrite, and do better, become better.

At the end of the day, on this day, and every day, that is what atonement means. Bringing together, reconciling our flaws and our ideals. Bringing together our relationships, which every day break and must be repaired. And most importantly, bring us into alignment with the proper way to live. We are oriented toward God and goodness, wherever we may be in any given moment. THAT is redemption in the moment, here and now.

Reflection questions:

- 1) Who should we spend time with, and why? What does it mean to "eat with sinners"?
- 2) What is religion for? (Sabbath for humans, not humans for Sabbath)
- 3) What does it mean that Mark made a mistake? (What is scripture?)
- 4) How can we communicate and share in a way that most helps each person where they are?