

# Spiritual Healing

A Sermon by Rev. Joel Christian Glenn

8 March 2026

## Children's Talk: Deaf and Mute

Today we are going to learn about one of the Lord's miracles. What are some of the miraculous things the Lord did? The one I want to look at involves a man who had two problems that were connected with each other:

Then they brought to Him one who was deaf and who spoke with difficulty, and they begged Him to put His hand on him. And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers in his ears, and He spat and touched his tongue. Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."

Immediately his ears were opened, and the bond of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke rightly. (Mark 7:32-35)

So what was wrong with the man? He was deaf, which means that he could not hear. If you couldn't hear, what are some of the things you would miss? Music, laughter, conversations, instructions, the sounds of nature, etc. One thing that the man would not have been able to hear that would have been very sad is the teachings of Jesus! Not many people could read then, and they didn't have a good system of sign language. Wouldn't it be so frustrating to be so close to the Lord but not able to understand anything He said!

Most of us are lucky enough to be able to hear with our ears; we can hear the Lord's teachings; but we are sometimes deaf in a different way: when we don't pay attention to what the Lord says it is like we are not hearing Him. I'm sure all of you have sometimes heard your mom calling you, but were so focused on what you were doing that you didn't really hear her. It's not enough to just listen, we have to pay attention.

But the man also was unable to speak well. That's related to the first: when someone cannot hear, it is really hard for them to speak too. They don't know what words should sound like, and they cannot hear themselves speaking to tell if they are speaking well themselves. When we don't listen to the Lord, it makes it really hard

for us to talk right to other people, to use kind and respectful words and to share with them the helpful things we might have learned from the Lord. Paying attention to the Lord is not something we should do just for ourselves; we should do it so that we can help other people too.

The Lord healed both for the man: He touched his ears so he could hear well and his tongue so he could speak well. And the Lord can help us pay attention better to His words, and then help us share those words with the people around us.

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When the Lord lived in the world 2000 or so years ago, He seemed to care a lot about healing people who were sick. When John sent two of his followers to look into the work that Jesus was doing, Jesus specifically pointed to how He was healing the sick:

Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them." (Matthew 11:4-5)

Five of the six signs that Jesus mentions are about healing people of physical difficulties! Now on the one hand this makes sense: Jesus loved people, and He was able to heal them, so why wouldn't He? On the other hand, He healed only a tiny fraction of people who were diseased or sick. Consider that He never left the region of Israel and His public ministry lasted only three years. What of the millions, and even billions, of people who were never able to meet Jesus and find healing from Him? We have to look deeper to find an answer. Jesus did not heal only for the sake of fixing the physical problems of a small handful of people; in fact that was not even close to the main reason He healed. Jesus healed people's sicknesses to show us something incredibly important about the nature of God and what He can and will do for us spiritually. These physical healings represented the very real ways that God can heal each and every one of us spiritually. As explained in the Teachings of the New Church:

Since diseases represented the iniquities and evils of spiritual life, therefore the diseases which the Lord healed signified liberation from various kinds of evil and falsity which infested the church and the human race, and which would have led to spiritual death.... Therefore the Lord's miracles consisted especially in the healing of diseases. (*Secrets of Heaven* §8364)

So today we are going to dive deeper into three stories of the Lord healing people and how they relate to our own lives.

## 1. No Doctors Could Heal: All the wrong kinds of help

The first healing is the woman with a flow of blood who touched the Lord's garments. We read of her that,

Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse. (Mark 5:25-26)

Here was a woman, sick for twelve years, who seemingly had tried everything to get better but with no success. No matter what the doctors tried to do she only got worse.

When she heard about Jesus, she went to Him, with such confidence that she believed only touching His clothes would heal her; when she did so,

Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction. (Mark 5:29)

When Jesus noticed her He commended her for her faith and confirmed that she was healed:

And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction." (Mark 5:34)

If this healing represents a spiritual kind of healing that is available to all of us, what might it mean to have a sickness that no doctor can heal over many years, but that the Lord heals right away?

I think that perhaps this stands for those times when we have a spiritual problem, and look in all the wrong places for a solution. This is like the woman going to doctor after doctor, none of whom could actually heal her. Illustrate with a spelling error: fix the error, rather than destroying or hiding the work.

Let's say you break a rule and then someone else calls you out in front of everyone. You'd probably feel some combination of guilty, angry, and embarrassed. How would you try to fix that?

- Coverup: Lie and deny it; and just hope that no one can prove it
- Get even: turn the tables on the person who called you out and accuse them of wrongdoing.
- Avoid risk: make yourself small and resolve never to rock the boat or trust another person again.

None of these actually resolve spiritual problems. What we actually need is to go to the Lord, listen to what He has to say, and then act on it.

- Instead of hiding our mistakes, we need to admit them and take responsibility.
- Instead of getting even, we need to find a way to forgive those who have wronged us.
- Instead of avoiding risks, we need to remember that trying to do what is right matters even when we mess up or things go wrong.

The Lord has ways of helping us to fix the root of the problem, not just cover them over or make us feel better in the short term.

## **2. Raised from the Dead: Beyond all help**

Our second story of healing is perhaps the most miraculous: raising someone from the dead. There are a few instances of this, but we will focus on one from Mark, in which a man named Jairus asked the Lord to come heal his daughter who was on the point of death. Unfortunately, Jesus did not seem to come in time: while He was on the way,

some came from the ruler of the synagogue's house who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" (Mark 5:35)

Notice how they think that since the daughter has died, there is nothing more Jesus could do. When Jesus did arrive and continued to offer hope, they did not believe:

When He came in, He said to them, "Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him. (Mark 5:39-40)

They were so sure that Jesus could do nothing, they mocked Him. And yet, of course, Jesus could still do something for the girl:

Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, "*Talitha, cumi*," which is translated, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." Immediately the girl arose and walked, for she was twelve years of age. (Mark 5:41-42)

When everyone thought the girl was beyond all help, even from the Lord, the Lord could still in fact bring her back to life.

We sometimes think that we too are beyond all help, even from the Lord; that there is no point in trying because we already know that nothing will make a difference: we can become so set in our ways, so used to feeling, thinking, and behaving in a certain way it feels impossible to change. At times like this, we feel like "this is just who I am, so why bother trying to change?" Illustrated with a stuck jar: continue trying to open it even beyond when it feels impossible to open.

Maybe you just cannot stop yourself from losing control when you get angry with your siblings when they just do not listen to you or mess with your things. And you've done that so many times that think you'll never be someone who can be patient when things are frustrating. The problem with this attitude is that if we think things are so bad that they will never change, and we give up, the Lord won't be able to help us. It takes a huge amount of faith and trust to believe that the Lord can help us become better people. One of the ways the Lord helps us is by giving us a love that is worth changing for. With the things I've thought were impossible to change about myself, when I've realized that that thing was hindering me from treating the

people I loved right I had a new and deeper reason to change, and to work even on what seemed unchangeable.

### **3. Cleansing Leprosy with a Touch: Undeserving of help**

The last story of healing has to do with leprosy. Leprosy was a skin disease that was treated very seriously. In the religious beliefs of the day having leprosy rendered someone unclean, and so unworthy of being part of normal society (cf. Leviticus 13:45-46). Lepers could not live among other people. They were outcasts. It was unthinkable to spend time with a leper, much less come into direct contact with one. The belief was that if a person touched a leper they would become unclean as well. Which makes it all the more meaningful in how Jesus healed a leper:

Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You can make me clean."

Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed. (Mark 1:40-41)

The way that lepers were treated, isolated and rejected must have filled them with shame and a sense of worthlessness. Yet the Lord was willing to cleanse the leper; He did not reject Him because of His uncleanness; in fact He reached out and touched him in order to heal him. He was not put off by the man's uncleanness. Illustration of a trash bag: the trash can be so filthy that it is hard to engage with; but it's absolutely worth it and will make things cleaner.

There are times when we feel incredible shame, guilt, and worthlessness over things we have done or even just who we think we are. In this state it is easy to think that we are undeserving of help.

- When you've made the same mistake over and over again. The first or second time was alright, but now it is way too embarrassing to ask for help again.

- Other people are able to make friends, so I should be able to without help. No one else needs to ask for help, so I can't let anyone know that I need help.
- The fault feels too bad to have, e.g. Extreme jealousy or anger feels shameful to admit to having. Only a terrible person would be jealous when their younger sibling is born and gets all the attention!

The Lord shows us that this attitude is not true. He was willing to reach out to touch and heal the outcast and unclean leper; and no matter what you have done or been through, the Lord is willing to reach out to heal you.

### **Conclusion**

The people of Jesus's time and place could see the many healings that He performed. We on the other hand have a chance to bear witness to even greater healings, healings that touch our hearts and minds, our very lives.

1. When we are like the woman that no doctor could heal, and think that nothing we try works, the Lord has real solutions to our spiritual problems to offer.
2. When we are like those around the girl who had died and believe that we are beyond all help, that there's no point in trying because nothing will make a difference, the Lord says there is always a way for things to be restored and fixed.
3. When we are like the unclean and outcast leper, isolated and feeling ourselves worthless and undeserving of help, the Lord still reaches out with all His power, willing and able to help us no matter what.