Miracles Reveal: Healing

Mark 1:21-34 Kimby Young

Psalm 30:1-5 January 21, 2018

The season of Epiphany which continues for the next few Sundays, is all about God’s revelation to the world. How is God revealed to the world? And particularly what does Jesus Christ reveal about God to the world? The answer is quite a lot. Jesus Christ is the truest and clearest revelation of who God is. God can be seen and known in many ways in the world – in the wonder of creation, in the miracle of love, in the moment of peace that can only be explained by holiness. God can be experienced in many ways. We Christians believe that in trying to reach humanity, God chose to come to Earth as flesh and blood in Jesus Christ, and thru the actions and words of Jesus, to show us what love is all about – what God is all about. Jesus Christ is the clearest revelation of God that the world has ever known. So as Christians we often examine the life of Christ, to try to understand God more completely, to try to draw closer to God thru Jesus Christ. In the next few weeks of Epiphany, we will look at the miracles of Jesus, to see what they reveal to us about who God is and how we experience God.

This week’s scripture is all about healing. In the short passage from Mark, we read of two detailed miracles of healing and then the simple phrase – “the people brought to Jesus all the sick …and Jesus healed many.” And in the next paragraph there are more miracles of healing, and the next chapter even more, and throughout the gospel of Mark the healings are far too many to count or list. Jesus came with healing. Jesus came to bring wholeness. Jesus came touching bodies and minds and souls. Jesus came and still comes restoring God’s beloved children to all they were meant to be. What does this tell us about who God is?

First, God has power – authority this scripture calls it. Jesus had this power. People could see his authority. And in other parts of the gospel we see that Jesus gives this power to any of us who would follow Jesus. God has power. And this power is used for good – for healing, for restoration, for transformation, for making things right. Our Creator God created everything good and wants everything to be as it should be. So why is there disease, why is there illness, what is demon possession or today we might call it mental illness? Why is there pain and suffering and death, if God has the power to make everything right? How is God’s power used and when and why? And why not? I have prayed for healing – often. I have prayed for miracles. And sometimes they come. But sometimes – we all know it – sometimes the healing doesn’t come – not the way we want it anyway. How can we understand that?

My answer is in the second healing miracle of this story. The scripture says Peter’s mother in law was sick, and when Jesus heard about it, the scripture says, Jesus went to her, took her hand and helped her. Mark is not a verbose writer. He never goes into detail. Mark is all about the facts. So he says simply - Jesus went to her, took her hand and helped her. But reading between the lines – for me, the miracle here, the healing here – is all about Jesus presence. Jesus goes to her. Jesus touches her. Jesus helps her. Jesus has compassion. Jesus loves this woman. And she is healed. She is whole again. That’s what healing is all about – knowing that you are in the presence of God - and knowing that powerful presence loves you. Whatever happens – whatever you are going thru – God is with you and God loves you. That is what Jesus revealed most clearly about the nature of God. First God is powerful and second God loves you. This powerful loving God is with you – whatever happens in your life. That may not take away the suffering. It will not answer the questions why. But the presence of God surrounds us in our most difficult times and helps us to make it thru with comfort and hope. God is with you. And God loves you.

Power and Love. The healing miracles of Jesus reveal God’s power and God’s love. So, bringing that forward to today – what miracle of healing can God’s power and God’s love bring to you today? What miracle of healing do you need today? What miracle of power and love might you be seeking today? Might we be seeking today? Oh, I can name a lot of them. I can name a lot of situations that need God’s power and God’s love right now. I bet you can too. Some are very personal, even private, and some are absolutely global – our need for healing runs deep. Our need for God’s power and God’s love is deep, even desperate.

In a few minutes I am going to invite you to name a need for healing – at least one. I’m warning you ahead of time, so you can get ready – all you introverts and quiet Presbyterians. I am going to invite you to pray with the people around you – the two or three or four people sitting around you. I will invite you to name a need for healing that you seek – for your self, for a loved one, for a group or type of people, or for a need in the world. And we will pray for miracles out loud, in this room, in groups of three or four. We will pray for God’s power and God’s love to be demonstrated wholly and completely. We will pray for healing. We will pray for hope and life and light and grace. And God will hear our prayers. And God will answer our needs. I don’t know how, but I believe. I expect miracles. And I invite you to believe.

The Psalm for today talks about God’s healing. It has the famous phrase, “Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.” I am praying for the morning – for dawn, for sunrise, for light to shine to push back the darkness. I am praying for healing and for miracles. I am praying for God to come to us in power and love, for us to be aware of God’s presence, for us to be moved and transformed by that power and love of God. So whether you are in the midst of that dark night or you have already experienced the dawn of God’s presence and power – may you know the joy of God with you, may you believe in that joy coming, and may you hold on to the hope of the miracles promised in Jesus Christ our Lord.