

# “Speaking More than Mere Words”

## Matthew Chapter 9

Everyone has heard that actions speak louder than words. Or maybe you have heard a picture (actions) paints a thousand words. It is true that mere words are often not enough. Hearing someone say I love you while looking away or at the ground can leave us a little underwhelmed.

Jesus in this chapter will do things that will establish profound truths about Him and His kingdom. This is a wonderful chapter because not only do His actions speak louder than words, but Jesus also speaks words to make sure you and I are clear as to the truth He is conveying

Mat 9:1

### 1) The Messiah’s Authority vs 1-8

Jesus Forgives Sin

Getting into a boat, Jesus crossed over *the sea* and came to His own city.

- Jesus and His disciples return to Capernaum (Mark 2:1)

Mat 9:2

And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven."

- Mark 2:1-12 and Luke 5:17-26 is the same account with a little more detail.
  - Jesus was teaching in Peter’s home and it was packed out.
  - Some scribes were there.
  - There was a man who was a paralytic. He had 4 friends who were trying to get him to this meeting to be healed. They couldn’t get in because of the crowd. So they went on the roof and dug through the roof and let the man down in front of Jesus.
- Seeing their faith - This is remarkable. Jesus is impressed with the faith of the friends. (Mark writes there were 4) These four had a faith that had action and effort.
  - They agreed together to do something.
  - They had to GO get their friend.
  - They had to take him and carry him.
  - They didn’t give up when arriving at a crowded house.
  - They had faith to do more than the majority of people.
  - They were unconventional and willing to risk trouble.
  - They had a great desperation to get their friend to Jesus.
- After all that effort Jesus said, "Take courage son. Your sins are forgiven"
  - **Courage** - It does take courage to be a Christian. To live to a different standard to take a stand for righteousness, to rescue others.
  - **Forgiven Sins** - Jesus recognized a greater problem than paralysis. Jesus dealt with the man’s more severe need.
    - **Matthew 18:8** "If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire."
- Everyone was disappointed. You can imagine the four friends. "No! Heal Him!!" You can imagine Peter and his wife, "Look at my roof!" The crowd was expecting something more exciting. And the scribes were angered for the blasphemy.
- Everyone but one. The Man Who Was Forgiven. For the first time, someone dealt with him as a person. Someone dealt with the real issue that every man has. For so long everybody looks at his disability and tries to fix that or judges him for that. But Jesus dealt with the man as he would with any man. His heart.
  - Jesus saw his anger at the unfairness of his troubles. Jesus saw his loathing of those who looked down their nose at him. Jesus saw his hatred for the faith healers that left him feeling he didn’t have enough faith. Jesus saw his sinful heart that paralyzed him from the soul.
  - This man knew the healing of his soul. The bitter taste of his own heart was changed with a new heart. Freedom from his foul heart granted hope for a different cheerful disposition regardless of his physical condition.

Mat 9:3

And some of the scribes said to themselves, "This fellow blasphemes."

Mat 9:4

And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?"

- The scribes correctly recognized the reality of what Jesus said, but they came to the wrong conclusion.
- The scribes that only God can forgive sins. Their thoughts were "blasphemy". The word "fellow" or in KJV "man" is not in the original. (notice that this word is italicized) Of course it was directed towards Jesus but it was the issue that Jesus just claimed the role of God. This was blasphemy.
- I do not believe that Jesus is scolding the scribes unto damnation here. I believe Jesus is very consistent when he ministers to mankind. Jesus deals with the heart of the man.

- He did with the paralyzed man.
- In Mark 10:17-23 He does with the rich young ruler.
- He does with the scribes. "Thinking evil in your hearts"
- He does with you and me
- Mark 7:20-23 "He was saying, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.""
- Jesus isn't condemning the scribes. He is taking them to the first step of salvation. They needed to recognize their need. That they DO have an evil heart.

Mat 9:5 "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, and walk'?"

- The scribes and Pharisees loved this kind of debate. This was the process of learning for these religious lawyers. To pose a question that traps you into a moral dilemma.
- To you and me it may seem that it is easier to say your sins are forgiven. To the scribe both are impossible with man.
- It seems easier to say your sins are forgiven because there is no requirement for immediate results. To say get up and walk would require immediate results.

Mat 9:6 "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—then He said to the paralytic, "Get up, pick up your bed and go home."

Mat 9:7 And he got up and went home.

- For the scribe and others Jesus wants them to know something in all this. He is very clear what it is.
- "That you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"
  - Jesus wants them and us to know He has the authority to forgive sin.
  - No other religion has a Messiah who forgives sin. In other religious systems man must achieve a state of worth. Jesus states He can forgive sin.
  - This is a dynamic shift in theology. The sacrificial system for the Jews was payment for appeasement. For sin to be forgiven was unheard of.
  - "ON EARTH" is important that it is an act that occurs on earth. Once a man dies there is the judgment. Hebrews 9:27 "And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment"
    - The opportunity to receive salvation is lost upon death.
    - Jesus offers knowledge of salvation now, today rather than a striving through religious duties without confirmation until the end.
- Jesus proves his authority by telling the man to pick up his bed and walk -- healing the man. The man gets up and walks home.

Mat 9:8 But when the crowds saw *this*, they were awestruck, and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

- When ministry is done right, the response of the people is right.
  - They were awestruck. -- Impressed, not a ho hum routine.
  - They glorified God -- God received praise. Not a man.

The question always arises with faith healers, "Why don't they go and empty out the hospitals?" The same can be asked of Jesus when he forgives sinners. Where should he go to be most effective?

Mat 9:9 2) The Messiah's Target Ministry vs 9-13

Jesus Goes to Sinners

As Jesus went on from there, He saw a man called Matthew, sitting in the tax collector's booth; and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him.

- Matthew gives a very brief account of his calling to follow.
- Matthew was a tax collector.
  - Tax collectors were considered a **traitor**. He collaborated with the oppressive Roman government. They would collect taxes from men with a Roman soldier posted nearby to enforce the taxation.
  - Tax collectors were considered an **extortionist**. Tax collectors were allowed for their own wage to squeeze out more than the required Roman quota.
  - Tax collectors taxed everything. Taxed how many wheels on the cart, and how many fish caught. No doubt Matthew had possibly taxed Peter a time or two.
  - Tax collectors were **hated**.
  - Mark says "Jesus saw a tax gatherer" Luke says "Jesus saw a (KJV) publican" Matthew's account reveals the heart of Matthew. Other people saw him as a sinner, a traitor, a thief but Jesus saw a man.

- Matthew was welcomed to join the group. He was always rejected. Why wouldn't he follow?
  - Luke says He left all.

Mat 9:10 Then it happened that as Jesus was reclining *at the table* in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were dining with Jesus and His disciples.

Mat 9:11 When the Pharisees saw *this*, they said to His disciples, "Why is your Teacher eating with the tax collectors and sinners?"

- So Matthew is so excited for Jesus he throws a party. He invites all his friends. You see the only ones that accepted him were people in the same boat. There were no church goers invited to his party. Only Tax Collectors, Sinners, Publicans.
  - Studies show that the longer a person is a Christian, the fewer non-Christians they will know. This is good and bad.
    - **Good** because the life style so changes that the lifestyle of sinners is no longer attractive and those people seem to drop away.
    - **Bad** because there are less and less people we intimately know to share the gospel with.
- Some religious folks happened by and saw this rabbi, Jesus eating with these awful people. Of course they self righteously judge Jesus by his associations.

Mat 9:12 But when Jesus heard *this*, He said, "*It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick.*"

Mat 9:13 "*But go and learn what this means: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.*"

- Jesus actions speak louder than words, but the Pharisees misinterpret what is being said.
- They think Jesus is whooping it up with sinners.
- Jesus is saying, "*I'm making a house call*". They are sick. They need a physician.
  - The Pharisees should have been doing this. Helping the spiritually sick. But all they did was compare themselves to the sick. It is like a doctor who has studied medicine. Received a degree, has the knowledge to help people and all he does is take care of himself and thank God he is not like those sick people.
  - Jesus is doing what we want the Faith healers to do. He is going to the sick and making them well.
- "*Go and learn what this means*" This is a rabbinic phrase that tells a student who asks a foolish question to think before you speak.
- Jesus quotes Hosea 6:6 The people, especially the Pharisee had forgotten who God was. They followed rituals and did not have a relationship. Hosea was speaking to the leadership. Jesus is too. He is telling them to have compassion for people not professional ministry.
- Jesus was telling them as a rabbi (a teacher) it is about people not reputation and acceptance in the right circles.
- "*...did not come to call the righteous, but sinners...TO REPENTANCE*" It is unfortunate that some manuscripts leave off what sinners are called to. They are called to repentance.

Mat 9:14 3) The Messiah's New Dispensation vs 14-17

Jesus Demands Change

Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?"

- Fasting in the Old Testament was in connection with sorrow of a funeral. (1 Samuel 31:13; 2 Samuel 1:12 + 3:35 + 12:16-23)
- Fasting in the Old Testament was in connection with sorrow over sin. (Ezra 10:6)
- Fasting in the Old Testament was in connection with prayer about sickness. (Psalm 35:13)
- Fasting in the Old Testament was in connection with making prayer effectual. (1 Kings 21:27; Ezra 8:21; Ester 4:16)
- Fasting in the Old Testament was in connection with ritual of remembrance of national calamities.
  - Zechariah 8:19 "*Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'The fast of the fourth, the fast of the fifth, the fast of the seventh and the fast of the tenth months will become joy, gladness, and cheerful feasts for the house of Judah; so love truth and peace.'*"
  - 4<sup>th</sup>, The Golden calf, Moses breaks the tablets of Commandments, Jerusalem was attacked by Nebuchadnezzar
  - 5<sup>th</sup>, The First temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, the Second temple by Titus

- 7<sup>th</sup> the massacre of Jews and the murder of Gedaliah at Mizpah (Jeremiah 40-41)
- 10<sup>th</sup> the beginning of the siege of Nebuchadnezzar
- But in the Zechariah text a prophecy of the Messiah's fast will be different. A fast not of remembering calamities but one of joy, gladness, and cheerfulness.
- There are three groups of people mentioned here about fasting.
  - 1) The Disciples of John - Fasting for repentance. A humbling for the preparation for the coming Messiah
  - 2) The Pharisee - Fasting for a gage of their spirituality. They fast to be seen and to impress others.
  - 3) The disciples of Jesus who were not fasting.
- The Disciples of John came to Jesus. They were good Students of John and were devoted to preparation through fasting. John taught them to prepare the way through repentance. A humbling or afflicting of oneself to know God's will and direction and an observance of the Laws and Traditions. Noticing the discrepancy between the disciples, it was an honest question.
  - When what has been taught to us is different than what we seen in the Bible or in Jesus it is a good idea to ask Jesus why.
  - Jesus responds with 3 pictures.

**Mat 9:15** **Bridegroom** And Jesus said to them, "The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

- Jesus explains the actions of His disciples.
- The bridegroom is with his attendants. The disciples are with Jesus. The bridegroom and attendants are busy at hour making preparations.
- Isaiah 58:6 "Is this not the fast which I choose, To loosen the bonds of wickedness, To undo the bands of the yoke, And to let the oppressed go free And break every yoke?"
  - The disciples are active in this fast Jesus has chosen. Jesus tangible presence does not allow them to be unclear as to His directions. When Jesus will be "taken away" then the disciples, like you and me, will have a little more uncertainty because our flesh will be confusing us at times with regard to Jesus Spirit. Thus then we will need to fast to silence our flesh to hear the Spirit clearly.
- Jesus does not abolish fasting, He suspends it for a time when He will be "taken away" When he will not be with His disciples in a physical manner.
  - Just like the Old Testament fasting during times of uncertainty sorrow or grief, the New Testament believer also have these times. Fasting is still an important discipline for seeking the Lord for direction and instruction.

**Mat 9:16** **Patch** "But no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear results. .

- Jesus explains His actions in not requiring fasting for the harm it will do.
- Putting unshrunk patches of cloth on shrinking cloth will cause an unsightly result.
- At this point, Jesus is transitioning to teach that from here forth there will be a whole new garment. Not a garment of sackcloth and ashes but a garment of righteousness.
  - Ephesians 4:24 "put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth"
  - Isaiah 61:10 "I will rejoice greatly in the LORD, My soul will exult in my God; For He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels."

**Mat 9:17** **Wineskin** "Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."

- Jesus explains His requirement of the fast for a new entity - the Church
- New wine is still in its fermenting stage. In this process gasses are released. New wine fermenting gasses will cause the soft pliable new wineskins to stretch. Once these have been stretched they cannot (should not) be stretched further, for they will burst.
- Jesus is speaking to a new wine skin He will pour His spirit into. The church.
  - Jesus promised to the disciples the Gift of the Father. They were to wait in Jerusalem for this Gift. (Acts 1:4)
  - On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples and the Church was born. (Acts 2)
- Not only is Jesus promising a New wineskin, the Church, but He is promising that BOTH the old and the new are preserved.

- The New dispensation is not discarding the Jews but a outworking through a different entity. The Church. Remember the Church in its origin was Jewish.

Mat 9:18 **4) The Messiah's Motivator** vs 18-34

Jesus Responds to Faith

While He was saying these things to them, a *synagogue* official came and bowed down before Him, and said, "My daughter has just died; but come and lay Your hand on her, and she will live."

Mat 9:19 Jesus got up and *began* to follow him, and *so did* His disciples.

- Jairus' Daughter -Part 1
- Luke 8 and Mark 5 provide greater detail of this incident.
- What is striking here is this man is a ruler of the synagogue. He was a logistics officer who opened up and locked up the synagogue and kept the schedule and invited various rabbis to speak.
- Also, His daughter is dead. Mark 5 says that at first when Jesus began to go with him the daughter was at the point of death. Then friends came to tell Jairus that his daughter had died.

In the meantime,

Mat 9:20 And a woman who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years, came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak;

Mat 9:21 for she was saying to herself, "If I only touch His garment, I will get well."

Mat 9:22 But Jesus turning and seeing her said, "Daughter, take courage; **your faith has made you well.**"  
At once the woman was made well.

- Again there is more detail in Luke 8 and Mark 5.
- Matthew condenses these accounts. Matthew is showing that Jesus fulfills the prophecy of the Messiah by healing, raising the dead and casting out demons.
- But he also stresses here in verse 22 and again in verse 29 that it is in response to FAITH.
  - This woman has an issue of blood for 12 years.
  - Levitical Law (Leviticus 15:19-31) would call her unclean with requirements of isolation and ritual for cleansing.
  - Mark 5 says that she had spent all she had looking for a cure.
- It was the woman who believed her healing was found in getting in touch with Jesus. This is the faith that Jesus noticed.
- She was at once made well. The world with its cures left her without true healing. Jesus provided what the world couldn't.

Back to Jairus' Daughter - Part 2

Mat 9:23 When Jesus came into the official's house, and saw the flute-players and the crowd in noisy disorder,

- The synagogue official was also required to make sure mourners were on sight for his congregation when there was a death. Here the mourners took it upon themselves to come and mourn.

Mat 9:24 He said, "Leave; for the girl has not died, but is asleep." And they *began* laughing at Him.

Mat 9:25 But when the crowd had been sent out, He entered and took her by the hand, and the girl got up.

Mat 9:26 This news spread throughout all that land.

- Jesus was trying to instruct the mourners that their wailing and noise was not necessary. She was only asleep. They laughed at Jesus.
- Jesus put them out. It is like when it was written that Jesus could do no miracle in Nazareth because they did not believe. Here these unbelieving scoffers were put out.
- Again, there is a sense that a believing faith, not unbelief, is a condition for Jesus miracles.
  - In Mark 5:36 when Jairus was told his daughter was dead Jesus turned to Jairus and told him to have faith. "But Jesus, overhearing what was being spoken, said to the synagogue official, "Do not be afraid any longer, only believe.""

Mat 9:27 As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"

Mat 9:28 When He entered the house, the blind men came up to Him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."

Mat 9:29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, "It shall be done to you **according to your faith.**"

Mat 9:30 And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them: "See that no one knows *about this!*"

Mat 9:31 But they went out and spread the news about Him throughout all that land.

- This healing of the Two Blind Men is the 10<sup>th</sup> miracle since the beginning of chapter 8.
  - Even blind men can follow. So it is with our skeptic friends and family that though they cannot see the truth as clearly as some they are capable of following.
  - Sometimes my faith is like these of the blind men. I really cannot see where I am going but I hear the voice of my savior and I blindly follow trusting my life to His care.
- The blind men call out to Jesus and use the Messianic title, "*Son of David*"
- Once again it is stressed the belief is important. A belief in Jesus ability.
  - Jesus specifically asked them if they believe.
    - 1 Their belief caused them to Follow
    - 2 Their belief caused them to Call Out
    - 3 Their belief caused them to Risk Being an Embarrassment.
    - 4 Their belief recognized their Undeserved Nature (Cried for Mercy)
    - 5 Their belief caused them to be Healed.
  - Jesus specifically asked them to tell no one. They told everyone they could.

Mat 9:32 As they were going out, a mute, demon-possessed man was brought to Him.

Mat 9:33 After the demon was cast out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed, *and were saying*, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

Mat 9:34 But the Pharisees were saying, "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons."

- A mute, demon possessed man was brought to Jesus. This one was a difficult case.
  - The Jewish Exorcist considered this impossible. It was required that the demon give his name so the exorcist could cast it out.
  - A mute cannot speak the name.
  - While this was a difficult case for most, for the King of all Kings it is not.
- The demon was cast out and the man spoke and the crowds were amazed. The Pharisees give up all sense of trying to believe. Miracle after miracle, fulfilled prophecy after prophecy they continue to deny Jesus.
- Ultimately, they not only deny Jesus but they attribute to Him demonic source.
  - His miracles were not in question only the source.

Mat 9:35 **5) The Messiah's Mission** vs 35-38

Jesus Calls You and Me to Work

Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

Mat 9:36 Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

Mat 9:37 Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

Mat 9:38 "Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

- In verse 34, Jesus was unfairly and harshly criticized. This did not hinder Him or slow Him down.
- Chapters 8-9 describe 11 miracles. Verse 35 shows us there were many, many more.
- We see the heart of a true spiritual leader.
  - He sees the people
  - He feels compassion.
  - He recognized the need
  - All this before He becomes their teacher, minister, leader.

- Jesus ties man's greatest need to the greatest opportunity. Man's distress is the point of harvest.
- Jesus sees the harvest plentiful, because the need is so great. BUT THERE IS A PROBLEM.
  - There are not enough workers.
  - He asks his disciples to pray for workers in the harvest.
  - \*\* Each of these disciples (except for Judas) will become the workers they are asked to pray for.
    - Are you praying for someone to stand up for righteousness where you work or where you go to school?
    - Are you praying for someone to do the right thing in some situation?
    - Are you praying for someone to speak about Jesus to your friends or family?
- \*\* You are in the right place, but just as the disciples were once in that very place, they themselves became the answer to their prayers.

ARE YOU THE ANSWER TO YOUR OWN PRAYERS?

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