

Lesson 52
April 29, 2020

Welcome to our Mind of Christ study today. This is a serious study of taking us into the life of Christ and looking very closely at the **mind** of Christ, especially; how He *thought*, what He *said*, and what He *did* to give us insights into the way **Jesus thinks**.

Today we will be looking at two sections of this; both relatively short. You will need your Bible and I will be reading from the New American Standard Version of the Bible and I will be reading from **Mark 1:21-28** and **Luke 4:31-37**.

Mark 1:21-28

They went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and began to teach. ²² They were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³ Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out ²⁴ saying, “What do we have to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!” ²⁵ And Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet, and come out of him!” ²⁶ And throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him. ²⁷ And they were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, “What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.” ²⁸ Immediately the news about Him spread everywhere into all the surrounding districts of Galilee.

Now I want to read the story from **Luke** Chapter 4 and you’ll see that they sound very much the same, although if you look closely, there are some differences between the two stories.

Luke 4:31-37

And He came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and He was teaching them on the Sabbath; ³² and they were amazed at His teaching, for His message was with authority. ³³ In the synagogue there was a man possessed by the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, ³⁴ “Let us alone! What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!” ³⁵ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be quiet and come out of him!” And when the demon had thrown him down in their midst, he came out of him without doing him any harm. ³⁶ And amazement came upon them all, and they began talking with one another saying, “What is this message? For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits and they come out.” ³⁷ And the report about Him was spreading into every locality in the surrounding district.

We have the reading of these two accounts of the same story. Obviously the story is located in the synagogue and the setting is Capernaum. It’s the Sabbath day, and of course, they are in the Synagogue for the Sabbath. Luke doesn’t tell us that they were actually in the Synagogue but I assume that there could have been some rumors going around ... remember, Jesus had come from Nazareth recently and He was in the Synagogue there, where they had even tried to kill Him because He announced He was the Messiah, fulfilling of the Scripture that was recorded in Isaiah 61. So, I wonder why, in Capernaum which was not that far away, why they would even let Him *into* the Synagogue after the experience in Nazareth.

But another amazing aspect of the story is the presence of this demon-possessed man who was *in the Synagogue*. I wouldn't think that would happen every Sabbath day. Anyway, this demon-possessed man shows up in the assembly on the Sabbath day.

Mark says that they *went into* Capernaum, and Luke says he *came down* to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. **Luke** puts the story **after** the incident in Nazareth where they tried to kill Him. **Mark** puts the even after the calling of Simon, Andrew, James and John that we studied last week. "**They**" went down is likely indicating that these four disciples were with Him on this occasion. Luke is correct in saying that Jesus came *down* to Capernaum since Nazareth was in the hill country and Capernaum was by the lake. So it would be geographically up from Nazareth but it would be coming down from the hills into the lower area of the lake. Both agree that He was teaching. This was the focus of the group until the demon-possessed man came, and then the response was 'amazement'.

They were amazed at His teaching; they were amazed at the depth of what He said. It struck them; it astounded them. They were stunned at His teaching. I have had that happen on some occasions in my life where I sat at the feet of certain individuals and I was 'amazed' at their teaching; I was amazed at how they opened their Bible up and helped me to understand it even better. So, I could see where Jesus could have, not just because of His eloquence, although he may have been eloquent, but *because* of His understanding of things and the way He put things together and it made a lot of difference the way it struck them.

What struck the crowd was that He spoke with 'authority'. Mark adds that He spoke with authority, 'not as the Scribes had done'. The word for 'authority' is "exousia" (ἐξουσία) in Greek, and is used here, and in various applications in the Scripture. Authority is a good definition here. The same sentiment is expressed in **Matthew 7:28-29** after the Sermon on the Mount where it says that "Jesus spoke as one having authority, not as the Scribes and the Pharisees."

Surely Jesus *had* authority as **Matthew 28:18** says that God **gave** Him all authority in heaven and on earth; but *having* authority and *projecting* authority are *not* the same thing. I give a personality profile to people sometimes, particularly in pre-marital counseling. In that, the Taylor Johnson Analysis Test, it measures nine different categories. One of those categories is the measurement of what is called a "dominant submissive" trait. Dominant doesn't mean domineering; it just means someone who is very confident; and I would imagine if Jesus took this test, He would rate very high in confidence or dominance because Jesus projected an air of being in control of Himself without making people necessarily feel as though He was in control of them. That would be a domineering kind of person. He was sure of Himself because He *knew* where He came from, He *knew* why He was here, and He *knew* who He was ... so He was confident. Jesus wasn't figuring things out like the rest of us are.

This is a key *, I think, to the mind of Christ. We must understand that Jesus had a confidence and authority about Him that. Later Jesus would get into the *nature* of this authority, when we get to Matthew 20.

But the greatest, He says, must be a slave. To *spea*k with authority does not mean to ‘*exercise*’ authority over others as the Gentiles do; but it means to become a servant of all. The Scribes, or the teachers of the Law, were the modern “experts” of the Torah. They studied the commentaries as well; they were consulted when legal questions arose; and they were the authority of the subject of religion. **But Jesus** was the **authority of the will of the Father**. Jesus spoke out of a *relationship*; not out of an *academic expertise* that He had.

Since Jesus **knows** the truth, and has the correct interpretation on *every point*, He can speak with confidence and with authority. Jesus is LORD. The bottom line is **Jesus is LORD**. **John 13:13** says something very telling about this before He washes the disciple’s feet. He says, “You call me Teacher and Lord and you are right for so I am. If then, the Lord and the Teacher washed your feet, you also, should wash one another’s feet.” **Mark 1:23** it says the man in the synagogue had an unclean spirit (πνευματι ακαθαρτω). **Luke 4:33** says the man had a spirit of unclean demons (πνευματι διαμονιου). Those are distinctions made in these two different accounts. So, the question is, what was it that was inside of this man?

There are some preliminary observations that I would make about this. They are not conclusive to everything we could say on the subject, but I want to give you the preliminary observations.

First of all, the word spirit (πνευματι) is used to describe God in **John 4:24** “God is spirit (πνευμα) and those who worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.”

Secondly, the word spirit also is used in reference to man. In **1 Cor. 2:11** it says, “Who know a man other than the spirit (πνευμα) of the man that is within him.”

Thirdly, I don’t know of any place in scripture where the word ‘spirit’ is used *explicitly* to describe an angel, and I will tell you, maybe in a moment, why that is important.

Fourthly, ‘spirit’ and ‘demon’ are used in Luke and are connected to one another. In other words, there is some relationship between the idea of a spirit and a demon. They are two different words in the Greek, but they are connected with one another in **Luke 4:33** (πνευματι διαμονιου).

And then number Five, ‘demons’ or ‘unclean spirits’ can also ‘be had by’ or be ‘in possession of’ a human. In other words, a person can ‘have’ an unclean spirit; or a person can be ‘possessed by’ an unclean spirit; a spirit can inhabit a person’s body and have some control over the individual.

Number Six is: these entities which are inside this man are able to ‘speak’.

Number Seven: they can also ‘think’; they are not just inanimate. They have some ability to reason.

Number Eight: they can also ‘hear’ because they can carry on a conversation with Jesus, in this case.

Number Nine: they can do bodily harm to the person who they possess.

Number Ten: they can submit to greater authority ... and here, that authority is Jesus, and not other men.

So, what does **unclean** mean here? The Analytical Greek Lexicon describes it as being 'impure'; it can mean lewd or foul. So how did this person, or the spirit within the person; how did it get to be 'unclean'? The word is used in Acts 10 to describe food, by way of meaning that Gentiles. In the mind of Peter, they were unclean people and God used food to get across a point about how something can be unclean. When Peter saw the "critters" (as I call them), the animals in that sheet, he referred to them as '**common**' and '**unclean**'. The **voice** told him that these had been cleansed by God, Himself and that it was okay for Peter to kill and eat the things inside the sheet.

The Jewish dietary laws given by God in the Old Testament were restrictive regarding the type of food that Jews could eat. This food was unholy; it was unsanctified food. The food was this way, not inherently but by 'declaration of God'; and He could and He did later declare those same foods as being 'clean' (see **Mark 7:19**). Also, **1 Timothy 4:4-5** says "for everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude; ⁵ for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer."

God declared all foods to be clean and to be eaten and enjoyed. In this context, the determining factor of whether something is clean or unclean is the idea of sanctification. An unclean spirit must be an unsanctified spirit; an unholy spirit, if you will...a lost spirit, one that is separated from God. The demons ask to go into the pigs on one occasion in **Matthew 8:28**. They wanted to go into an 'unclean' animal...an animal that was considered to be unclean under the law.

So, how does the spirit become unclean? It must either be **created** that way, or it **became that way** because of some decision or declaration that was made. It is **MY belief**, that the unclean spirit is the spirit of a lost person who has died, and for some **unknown** reason to me, roams the lower realms of the earth; and attaches himself to certain people (and in some cases even children) for the purposes of 'doing them harm' OR 'to have a place to live'. Now again, I'm sure this sounds a little crazy to us, but that is the best conclusion I can draw based on the evidence that I have. I might also say that in doing some research on this, for those of you who know who Alexander Campbell is; he also came to the same conclusion.

The word demon, (δαιμονίου), can mean a god (little 'g' of course) or it could mean a 'superior power'. In the New Testament it is usually talked of as a **malignant demon**. Now, some people associate that with this being a fallen angel. Again, I see no reason to believe that the demons or the unclean spirits were fallen angels. Now, there **are** fallen angels and they do serve Satan because he, himself is a fallen angel; but I do not believe that the angels and the demons are the same kind of beings. I believe that they're distinct from one another, although they are "on the same team" if you will.

Here are a few of the accounts where demons are referred to otherwise:

In **Matthew 8:31**, we have two men who have multiple demons. They were cast out and went into a herd of pigs which we recently talked about. They *knew* who Jesus was; that He was the Son of God. They knew that they were destined to be tormented by Him and they caused the two possessed men to be exceedingly violent.

In **Mark 5:12** here one man is referred to as having an unclean spirit. This is the same story but in Mark's account there is only one man that is referred to as having the same problem. But in this story, this one man is unable to be bound by a chain, he could break the chains to pieces, no one could subdue him, he cried out, he cut himself with stones, but the man bowed before Jesus when he approached and called Him the Son of the Most High God. He said, "I implore you by God, do not torment me ...". His name was Legion because there were many spirits in this man; he spoke with one voice though, and actually the word "demons" is not even found in the text...it says, "devils". In the New American Standard Bible it puts *demons* in italics because the word is not found there.

In **Luke 8:29-31**, one man is there. He is naked and living in the tombs calling, "**Jesus, Son of the Most High God. I beg You, do not torment me.**" The unclean spirit seized him, the man who was possessed, and many times he broke chains and drove the man into the desert. His name was legion because there were many demons that possessed this man; and here Jesus commands him to depart into the abyss, a deep bottomless {or immeasurable} pit.

This word, abyss is used in **Romans 10:7** of ascending into the abyss in order to bring Christ up. In **Revelation 9:11** it is used to describe the place of the 'angel of the abyss'. The angel is named Abaddon or Apollyon depending on the Hebrew or the Greek translation. It says that locusts come out of this place of the abyss to torment those who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads, and they torment them for five months (see v. 10). In **Rev. 11:7** the beast comes up out of the abyss to kill the two witnesses who later were resurrected by God. In **Rev. 17:8** it mentions the beast coming up out of the abyss to go to destruction. Then, in Chapter 20, verses 1 and 3 the angel of the abyss has the **key** to the abyss and he puts Satan there for 1,000 years in order to prevent Satan from deceiving the nations.

All of this is really interesting. The abyss is not a place where Satan is going to be kept forever. He is only put there, kind of like 'in prison' and later he will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone.

So in these two stores that we are studying tonight, the synagogue in Capernaum, the demon identifies Jesus as two things: '*Jesus of Nazareth*', and '*the Holy One of God*'. The demon recognized the dual nature of Jesus as man **and** God. Does this indicate that those in the spirit world are able to discern truth in ways that the living cannot, and if these are the spirits of evil men who have died, how did they get their understanding of Jesus' identity?

Other passages also show that they had this kind of knowledge. In **James 2:19** James says, "**You believe that God is one ... You do well. The demons also believe and they shudder.**" And again, how did they get this belief, this knowledge or this understanding? The demons think Jesus' purpose is to destroy them and it indicates that there may be more than one demon in this man in the synagogue.

The word 'destroy' means to destroy utterly, to kill, to bring to naught, and to make void. It also means to 'perish'. Jesus says later on in **Matthew 10:28**, "Do not fear those who can kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell." So Jesus does have the power to destroy people and destroy demons in Hell.

Although there is much I don't understand about all of this, it confirms the message of Paul in Ephesians 6; that *we are engaged in a great battle with spiritual forces of evil*. This battle is serious and it involves entities bent on our destruction and control. Jesus, our champion, proved on Earth that none of these enemies; whether Satan himself, nor the demons that plagued man, were any match for Him. He was able to conquer. They *feared* Jesus. They knew He was capable of bringing about their utter destruction. It is humbling for me to know that I fight on His side, but bring so little fire power to the table or to the battle. I am a sitting duck unless I am with Jesus. I am nothing without Him ... totally unarmed and unprepared. Within the mind of Christ is all the wisdom necessary to win the war. I must trust this wisdom and I must fight on.

So Jesus' command to this unclean spirit was in the form of a rebuke. Jesus says to him, "Be quiet. Come out of him!" It's the same in both Mark and Luke. It is not God's will that Jesus be revealed as the Messiah by the testimony of demons. That's one of the reasons Jesus told him to be quiet. Matthew 16 says that it is going to be revealed by God Himself and those who He chose to reveal Him.

Why does the 'coming out' of this man seem so violent? Why doesn't the demon just quietly slip away? Luke said the demon threw the man down although it didn't seem to do the man any permanent harm. Mark said that the unclean spirit threw him into convulsions and he cried out with a loud voice...literally 'throwing him'. So, there does seem to be some violence in this although it doesn't seem to have done any damage to the person who was indwelt by this demon.

Mark 9:20 when referring to this says the boy was thrown into a convulsion. ¹⁷ *And one of the crowd answered Him, "Teacher, I brought You my son, possessed with a spirit which makes him mute; ¹⁸ and whenever it seizes him, it slams him to the ground and he foams at the mouth, and grinds his teeth and stiffens out. I told Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not do it."* ¹⁹ *And He answered them and said, "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!"* ²⁰ *They brought the boy to Him. When he saw Him, immediately the spirit threw him into a convulsion, and falling to the ground, he began rolling around and foaming at the mouth."* Verse 26 says it was a terrible convulsion. After coming out of the boy, he seemed like a corpse ... like he was dead.

In the same story recorded in **Luke 9:39** we learned that the boy "*suddenly screams, foams at the mouth, it mauls him and threw him into a convulsion.*" All of this seems like a sort of torture inflicted on those who are indwelt by the demon. And this is interesting: the demons that fear torture by Jesus are those who torture those they possess! In some cases they seem able to cause the person bodily harm. The demons are not stable; they are afraid. They **know** they're destined for the abyss and for torture and for ultimate destruction.

This conflict between evil and good, God and Satan, the spiritual forces of evil, the rest of her offspring (according to Revelation 12), **is so very real** and should it be any *surprise* that we are offered a sampling of the range of possible abilities that Jesus has ... even the control of demons...the ability to command them with His word. And with this, the Word spread throughout all of the surrounding sections.

Now, I want to cover one more section and this is found in **Mark 1:29-34** for another story.

“And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon’s mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever; and immediately they spoke to Jesus about her. ³¹ And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she waited on them.

³² When evening came, after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. ³³ And the whole city had gathered at the door. ³⁴ And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was.”

This story is also repeated back in **Matthew 8:14-17**

When Jesus came into Peter’s home, He saw his mother-in-law lying sick in bed with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she got up and waited on Him.

¹⁶ When evening came, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed; and He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were ill. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: “He Himself took our infirmities and carried away our diseases.” So this is the account in Matthew.

In this account, the facts are (1) *Matthew* mentions that Jesus was in Peter’s house. (2) His mother-in-law has a fever, there is a healing that takes place, and then (3) his mother-in-law got up and waited on them, and then (4) it talks about the demon-possessed and the ill who came to Him after that occasion. (5) And then there is the quote from **Isaiah 53:4**. So we are going to look at each one of those.

Mark says that this happened (1) after they were in the Synagogue where they healed the demon-possessed man and (2) that it was Simon and Andrew’s house that they went to and (3) that James and John were there. So we see the four disciples that He had called thus far. He hadn’t called all the apostles yet. (4) Then it says they spoke with Jesus about the mother-in-law being ill and (5) that He raised her by taking her by the hand, and (6) she waited on them, and (7) eventually people came to the door that evening; and (8) He healed those who were demon possessed and were ill. Then it says the whole city gathered at the door and (9) that Jesus did not permit the demons to speak because they knew who He was.

Now let’s get the facts about what Luke says about this in **Luke 4:38-41**.

“Then He got up and left the synagogue, and entered Simon’s home. Now Simon’s mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Him to help her. ³⁹ And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her; and she immediately got up and waited on them. ⁴⁰ While the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on each one of them, He was healing them. ⁴¹ Demons also were coming out of many, shouting, “You are the Son of God!” But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ.”

Let's get the facts of what Luke says. (1) Luke also says that this happened after they left the Synagogue and (2) he also mentions that they were at Simon's home (not mentioning Andrew). (3) He says *they made the request of Jesus on behalf of the mother-in-law*. (4) It says that Jesus stood over her, (5) that He rebuked the fever and it left her, and (6) then she got up and waited on them. (7) While the sun was setting He healed the sick of various diseases and also the demon-possessed people. (8) It says He laid his hands on every one of them (9) and then the demons did cry out that He was the Son of God. (10) Jesus rebuked them and did not allow them to speak because they knew that He was the Christ.

These are the facts, with a little bit of differences in these accounts, but nothing that is contradictory. So we have a lot of details among these three accounts. Chronologically we see that the day was very full for Jesus. He had been teaching in the Synagogue, casting out the demons, and now He's gone to the home of Simon and the other disciples which was about two or three miles away from where He was in the Synagogue. He heals his mother-in-law and then heals all those who came to Him. Jesus ministered for long hours that day and surely the day seemed long to Him. There must have been much rejoicing in the village because there were a lot of good things happening for the families that were being healed.

I wonder if there was any talk about this visitor who had come recently from Nazareth where there had been an attempt to assassinate Him. I would imagine that there was a lot of stir going on here in Capernaum and Bethsaida.

Mark indicates that Peter and Andrew shared a house with their families. There is no indication of the size of this home and remember, Jesus had a place in Capernaum too. Mark says that James and John were there. This was a Saturday afternoon, with a meal after being at the Synagogue. Whose idea was it? Was it part of the idea that Jesus had for discipling? It was certainly a demonstration of hospitality on the part of Peter which he will refer to later on in **1 Peter 4:9** where he says 'we must show hospitality'.

Was Jesus deliberately setting a precedent for us to follow modeling an organic approach to 'doing church' gathering in his home? Is this a precursor to 'dinner on the grounds' because they had a meal prepared, or was this just simply Jesus spending time with His disciples?

It is clear from all of these accounts that the mother-in-law of Peter indicates that Peter was married, and she was ill with a fever. Luke says that it was a high fever, and Luke probably would because he was a physician. Now, if she had a fever, she was likely contagious ... (that's my layman's view), so why did they have a lot of guests over with a sick woman in the house? Did they even know about the spread of disease? Of course, Jesus was no ordinary guest. Mark and Luke both say the disciples spoke to Jesus about the woman or even made the request that Jesus would heal her. Jesus did not just 'discover' her on His own. Was his visit really about the healing of Peter's mother-in-law? Did she have a fever when Peter and Andrew left to go to the Synagogue that morning? Did Peter's wife or Andrew's wife stay behind to care for her? Were there any kids in the house? Regardless of when they knew that she was first sick, when did they intend to involve Jesus in her healing?

The process of healing involved several things. Jesus stood over her; it says He took her by the hand, according to Mark. Luke says that Jesus **rebuked** the fever. The word ‘rebuke’ means to set a value on, to assess a penalty. He basically alleged that the fever was a criminal that had invaded her. Jesus reprovved, chided or censured the fever; admonished it strongly. In **Matthew 19:13** the same word is used when the disciples **rebuked** the children who were brought to Jesus. The thief on the cross **rebuked** the other thief in **Luke 23:39-41**. In **Luke 17:3** it says if your brother sins against you, you can go and **rebuke** him intensely, so these are the different ways the word rebuke is used in Scripture.

Did Simon’s mother-in-law feel hot to Jesus touch; did she return to normal the second that He touched her? These may be trivial questions, but just try to imagine what Jesus actually experienced that day. It says ‘the woman *arose*’ which is the same word to describe Jesus’ *resurrection*. She *arose* and she served them, obviously a great picture of Jesus Himself.

The significance of “when evening came” is interesting because it is ‘then’ that the people came to be healed by Him seeming to wait until the end of the Sabbath day which ended at sundown of that day. This would become an issue for many people about ‘healing on the Sabbath’ day. So Jesus had no problem healing on the Sabbath; He healed Peter’s mother-in-law before the evening came, and He had also cast out the demon earlier that day in the Synagogue. Jesus will address that later on. *How many divine blessings, I wonder, are forfeited, or at least delayed, by our man-made rules* about when you can do this and when you can do that?

Did Jesus ask them why they waited until the sun went down to bring the sick and possessed? Surely He must have thought of it. Did He shake His head in disbelief that these people would be so steeped in their traditions that they had to wait until the sun went down to show up? Remember He had also cast out that demon in the Synagogue earlier that day; nothing was said on *that* occasion; in fact, they were *amazed* by it.

Through these pieces of evidence we can construct a likely scene, and by doing so, begin to re-experience what Jesus did on that day and get insight into His thinking. He went against the flow of culture and religion in areas where He needed to demonstrate that *people’s needs and their value trumped man-made rules*. Society had drifted ever so slowly into this place that they probably didn’t even realize where they were and how they got there. But these rules were interfering with Jesus’ work. He chose to expose the rules by ignoring them, and dealing with the reaction as it seemed important. There is no indication that he said anything to those who showed up after sundown, but later, in chapter 12, there will be much said about this.

On this occasion, the demons knew that He was the Christ, the Messiah. It is still amazing to me how much more astute these demons were than the average Jewish person of Jesus’ day ... or the average person even of our day ... this knowledge and realization; this free confession of the demons; these doomed creatures who confess so freely that Jesus is the Son of God. Though the spirits spoke these things within someone else’s body, they were still confessing who Jesus was! Perhaps once they left their original bodies, if they were in fact dead people who left their bodies, they obtained a knowledge that they were unable to obtain while in their own bodies. And once they had it, it was not lost because they re-entered someone else’s body; and they were able to speak then.

In **Matthew 8:17** Matthew introduces a commentary on what Jesus was doing after the sun went down in Capernaum at Simon's house. Matthew tells us that this was the *fulfillment of a prophecy* based on **Isaiah 53:4**. It says, "He himself took out infirmities and carried away our diseases." Now you will recognize that Isaiah 53 was a Messianic prophecy, primarily about the crucifixion of Jesus.

The question that arises regarding this verse is, 'Did Jesus provide physical healing from His atonement on the cross?' There is some excellent work out there on the web about this because it is an interesting question. There is an article written by a man named Richard Mayhue which is called, "*For What Did Christ Atone?*" It is dealing with the question about whether or not Jesus had to die in order to forgiveness us of our sins.

Our text, if you combine with it **1 Peter 2:24-25**, "...and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. ²⁵ For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls" both accent Isaiah's prophecy on this matter.

The fact that Jesus did come to prove that He had the power to conquer anything that is of *sin* and their *consequences* or *effects* was important in establishing His credentials as the Son of God. Illnesses and demon possessions were part of the curse that came about because of sin, and Jesus did come to deal with sin and its effects upon people. The fact that He *could* do this does not mean that He would in *every* case heal *every* disease on earth or cast out *every* demon. Had He intended to do this; certainly we would see a much different world today; and not just limited to Christians and their help, for the atonement is offered freely to all. Jesus healed many on earth who were not, at that time, saved.

Isaiah 53, in the New American Standard Key Word Study Bible, there is quite a treatment of this subject. The writer emphasizes Jesus being our 'first fruits', securing for us in His death and resurrection, the *immortality of the body*. Romans deals with this in **Rom. 8:23** "And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body." This is also in **1 Corinthians 15** and in **2 Corinthians 5:4**. But though this is true, it is **also** true that sometimes New Testament writers lift Old Testament language from its immediate context and apply it literally to a specific situation.

Here, the 'face value' words of Isaiah would take our infirmities and carry our diseases *was being lived out*, that day, in Capernaum when Jesus reached into their lives and lifted out their infirmities and carrying away their diseases.

Did the cross *have* to happen in order for these diseases to be healed?

Jesus also forgave sin before He died, but He had to die in order for sins to be forgiven. Just speculating, but had Jesus not gone through with the cross, would all these infirmities and diseases have returned on these people? Of course, everyone who was healed received only temporary health. They all eventually died of something.

Burdens lifted may return. Even sins forgiven may come back to be committed again. We pray for people to be healed of cancer to see it disappear and to return later. I am not sure what all this means other than permanent removal of sickness and sin will not come until the resurrection of our bodies when death itself is destroyed.

Perhaps the present system of all the prayers answered 'yes' and 'no' simply express the two realities. The 'yes forever' is coming and the 'no now' is the present lot. The fact is that Jesus came as a healer, and the inclusion of **Isaiah 53:4** in this context is simply meant to convey this idea. So when they were checking the credentials of the person who claimed to be the Christ, He had to be able to heal sicknesses and He had to be able to cast out demons. *Jesus could; and He did; and therefore He must be the One.*

Oh, for the day when the stress of disease and possession of demons are gone forever.

That concludes that section for our study on The Mind of Christ.

I hope you have followed along today. I think that one of the advantages is that if I have gone to fast you can pause it and you can go back and look up the Scriptures; you can go back to repeat it. Thank you for joining us and I hope that you will continue to study The Mind of Christ on your own.

