

Called To Fly

Matthew 8

Jesus Heals Many

¹⁴When Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. ¹⁵He touched her hand and the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him.

¹⁶When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick.¹⁷This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

"He took up our infirmities
and bore our diseases."¹⁸

The Cost of Following Jesus

¹⁸When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake. ¹⁹Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

²⁰Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

²¹Another disciple said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."

²²But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

As a child there were a few movies on VHS tape that I went back to often

- The wizard of Oz was one of them, a movie really before its time
- I often think about the scene in the Wizard of Oz
- Where they meet the all powerful Oz, when they finally meet him, after all their travels
- They discover that when you pull the curtain back there is no magic
- The great and powerful Oz is just a man with some tricks,
- What they though was magic and amazing wasn't.....was just normal

Well here Jesus is doing a reverse Wizard of Oz

- All these people come and hear this powerful teacher
- Thinking he is just a normal man
- But Then... pulls back the curtains to show them that
- there is magic in the world
- There is a great and powerful one

- And in Christ they have access to something much more than a teacher
- And this is a big part of his ministry, pulling back the curtain, showing people the truth

In this simple little passage we see Jesus pulling back the curtain

- Giving us and all the onlooker a glimpse at the truth about the world

In V14-15

- We see a triplet of miraculous events mentioned here
- as the backdrop for next conversation
- Peters Mother in-Law (one of the only mentions of Peters wife)
- He touches her hand and she is healed

Word of this spreads and by evening many have brought their sick of demon possessed.

- V16
- "with a word" he drives out the spirits ... such is his power and authority
- In the spiritual realm. ... the demons obey his commands
- Mathew often highlights the ministry of Jesus as a Battle of 2 kingdoms
- As he goes about doing his work he is casting out and weakening the enemy
- For the time when he will deliver the final blow on the cross

These healings and exorcisms are the backdrop for the next 2 encounters he has

V18-20

- It's a funny passage this one.
- A teacher of the Law, so someone in the Jewish leadership
 - o Some one who knows the scripture respected in the community
- Comes to him and says let me follow you and Jesus basically shrugs him off
- He doesn't say no to him , but give his this cryptic response
- V20
- Wild animals have a place they call home, but I am a wanderer
- Kind of saying you don't really know what you're asking
- It was a great honour to be the disciple of a great teacher
- To follow him and learn from him, clearly Jesus was a great prophet and teacher
- He came in power like Elijah or Moses
- This guy is kind of applying to be in Jesus entourage.
- Let me follow you I'll do whatever it takes

But Jesus doesn't take applicants, he is not in the business of starting a college

- Handing out degrees
- To follow him is to accept his radical call on your life
- Along with the hardships and challenges.

And it's the same for usGod's call on us is not just for us to meet the requirements

- To finish the assignments and hopefully pass the test.

- Not just being a good boy or girl, occasionally coming to church, its much more than that
- But its to a new way of life, a new way of thinking
- Its to understand the world in a totally different way, and never be the same again
- That's What Jesus is calling us to. Pulling back that curtain on the reality of this world

He goes on in V21-22

- Maybe one of the hardest responses we heard from Jesus
- He would have not passed his pastoral care module at bible college

Some say that what he means is "can wait until my father passes"

- As in he is still alive but old
- So it could be 1 year - 5 years who knows?
- Some people say what Jesus is talking about is the physically dead and the spiritually dead
- But he plainly says let me bury my father, not ask to wait until he had died
- Nor is he asking some question about being physically and spiritually dead
- BUT His dad has just died. In the ancient near east you would bury them with in a day.
- Many middle eastern cultures are similar today, within 24-48 hours
- But Jesus say to this man.. "no ... come follow me"

Which is the exact point

- There is nothing that take priority over follow JC
- Not even the most reasonable excuselike the passing of a parent

Because here is the truth we are a people filled with excuses.

- I have heard "I know there is a God but I'm just not ready yet"
- Which means, I love my life too much and I don't want to change
- I don't want to let go of things I know God teaches against

I can clearly think of a couple of my friends from my home church that

- I think believed it all and just gave up on the whole God thing because of
- A girl/ boyfriends, or going out drinking or whatever it is.

And today for many people Life is to busy with work and family and education

- There is a million and 1 excuses
- but Jesus lays it out plainly to us
- There is no excuse
- Jesus come to open our eyes.. to pull back the curtains on this world
- And show us that there is a great and powerful OZ... his name is JC
- Come follow me, not tomorrow, or in a month but now.

Let me tell you a story from an old damish theologian

A Farmer one day decided to try his hand at breeding geese

- He build a big barn and a pen with high walls all around
- He raises generation on generation of geese in that barn

- Kept them warm in winter protected from foxes and well fed with corn and mash

Eventually the geese forgot what was outside the walls completely

- Until one day a wild goose land amongst them in the pen
- He told them about the great world outside these walls
- He speaks of valleys and mountains, or rivers and oceans
- He tells them that they were destined to soar in the skys to see this world
- Because they have wings... they were made for something bigger than this pen

The geese were inspire and astounded by this new teaching

- They honk and squawked and flapped their wings
- At all they could be and more
- They talked about all the possibilities of what could be.
- What they might do and see.
- The wild goose said to them all lets go, follow me and we will see the world
- He turn and flapped his great wings and soared into the sky
- But the tame geese just sat and watched him go
- For the food was good and the barn was warm and safe.

You see...We are called to Fly.....

- So often in life we build the little walls around us
- We keep others out, just let a select few in
- We fill our little pen with lifestyle or career or friends ... and that's it
- And we especially keep God outside those walls
- But God calls us to get out of that pen, knock down those walls and Fly
- Jesus say to the crowds, there is a great world out their greater that u every knew
- Filled with the Spirit of the Lord, a God that is Good, a God that loves us
- And a God that has plans for us, plan not to harm us but give us a hope and a future
- Plans that we might connect with his people in relationship
- That we might find a unity and a peace that is beyond understanding
- it wont be easy..... but it will be worth it.

After being woke... Jesus says to the onlookers

- Now is the time... don't wait, don't put it off don't delay
- There is great world outside these walls
- The time is here and the time is now.
- Flap those wings and fly