

6-2006

The Healing Ministry of Jesus as Recorded in the Synoptic Gospels

Alvin Lloyd Maragh

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarsrepository.llu.edu/etd>



Part of the [Medical Humanities Commons](#), and the [Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Maragh, Alvin Lloyd, "The Healing Ministry of Jesus as Recorded in the Synoptic Gospels" (2006). *Loma Linda University Electronic Theses, Dissertations & Projects*. 457.

<http://scholarsrepository.llu.edu/etd/457>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by TheScholarsRepository@LLU: Digital Archive of Research, Scholarship & Creative Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Loma Linda University Electronic Theses, Dissertations & Projects by an authorized administrator of TheScholarsRepository@LLU: Digital Archive of Research, Scholarship & Creative Works. For more information, please contact scholarsrepository@llu.edu.

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
LOMA LINDA, CALIFORNIA

LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Religion
in conjunction with the
Faculty of Graduate Studies

The Healing Ministry of Jesus as Recorded in the Synoptic Gospels

by

Alvin Lloyd Maragh

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Clinical Ministry

June 2006

© 2006

Alvin Lloyd Maragh
All Rights Reserved

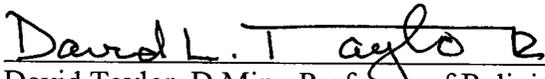
Each person whose signature appears below certifies that this thesis in his opinion is adequate in scope and quality as a thesis for the degree Master of Arts.



Siroj Sorajakool, Ph.D., Professor of Religion

_____, Chairperson

Johnny Ramirez-Johnson, Ed.D., Professor of Religion



David Taylor, D.Min., Professor of Religion

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for giving me the strength to complete this thesis. I am grateful to Dr. Sorajakool for his painstaking efforts in helping me during this tedious process. I could not have done it without him. Much thanks to Dr. Taylor whose wisdom was so informative and practical. To Dr. Ramirez, I am truly thankful for your honesty, advice, and comments. I am also grateful to Ms. Gayle Foster who edited my paper in such a professional manner.

CONTENTS

Approval Page.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Abbreviations.....	vii
Abstract.....	viii
Chapter	
1. The Healing Ministry of Jesus as Recorded in the Synoptic Gospels.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Arguments.....	2
Limitations.....	3
Significance of Study.....	3
Methodology.....	4
2. Literature Review.....	7
Healing Ministry of Jesus.....	7
Religion and Health.....	10
Synoptic Gospels.....	18
Synoptic Gospels Defined.....	18
Synoptic Problem.....	18
Agreement in the Synoptics.....	23
3. Healing and Marginalization, Part I.....	25
Demon Possession and Poverty.....	25
Demon Possession.....	25
Historical Perspective on Demon Possession.....	31
Mental Sickness.....	32
Demon Possession in the New Testament.....	33
The Poor.....	35
The Poor During the Time of the New Testament.....	36
Nature and Causes of Poverty.....	36
4. Healing and Marginalization, Part II.....	38
Women, Lepers, and Gentiles.....	38
Introduction.....	38
Women.....	38
Gender Perspectives During the Time of the New Testament.....	42

Lepers.....	45
Medical Evaluation	46
Perspective on Leprosy During the New Testament Period	47
Gentiles	49
Historical Context: Roman Empire.....	51
Racism and Discrimination in Jesus' Time	52
5. Healing, Faith, Forgiveness and the Sabbath.....	54
Healing and Faith.....	54
Healing and Faith in the Gospels	54
Faith	56
Sin and Forgiveness	58
The Concept of sin and Sickness in Jesus' Time.....	59
Forgiveness	61
Healing and the Sabbath	63
Sabbath Observance and Healing	66
6. Conclusion	69
Marginalized Population.....	70
Sin and forgiveness.....	70
Sabbath.....	71
Faith	71
Synopsis of the Results Chart	76
References.....	77

ABBREVIATIONS

BC	Seventh day-Adventist Bible Commentary
IB	The Interpreter's Bible
WDB	The New Westminster Dictionary of the Bible
DB	Dictionary of the Bible
NIV	The New International Version of the Bible

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

The Healing Ministry of Jesus as Recorded in the Synoptic Gospels

by

Alvin Lloyd Maragh

Master of Arts, Graduate Program in Clinical Ministry

Loma Linda University, June 2006

Dr. Siroj Sorajakool, Chairperson

This study explores the narratives in the healing ministry of Jesus as recorded in the synoptic gospels. The majority of the healing narratives address issues that transcend physical aspects and point to Jesus' attempt to restore the whole person. This is reflected in the fact that more than half of the healing narratives deal with the marginalized of society during Jesus' time. He healed demon possessed persons, beggars, lepers, women suffering from incurable diseases, and those who were racially discriminated against by the Jews. Other healing narratives deal with the understanding of faith, the message of forgiveness, and the meaning of the Sabbath. The healing ministry of Jesus as recorded in the synoptic gospels shows Jesus' commitment to restore the whole person to God and not focus on a single dimension of healing.

CHAPTER ONE

THE HEALING MINISTRY OF JESUS AS RECORDED IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

Introduction

The focus of this thesis is on the healing ministry of Jesus Christ and how our understanding of this can be applied to the practice of ministry. Healing the sick was the hallmark of Jesus' ministry. Wherever he went, people brought the sick to him, and he healed them. The Gospels show us that He did this throughout his earthly ministry. During His time on earth Jesus became very popular. News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them. Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and regions across the Jordan followed him.

After John the Baptist was put in prison, he sent some of his disciples to Jesus to find out whether Jesus was really the Messiah. The reason John did this was that Jesus' ministry differed so much from his own. Even though the message that Jesus started to preach, "Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand," (Matt. 3:2, 4:17) was the same as that of John the Baptist, what Jesus did was different from John. Jesus summed up his own ministry in his answer to John: "Jesus replied, 'Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor'" (Matt 11:4-5).

When I think of the world I think of how people suffer from different diseases and ailments. Sickness does not only affect the physical dimension. It affects the whole person: mind, body, emotions, community, and spirituality. When one is sick they cannot function to their maximum ability and will therefore be less productive at a specific task at hand. Sickness was never part of God's plan, but because of sin we all are susceptible to its illness. Sin affects the whole person rather than a single dimension. Through Christ God intends for the whole of humanity to be reconciled back to Himself.

Statement of the Problem

Christians often look at the healing ministry of Christ from a biological and physiological perspective. Hence when they face physical ailments, they hope to witness the power of healing in their lives, they want God to intervene and restore their physical health. When intervention does not take place, they become discouraged. Is the aim of Jesus' healing ministry only the restoration of physical health? If this is so, then it may be appropriate for Christians to expect physical healing when they face chronic or life-threatening illness. But if Jesus' healing ministry transcends mere physical dimensions, then we need to ask ourselves what lessons Jesus wanted us to learn from his healing ministry.

Arguments

The majority of the stories of healings performed by Jesus as recorded in the synoptic gospels address issues that transcend mere physical healing and thus underline the importance of wholeness.

There are twenty-two stories of healing recorded in the synoptic gospels. Of these twenty-two, fifteen of these healing accounts tell stories of Jesus' ministry to the

marginalized. The marginalized here include women, lepers, demonics, beggars, and those who were discriminated against by the Jewish community during the time of Jesus. Besides Jesus' ministry to the marginalized, His healing ministry also addressed theological issues of sin and salvation, as in the story of the paralytic, while two accounts report Jesus addressing the issue of Sabbath keeping. There is also the importance of the role of faith, which is mentioned in many of the healing stories. There are stories that appear to address mainly the physical dimensions of sickness, but a closer reflection may show that they do include dimensions other than the physical aspects of healing.

Limitations

This thesis will be limited to a study of the healing ministry of Jesus Christ as stated in the synoptic gospels. Its main goal is only to show that Jesus' healing ministry, as shown by the population He heals, seeks to address issues beyond physical healing and does not claim to construct a complete theology of healing. It assumes that the populations addressed in the synoptics reflect Jesus' goal for healing. This study will not address the theological significance of each healing story but will only report contents that extend beyond physical healing. This paper is not exegetical in nature, but a narrative analysis in the English language.

Significance of the Study

While there have been numerous discussions on wholeness as the basis for the healing ministry we offer here, there have been few studies based on the stories of healing in the synoptic gospels showing Christ's commitment to wholeness and healing. This study will provide a Biblical basis for us to engage in the ministry of healing and wholeness based on the life and example of Jesus Christ.

Methodology

My approach to this study is a narrative analysis of the healing ministry of Jesus as recorded in the synoptic gospels. The study will show how Biblical narratives of Jesus' healing ministry address issues that transcend physical healing. The following chart will be used in the conclusion to show the distribution of the healing narratives. In order to show that the healing ministry of Jesus addresses issues beyond the realm of mere physical healing, this study will attempt the following:

1. Explore theologically and Biblically related literature relating to the healing ministry of Jesus. This will include reviews of social scientific studies exploring the place of spirituality in healing, and also investigate the problem in the synoptic gospels since this study is limited to the healing accounts.
2. Identify all the restorative stories of Jesus recorded in the synoptic gospels. This will include the Biblical passages and a short summary of each account.
3. Report and categorize issues identified in the synoptic gospels. They will be put into categories that best fit the nature of their account. There are examples that may fit into more than one category. This study will also record the number of stories that complement a particular group.
4. Explore the interrelated conditions of each story of healing in order to understand it.
5. Demonstrate how the majority of the healing stories of Jesus address more than just the physical dimension. This will be done by reflecting on various categories and identifying statistically how many of these healing accounts address issues other than the physical. This will reveal the scope and focus of Jesus' ministry.

Texts	Narrative	Marginalized	Faith	Forgiveness	Sabbath
Matt. 8	Centurion				
Matt. 8	Peter's Mother-in- law healed				
Mark 5	Jairus' daughter healed				
Matt. 12	Man with withered hand				
Matt. 12	Blind and dumb demoniac				
Matt. 15	Gentile woman				
Matt. 9	Two blind men				
Matt. 9	Dumb spirit cast out				
Mark 1	Leper cured				
Mark 2	Paralytic healed				
Mark 5	Demoniac cured				
Mark 5	Woman with issue of blood				
Mark 7	Deaf and dumb man cured				
Mark 8	Blind man cured				
Mark 9	Devil cast out of boy				
Mark 10	Blind Bartimaeus				
Luke 4	Demoniac in synagogue				
Luke 7	Widow's son raised				
Luke 13	Woman's				

	infirmity				
Luke 14	Dropsy cured				
Luke 17	Ten lepers cured				
Luke 22	Malchus healed				

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

This literature review will explore three areas related to the arguments of this study: the healing ministry of Jesus, social scientific studies on spirituality as it relates to healing, and the synoptic gospels, since this study is limited to the healing stories as recorded in the synoptic gospels.

Healing Ministry of Jesus

In the book, *Spirituality, Health and Wholeness*, Richard Rice (2004) states that Jesus' miracles affirm the value of physical health and provide a basis for endeavors to relieve suffering and heal the sick. Physically Jesus cured blindness, deafness, leprosy, and paralysis. Jesus also provided physical food for the 5,000 plus multitude. Rice goes on to address the spiritual dynamics of Jesus' healing when He dealt with spiritual and physical needs together. For example, the healing of the paralyzed man in Mark two shows both the physical and spiritual healing of Jesus. Jesus healed the man from paralysis (physical) and he said to him "Your sins are forgiven" (spiritual healing). Jesus' entire ministry was directed toward spiritual ends. Its primary objective was to restore human beings to proper relationship with God.

Emotional needs of people were also addressed by Jesus. Jesus showed his feelings to the woman who had an issue of blood; He called her daughter, and listened to her story. Jesus was also attentive to the emotional needs of His closest followers. He once told His disciples to come apart from the crowd and rest awhile (Mark 6:31). Jesus also dealt with the social aspects of healing. Rice states, "We see the healing of communities in a number of Jesus' miracles, as well as his teachings on forgiveness.

Each of the individuals He raised from the dead was restored to a bereaved family—Jairus’ daughter, the son of the widow of Nain, and Lazarus of Bethany” (Rice, 2004, p. 24). Jesus healed diseases that caused social discrimination. For example, in Luke seventeen Jesus healed ten Samaritans who had leprosy. The person with leprosy was excommunicated from society and forced to shout, “unclean, unclean.”

In the book *Ministry of Healing* Ellen White comments on ministry as it pertains to the poor, home dynamics, the use of remedies, and healing the soul, just to name a few. She says that during the ministry of Jesus He did more healing than preaching. Jesus dealt with the mind and soul. “The Savior made each work of healing an occasion for implanting divine principles in the mind and soul. This was the purpose of His work” (White, 1905, p. 20). Like Rice, White also comments on the paralytic’s. She states, “He needed health of soul before he could appreciate health of body. Before the physical malady could be healed, Christ must bring relief to the mind, and cleanse the soul from sin” (White, 77). When Jesus said, “Your sins are forgiven,” instantly the man was restored spiritually. Jesus’ ministry was holistic in nature and not just limited to the physical aspects of healing the sick.

There are three aspects of Jesus’ ministry to the sick and dying that should be noted. First, He recognized the vulnerability of the sick, in their need for care. Jesus touched those who were sick both physically and spiritually. He touched the leper (Mark 1:41), laid hands on the blind man (Mark 8:22), and took the hand of the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:54).

Second, Jesus brought “outcasts” back into human society through His healing word and touch. He challenged the notion that sickness is the result of sin. The diseased

were thought of as unclean, punished by God and cut off from God's holy people. When his disciples asked, "Lord, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to be born blind?" (John 9:2), Jesus replied, "Neither he nor his parents sinned." Jesus' ministry was holistic and dealt with the sick and outcast.

Finally, Jesus reaffirmed the need for spiritual healing. The paralytic lowered through the roof is first healed of his sins (Mark 2:5), while the man by the pool at Bethesda is warned, "Give up your sins so that something worse may not overtake you" (John 5:24).

It is important to note that in Jesus' healings death was not excluded. Death itself, the ultimate affront to humanity, was overcome by Jesus. He raised Jairus' daughter (Luke 8:49-56), the widow of Nain's son (Luke 7:11-17), and Lazarus (John 11:38-44). His healing ministry consisted of not only the sick, but also those who were dead.

God's compassion for all his children is revealed in the human touch of Jesus, in the restoration to community of those considered outcasts, and in the salvific healing of sin and death. This is fundamental to the message of the Gospel ("Healing Ministry," 2000).

In the book *Jesus M.D.*, the author examines Jesus as the great physician. He compares Jesus to doctors who specialize in specific fields of medicine.

- The orthopedist knows Jesus was a fellow orthopod. After all, he made the lame to walk and the "bowed" to stand straight (Luke 11:11-13).
- The internist notes that He healed people with heart failure (dropsy) (Luke 13:2-4).

- The ophthalmologist counters, “Don’t forget He made the blind to see” (Luke 18:35-43).
- A neurologist points out that Jesus cured a man with palsy (Luke 15:18-25).
- The ENT (ear-nose-throat) specialist reminds us that He caused the deaf to hear (Luke 7:22).
- The infectious-disease specialist declares, “He cured leprosy!” (Luke 5:12-14; 17:11-19).
- The pediatrician quotes Jesus Himself who said, “Let the little children come to me” (Luke 18:6) (Stevens, 2001, p. 7).

Religion and health

In understanding the concept of the interrelation between religion and health, peer-reviewed articles proved to be beneficial. The first to be discussed is the article by Curlin, et al.: “How are Religion and Spirituality Related to Health?: A Study of Physician’s Perspectives.” Twenty-one medical doctors were set up in a semiformal interview and questioned about the interweaving of the religious, spiritual, and medical aspects in their patients’ lives. Through a grueling and very sensitive system, their replies were copied, labeled, and studied for obvious themes. The outcome was helpful yet failed to provide satisfactory answers. The physicians stated their belief regarding a connection and the apparent effect religion has on health, but they did not state its relation to the medical results. They only concentrated on the fact that religion serves as a buffering agent for patients so they can better comprehend and choose what will suit their health care needs. They saw religion both as positive and negative. It proved useful if it was able

to aid patients' coping mechanisms with regards to their illnesses, but detrimental when it interfered with medical decisions or led to mental dilemmas.

Another related article, "Spiritual Disposition and Understanding Illness," by Gall and Grant (2005) focused on the beneficial factors connecting religion and spirituality to one's ability to cope with their physical ailments. Their study showed that these factors were more obvious in patients affected with stroke, high blood pressure, cardiac problems and cancer. Based on a research by Ai, Dunkle, Peterson, and Boiling (1998), 76% of patients with cardiac problems regarded religion as either somewhat important or very significant in their lives. Anger at God and other signs of spiritual struggle have been associated with decline in physical and mental health.

Various strategies for survival, ranging from prayer, attending church services, involvement in church projects, holding on to belief in God, and requesting postoperative guidance were used by these patients. A study done by Oxman, Freeman, and Manheimer (1995) regarding post-cardiac surgery patients provided more definite evidence of the benefit of these religious factors. Here the mortality rate of patients who were unable to be appeased or empowered by religion was found to be three times higher than those who were benefited by it.

Lee and Newberg (2005) verified the important role of religion and spirituality in the lives of many people. Surprising as it was, their study showed that only 90% of people in America believe in God or a divine being. They went on to dissect the percentages of people who pray, are regular church members or members of a synagogue, who regard religion as an integral part of their lives, and those who confessed a longing for individual spiritual productivity. Their study supported the fact that patients are very

much inclined to include religion in their medical treatment. Among the patients who were asked, greater than 75% verbalized their wish to have spiritual matters integrated into their care, in form of a faith discussion and/or prayer. Amazingly enough, a number of medical doctors appear to have similar feelings as patients regarding this issue. They believe that achieving spiritual balance completes the homeostatic state of man and should be discussed with patients, but only a few do it on a regular basis.

While there are studies that showed increased longevity for people involved in religion, there are also some that provided proof regarding the marked difference religion and spirituality can have in a person's quality of life, specifically, in those stricken with the treacherous disease of cancer. According to Fitchett, et al. (1996), one's spiritual state has a comforting effect on their physical wholeness. To further study this, a group of 1,610 patients with different types of cancer (breast, colon, lung, head, neck), were studied by Brady et al (1996). His research showed that there is a beneficial communion between spirituality and quality of life for the ones involved.

Religion, in relation to sickle cell disease, is also a matter worth looking into. Harrison, and Edwards, et al., wrote an article entitled, "Religiosity/Spirituality and Pain in Patients with Sickle Cell Disease," wherein they focused on religious aspects of the lives of African Americans who have this disease. Research showed that they gain more benefits from religious involvement compared to their Caucasian counterparts. A nine year chronological study of 21,204 American adults was done by Hummer et al (1996). They found that people who attended church every week lived seven more years than those who did not attend. In the African American community, those who went to church more than once a week lived fourteen more years, twice the longevity of non attendees.

Further studies done by Musick et al. (1998) and Jones-Webb and Snowdes (1993) all showed the same outcomes. This analytical information presents the view that African Americans' church involvement—lack of or presence of—plays a vital role in their risk for stress and its relation to their medical condition. History has proven this. The obvious presence of societal stressors surrounding the African American community demonstrate why there is a strong need for religion and spirituality in their lives.

The subject of prayer was also mentioned. It is the most common and widely used aspect of religion that people utilize in dealing with their suffering and pain. There seems to be a direct relationship between one's pain and the amount of prayer or other coping strategies that emerge. The more pain a person is in, the more they pray for help. Several extensive studies have been conducted to demonstrate the link between prayer and reports of decreased levels of pain. These showed the inverse side of the pain-prayer relationship. During the early stages of pain, much focus is placed on spiritual things but as time passes, the more prayer and Bible study a person engages in, the lower the level of pain they experience. Currently, there are not enough studies to apply this concept to people with sickle cell disease.

Johnson et al (2005) also conducted a study targeting the African American community. Entitled, "The Influence of Spiritual Beliefs and practices on the Treatment Preferences of African Americans: A review of the Literature," it dealt with the sensitive issue of death. It was found that African Americans are more likely to request life-saving treatment compared to Caucasians, no matter how hopeless their prognosis may be. This difference may be partially explained by the high regard the African American community attach to their spirituality. For patients who are wasting away and their loved

ones, spiritual issues often take precedence over the physical ones. Studies show that patients desire, if not demand, that their medical doctors attend to both their spiritual and medical needs.

Spiritual beliefs provide the answer to that ever present question: Why are we here? It serves as a guide to that which gives meaning to a person's life and the experiences that come along with it. For patients who are literally knocking on death's door, or even those who are just facing medical ailments, these spiritual beliefs become especially crucial. They play a major role in comprehending and accepting one's disease, the healing process, and medical therapies. A survey was done nationally which included a group of chronically ill patients, grieving family members, medical doctors, and other health care workers. It was found that patients recognized that prayer and making peace with God were significant during the final stages of life. Spirituality is important, not only in the acute stages of illness, but throughout the whole process. Therefore, it is not surprising to hear that patients want their doctors to recognize their spiritual needs.

As previously mentioned, spiritual beliefs and traditions are especially important for African Americans. They are more prone to join or attend religious gatherings and participate in prayer rallies or Bible studies and experience a more internal and personal spiritual engagement compared to Caucasians. This is a probable explanation for African American's the decreased usage of advance care directives and comfort measures and increased preference for more aggressive life-saving measures that include, but not limited to: mechanical ventilation and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

In "Religious Views of the 'Medical' Rehabilitation Model: A Pilot Qualitative Study," by Yamey and Greenwood (2003) the correlation of religious beliefs and healing

processes were examined. Their research included six people—one representative from each of the prominent religions of today: Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism, and Hinduism. The participants differed in their occupations: some worked in health care settings while others held religious offices. But one thing they had in common— they all shared the desire to explore how their religion addressed health issues. The purpose of the research was to explore the religious beliefs that patients may bring to the rehabilitation process, and the hypothesis that these beliefs may diverge from the medical model of rehabilitation.

Physicians specializing in rehabilitation treatment have started to recognize the probable role of religion in relation to the healing process and continuing life issues of disabled individuals. With an occupation that attends to a fast-growing multicultural community, a better understanding of religious beliefs that might affect patients treatment is crucial. Abundant research proves the significance of religious and cultural beliefs in vocational rehabilitation and disability. On the other hand, scant materials have been written about the influence of religion in physical and mental restoration in the acute stages post-injury or illness. Patients who were discharged from a rehabilitation department in Baltimore, MD were surveyed regarding this specific issue. More than half of the group deemed their religious beliefs as significant while the others verbalized dissatisfaction regarding their spiritual needs.

One of the interviewees, who happened to be Muslim, stated that Islamic belief regards life as a test field for one's faith or belief. A medical condition or physical injury is seen as a test. A major aspect of Muslim theology is the idea that our lives are already predestined by divine providence or fatalism. Therefore, diseases are interpreted as being

God's will. For Buddhists, illnesses or injury may be consequences from past sins. It makes no difference whether the person is aware of their mistakes or not. Buddhists believe that their body has three internal requirements to stay healthy—air (or wind), bile, and phlegm. As long as these three things are in harmony with each other, a person remains healthy. Anything that disrupts this balance causes the person to be ill.

Orthodox Jews believe that nothing occurs without God. God gives people their injury or disease and these are even sometimes regarded as punishment for harmful deeds. The meaning behind God's actions is not clearly defined; they do not comprehend why things occur. They explain that sometimes people suffer consequences and often it is not easy to comprehend why. In their attempt to give a response they reason that God makes people suffer as He sees fit.

Sikhs share the same belief as in Muslim theology: illnesses or injuries are God's will. They believe in *karma*: if you do anything bad you are bound to suffer in this life and the next. In relation to a chronic and debilitating disease, Sikhs believe that all our bodies will someday be destroyed. We are helpless trying to preserve them for we are destined to decay and all we can do is accept it with an open heart and mind. In this regard, there is a belief in certain deterioration in a physical sense, which is God's will and which is preordained by karma. Hindus also believe in predestination. We are to bear our destiny (God's will for us) and not blame anybody for our sufferings. Karmic theory also comes to play in Hinduism, in that they believe that anything we experience in this lifetime is the result of our past actions.

Two different perspectives on injury and illness were described by Christian representatives. The first concept presented was that of a God who is very powerful and

is in complete control. Those who believe that their illness or injury is predestined will accept these as God's will. The second view, see trials as a ladder for spiritual productivity. He contrasted the Old Testament against the New Testament which brought forth more light on this concept. In the Old Testament, an illness or injury is regarded as punishment from God but in the New Testament, Jesus denied that sin was the causative agent for these conditions.

There is countless evidence demonstrating that a person's belief may affect the end result of illness. Those who believe in a divine being are less prone to sink into depression than the people who don't. Numerous evidence shows that religion and spirituality has a beneficial influence on longevity, surgical results, addiction, dealing with serious medical conditions, immunity, regulation of blood pressure, and usage of health care. People diagnosed with end-stage illnesses like HIV or cancer appear to have a better medical outcome when they are in touch with their spiritual side. The studies do not show or do not offer an explanation for the way the body responds to religious beliefs. Researchers are unable to determine whether the mind was just simply able to overpower the body's pathophysiological reactions or there really was a divine presence altering the progression of the disease.

A case study of one hundred twenty five caregivers of patients with HIV conducted by Richards and Folkman (2005). They found that more than half of the patients and caregivers believed in spiritual occurrences or events. Other studies of a similar nature have shown that HIV-affected individuals, especially women, demonstrated increased interest in religion and spirituality compared to those not infected with HIV, or those who belong to ethnic minority groups. One study showed that gay

men with HIV found that belief in divine power and spiritual change was very beneficial in facing the obstacles they encounter due to their HIV condition along with being a sexual minority. Faith in a higher power and prayer are two religious and spiritual coping strategies often used by HIV positive drug users. Among women (mostly African Americans) infected with the AIDS virus, their religious methods of choice are: communication between them and God or divine power, miracles, and prayer. HIV positive men have also been reported to use some of the coping mechanisms women use.

Synoptic Gospels

Synoptic Gospels Defined

The “synoptic gospels” refers to the first three gospels according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, of the New Testament in the Holy Bible. The stories and books are very similar in nature. The stories vary a little in detail and length, but general similarities are present. John is excluded because his gospel is vastly different from the other three.

“The word *synoptic* is derived from a combination of the Greek words *συν* (*syn* = together) and *opsis* (*opsis* = seeing) to indicate that the contents of these three Gospels can be viewed side-by-side, whether in a vertical parallel column *synopsis*, or a horizontal synoptic alignment” (“Synoptic Gospels,” 2006).

Synoptic Problem

Scholars have argued about the authenticity of the writers of the synoptic gospels. Did the writers copy from each other or use other sources in writing their books? The question of the relationship between the three is called the synoptic problem. Many Protestants and Catholics believe that Matthew and Luke were written after Mark’s gospel. It is believed that Matthew divided the book of Mark into five segments and used

them in the order of the miracles and sayings of Jesus. Some scholars also believe that Luke (twenty four chapters) divided the book of Mark (sixteen chapters) in two, with nine chapters inserted between. Compared to Matthew and Luke there is only about half of the content of Jesus' ministry in Mark. There are between ninety to one hundred Bible verses common to Matthew and Luke, and the beatitudes are common to both.

To explain the similarity of Matthew and Luke scholars have come up with the theory of an ancient document called Q. This document is said to have large portions of Jesus' preaching and ministry in Jerusalem. In the ancient world this document was distributed through travelers or scribes to various regions. The Q document itself it is thought to have more than one version. It is believed that Matthew and Luke may not have used the same version of the Q document. There are not many scholars who accept the theory of a Q document and its authenticity. The traditional Roman Catholic view is that Matthew (in an Aramaic version) preceded Mark and Luke; but that Matthew's Greek translation of his Aramaic gospel may have come after Mark and Luke ("Synoptic Gospels," 2004).

Specifically, a solution to the synoptic problem must account for the similarities and differences in content, order, and wording. The literary relation may be either direct (one Evangelist possessed one of the gospels) or indirect (two Evangelists had access to a shared source). The sources may be written or oral; one or a multitude.

The synoptic problem is not really a "problem" in the normal sense of the term. It is simply a way to refer to questions and possible explanations about the literary relationships between the first three New Testament Gospels. Matthew, Mark, and Luke present the basic story of Jesus in similar ways, including the order of the material, the

stories told, the sayings of Jesus, and even use many of the same words in parallel accounts. For this reason they are called the Synoptic Gospels. While the gospel of John sometimes resembles the other three Gospels, it tells the story of Jesus in significantly different ways, including a different order of events, different perspectives and points of emphasis, and has its own unique vocabulary and style. these differences can be understood in terms other than literary relationships between the Gospels, which is why John is not included in the synoptic problem (Bratcher, 2006).

To someone who has never studied the Gospels closely, or who has assumed certain logically constructed theories about the nature of Scripture apart from looking at the actual biblical text (e.g., the absolute inerrancy of Scripture), questions about the literary relationship between the Gospels may be unnerving at first. It is easy simply to reject this as so much scholarly speculation and academic conjecture. Yet, these questions arise from the biblical text itself, questions obvious to most anyone who takes the time to examine the biblical text closely. If we are honestly to hear and understand Scripture on its own terms, we will have to come to terms with this in ways that go beyond simply denying that there is any issue.

On the other hand, we need to honestly concede that there is no final answer to this problem. There are various perspectives, and theories based on the evidence of the biblical text as well as what we know about the process of writing. But there is not a “correct” answer. This simply suggests that while we need to take this issue seriously as part of what we see in the biblical text as it stands, it is not a matter of faith one way or the other. Rather, it is simply being honest with the biblical text and not trying to make it

say or be what it is not. It is also acknowledging that we do not have to have all of the answers to our logical questions before we can accept the Bible as God's word.

Dawson (1997) comments on the argument of length, which is another argument for the priority of the gospel of Mark. Mark is the shortest of the four gospels. Matthew contains 18,293 words, Luke 19,376 words, John has 16,563 words but Mark has only 11,025 words. The difference in length suggests that Mark probably did not use Matthew, John, or Luke for a source, because he would be unlikely to leave out so much material that was available to him from the other gospels. Of the 18,293 words that appear in Matthew, 7392 (40%) have no parallel in Mark, and of the 19,376 words that appear in Luke, 10,259 (53%) have no parallel in Mark. All of the material presented in Mark is covered in Matthew and/or Luke. Why didn't Mark include information on Jesus' birth, the birth of John the Baptist, and the Sermon on the Mount? These items would be crucial to the story of Jesus and should be included in each gospel if the author was trying to tell the whole story. If Mark had used either Luke or Matthew, he would not have left out this information.

The Catholic Encyclopedia states that these resemblances and differences, the extent and complexity of which grow upon students, who carefully compare the synoptic gospels and contrast them with John's narrative, constitute a unique phenomenon in ancient and modern literature. They are facts which no one can refer to as either mere chance, or the direct influence of inspiration. On the one hand, the resemblances are too numerous and striking to be regarded as explicable on the hypothesis that the first three Evangelists wrote independently of one another. On the other, the differences are at times so significant as to imply that they are due to the use of different documents by the

Evangelists, as for example in the case of the two genealogies of Jesus Christ. The harmony and the variety, the resemblances and the differences must be both accounted for. Together they form a literary problem,—the synoptic problem, as it is called—the existence of which was practically unknown to the ancient ecclesiastical writers. In point of fact, St. Chrysostom and St. Augustine are the only church Fathers who formulated views concerning the mutual relation of the Synoptic Gospels, and the writers of the Middle Ages do not seem to have taken these patristic views into account. Subsequent leading scholars, such as Grotius, Rich, Simon, and Le Clerc, had little more than a suspicion of the problem, and it was only during the eighteenth century that scientific examination of the question actually began.

Dawson claims that there is an argument for grammar. In the English translations of the Gospels, Mark's errors in grammar are not evident, because they have been corrected upon translation. However, according to biblical scholars, the argument from grammar for the priority of Mark is very strong. Based on the text, the grammar in Matthew and Luke is better than in Mark, and if Mark had access to either of the other gospels, it is inconceivable that he would change to a lower quality of grammar. In some verses, colloquialisms are found that are not contained in the other gospels. This would lead one to conclude that Mark was first, because he would not have added these statements to the other gospels, but this is only evident in the original languages. Also scholars have suggested that these same types of statements have been found in Peter's writings. These arguments would lead one to conclude that based on length and grammar Mark wrote his gospel first and it was available to Luke and Matthew.

Agreement in the synoptics

Dawson also says that there is agreement in the wording within the Gospels. This remarkable agreement in wording can be related to one or more of the following reasons:

- 1) Each author had access to one or more documents containing the verses where agreement occurs in the Gospels and used these or a rewrite of these verses in their own writings.
- 2) They were guided by the Holy Spirit in the actual wording in their writings and not just in thought or principle.
- 3) In a concerted effort they were writing a single document.

Jesus promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit would bring to their minds all that He had taught them, so we know that the Holy Spirit guided the writers of the Gospels. That He gave them exact wording is not very probable, because each would interpret these teachings in his own words. We see this in the difference in grammar between Mark and the others. The agreement tends to validate reason number one, and since all of the topics in Mark are covered by at least one other Gospel one would conclude that Mark was available to the other writers. Peter and Mark had a close relationship and possibly Peter had Mark give the other writers a working paper that was the start of a single gospel. The disharmony of the Gospels also gives reason number three credence. Each, except Mark, contains a genealogy of Jesus, but each are from a different perspective, i.e., the lineage of Mary, the lineage of Joseph and direct linkage to God. In many other areas of disharmony the writers filled in other gaps in the life of Jesus that were not contained in Mark and did not overlap the other Gospels.

There is also agreement in the order of the Gospels. What does the agreement in order suggest with respect to timing the authorship of the Gospels? Since all of the topics in Mark's gospel, some seventy-seven topics, are found in at least one other Gospel and the others cover the same material and topics in essentially the same order as Mark, probably Mark's Gospel was available to the other writers. The odds that four authors writing independently would arrive at the same order without prior consultation or guiding documents are astronomical. For example, the odds against the first eleven topics in Mark to appear in the same order in Luke are 285 trillion to one. In fact, the first seventeen topics are covered in order in Luke, but I don't know what the name would be for 8.27×10^{20} . Then based on the probabilities, the gospel of Mark was available and used as a point of departure for the other Gospels. This would indicate that the gospel of Mark was written first, but does not require that there necessarily be a gap in time between the gospels.

CHAPTER THREE

HEALING AND MARGINALIZATION, PART I

Demon Possession and Poverty

Of the twenty-two stories of healing recorded in the synoptic gospels, thirteen of these accounts describe Jesus' ministry to the marginalized. The marginalized groups may be divided into five types: those with demon possession, beggars, lepers, women, and individuals from different races. This section will look at the first two groups as reported in the synoptic gospels.

Demon Possession

In this section I intend to first recount all five stories, offer historical background, discuss the meaning of demon possession and show how this population was marginalized during the time of Jesus. Thus we will see the importance of the marginalized in the healing ministry of Jesus.

Five of the healing stories of Jesus in the synoptic gospels deal with the demonic. These stories are: 1) The blind and dumb (Matt. 12:22-30), 2) dumb spirit cast out (Matt. 9:32-33), 3) the demoniacs cured (Mark 5:1-20), 4) the devil cast out of boy (Mark 9:14-29), and 5) the demoniac in the synagogue cured (Luke 4:33-37).

The Blind and Dumb (Matt. 12:22:30)

Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see. All the people were astonished and said, "Could this be the Son of David?"

But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons."

Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand? And if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your people drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

"Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house.

He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters."

In the healing of the blind and dumb demoniac the man possessed was brought to Jesus. He did not come of his own will. This man had three ailments. He was possessed by a devil, was blind, and dumb (even though Luke does not mention this in his gospel). After Jesus healed the demoniac the people were shocked and said, "Is not this the son of David?" but the Pharisees accused Jesus of casting devils out by Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils.

Having observed this miraculous healing the Pharisees exclaimed, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." Jesus replied, "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself." He continued "If I cast out devils by the spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."

Dumb Spirit Cast Out (Matt. 9:32-33)

While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus. And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."

Demoniac Cured (Matt. 8:28, Mark 5:1-20, Luke 8:26)

1They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. 2When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. 3This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him any more, not even with a chain. 4For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. 5Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

6When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. 7He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won't torture me!" 8For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you evil spirit!"

9Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

"My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." 10And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area.

11A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. 12The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." 13He gave them permission, and the evil spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about

two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

14Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. 15When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. 16Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well. 17Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

18As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. 19Jesus did not let him, but said, “Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” 20So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

Jesus had just come to shore after a story night on the sea of Galilee. The country He entered was Gadarenes. “And when Jesus came out of the ship, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit.” In the Matthew there are two men possessed by demons but Mark and Luke only focus on one. The demon possessed man was so strong that chains could not hold him down. He would go into the tombs and hills night and day, cutting himself with stones. “The disciples and their companions fled in terror; but presently they noticed that Jesus was not with them, and they turned to look for Him. He was standing where they had left Him” (White, 337). The look of these demon possessed men terrified the disciples.

When the demoniac saw Jesus he fell to his knees and worshiped Him and the demons asked that they not to be tormented by Jesus. Jesus then asked the man his name and he responded by saying, "My name is legion." Jesus rebuked the demons and they entered into two thousand pigs that were nearby.

The beginning of this account is clear regarding the place of this possessed man in society. He lived among the tombs and hills by himself with chains around his hands and feet. He was not a part of society.

Devil Cast Out of Boy (Matt. 17, Mark 9:14, Luke 9)

14When they came to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and the teachers of the law arguing with them. 15As soon as all the people saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with wonder and ran to greet him.

16"What are you arguing with them about?" he asked.

17A man in the crowd answered, "Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. 18Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not."

19"O unbelieving generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me."

20So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth.

21Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?"

"From childhood," he answered. 22"It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."

23” “If you can’?” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for him who believes.”

24Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”

25When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the evil spirit. “You deaf and mute spirit,” he said, “I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.”

26The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, “He’s dead.” 27But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up.

Although the story places emphasis on the role of faith in healing that the father and the disciples lack, the boy, nevertheless, was possessed by the evil spirit. This boy’s life was unpredictable and he constantly faced the possibility of death.

Demoniac in Synagogue Cured (Mark 1:5 Luke 4:33)

33In the synagogue there was a man possessed by a demon, an evil spirit. He cried out at the top of his voice, 34”Ha! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

35”Be quiet!” Jesus said sternly. “Come out of him!” Then the demon threw the man down before them all and came out without injuring him.

36All the people were amazed and said to each other, “What is this teaching? With authority and power he gives orders to evil spirits and they come out!”

At this time in Jesus’ ministry He had come down to Capernaum and was teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Those who were listening to His words were surprised at

the depth of His teaching. While Jesus was ministering, a demon possessed person confronted Him in the synagogue with a loud voice.

Historical Perspective on Demon Possession

Demon possession is defined as “a human who has become inhabited or ‘taken over’ by a demon and who cannot, consequently, exercise his own will. According to Catholic theologians demon possession is involuntary and allowed by God to test a person” (Adam, 2006)

Demonic possession is a form of spiritual possession; specifically, one or more demons are said to enter a living or dead human or animal body or an object with the intention of using it for a purpose, normally evil but sometimes instead as a punishment or test. This term is more commonly applied to possession of living persons. It is said by several spiritual belief systems that a demonic possession can be “cured” by an exorcism that enables the exorcist to expel the demon or demons from the possessed subject or object.

Many religions contain some concept of demons and demon possession, but the details vary considerably. Many mainstream Christian churches, particularly in western society, either reject the concept entirely or strongly de-emphasize it, instead supporting the mainstream scientific position that supposed demon possessions are in fact a symptom of mental illness (“Demon Possession,” 2006).

Mental Sickness

Demonic possession is not a valid psychiatric or medical diagnosis recognized by either the DSM-IV or the ICD-10, and indeed, there is no scientific basis for such a belief (“Demon Possession,” 2006).

It is highly probable that what was called as demon possession in the New Testament era, would now be treated as a mental illness, using medication or psychiatric counseling (McAdam, 2006). Those who profess belief in demonic possession have sometimes ascribed the symptoms associated with mental illnesses, such as hysteria, mania, psychosis, or dissociative identity disorder to possession. There is a disease called demon mania or demonopathy. This is when a psychiatric patient may believe that he or she is filled with one or a multitude of demons. In the Christian faith, fallen angels are given the name or term demon (“Demon Possession,” 2006).

In the book *Demon Possession*, Collins suggests that psychologists tend to be disbelievers about demon possession (Collins, 1976). Freud believed that both God and Satan were mental substitutes for human fathers. “Freud concluded that what men called evil spirits are really “base and evil wishes” deriving from “impulses which have been rejected and repressed” (Collins, 1976, p. 241).

Neurosis is the common term for what people would deem demon possession in the twenty-first century.

The term was coined by the Scottish doctor William Cullen in 1769 to refer to “disorders of sense and motion” caused by a “general affection of the nervous system.” For him, it described various nervous disorders and symptoms that could not be explained physiologically. In modern psychology, the term neurosis, also

known as psychoneurosis or neurotic disorder, is a general term that refers to any mental imbalance that causes distress, but does not interfere with rational thought or an individual's ability to function in daily life (i.e., psychosis or a personality disorder). As an illness, it represents a psychiatric condition in which emotional distress or unconscious conflict is expressed through various physical, physiological, and mental disturbances (as physical symptoms, anxieties, or phobias) ("Neurosis," 2006).

Psychology also suggests, by the term "perceptual psychology," that people will act a certain way based on how others perceive them. If someone were to convince me that I was demon possessed I might act in a way that is common to demon possession. On the other hand, if I were to assume that someone else is demon possessed I might look for certain types of behavior that would prove my hypothesis to be correct (Collins, 1976).

For the one concerned about the allocation of medicine to treat the people possessed with demons, Waterhouse (2005) states, "There may be a general trend for physicians to want to employ drugs immediately in order to rule out medical problems whereas a pastor might feel that drugs should be used only after biblical counseling fails" (p. 103).

Demon Possession in the New Testament

Ellen White comments on how the community treated the demoniacs in Mark 5: "The two demoniacs had been the terror of the country. No one had been safe to pass the place where they were; for they would rush upon every traveler with the fury of demons." She even says that the disciples who were with Jesus at the time ran in terror at the sight of the demon possessed man (White, 1898, p. 338).

The people of the New Testament era treated possessed people as outcasts. Some who were possessed would even retreat to the mountains and the tombs to seclude themselves (Mark 5:5). They were feared by the people, hence their excommunication from society.

The New Testament writers always thought of devils or demons as spiritual beings which were hostile to both God and people (Harrison, 1975). People of Jesus' era and beyond would not allow a person who they thought was possessed to enter the market place or places of social gatherings for fear that the demons might attack them. Demons are viewed to be fallen angels from heaven who have entered the earth with Satan as their leader.

The people of the first century also believed that certain demons could bring on sickness such as blindness, loss of hearing, and even death (Yeboah, 2000). The one possessed with a demon was not permitted to associate around others who owned animals or flocks because it was known that demons could enter animals based on the miracle Jesus did in Matthew 8:31-32.

While the context of these stories of healing may not specifically address the issue of marginalization and that the issue of faith is often stated, its significance lies in the fact that Jesus healed the demonics. And it is clear from the historical reading that people who were thought to be possessed by evil spirits were looked upon as outcasts and outsiders. They were not a part of the community.

The Poor

The second marginalized group witnessed in the healing stories of Jesus is the poor. Pertaining to the issue of the poor, the story of Bartimaeus the beggar will be examined.

Blind Bartimaeus (Matt 20:29, Mark 10:46, Luke 18:35)

46Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. 47When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

48Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

49Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you.” 50Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

51”What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him.

The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.”

52”Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.

Matthew is the only Gospel writer who speaks of two men healed of blindness, not one as in Mark and Luke. Here I will focus on the main character, Bartimaeus, who is called by name only in Mark’s Gospel. Jesus has come into Jericho and is met by Bartimaeus begging at the roadside. He was extremely poor because of his physical condition. Bartimaeus is begging in the street a few days before Passover knowing that there would

be many people going toward Jerusalem. As he cries out to Jesus for help the crowd tells him to keep silent. Bartimaeus remains persistent and calls a second time, which is noticed by Jesus. Jesus then heals him based on his faith.

The Poor during the time of the New Testament

The beggars on the street were considered to have the “lowest” status on the economic scale. They would sit on the side of the street and position themselves where they knew that a large crowd was passing by (Guzic, 1997). The beggars most likely were of the Jewish race and were heavily taxed by the Romans, who ruled the world during the time of Jesus.

Nature and causes of poverty.

In the Bible, the poor are not merely those who suffer from material poverty, they are also the oppressed, the exploited, the despised, and the marginalized. The term poor is often used synonymously with the word oppressed. The Bible identifies injustice and oppression as the main causes of poverty and indicates its systemic nature.

“The classes of the poor more particularly mentioned are widows, orphans, and the sojourners, or resident strangers who possessed no land rights” (Box, 1963, pp. 784-785).

Hartin states that “to be ‘poor’ was not just an economic concept, but more a question of honor, social status, and a lack of power that led to oppression” (Hartin, 2000, p. 1070).

Being blind would surely hinder one from acquiring a solid financial status.

In the early era, the deacons were commissioned to support the poor and widowed with financial aid (Miller, 1961).

In the early Christian community the first election of officers was made to ensure a fair distribution of alms (money given to the poor). With the money given the needs of

the poor were met (Acts 4:32, 34) and every Christian was exhorted to lay by on the first day of each week some portion of his profits to be applied to the wants of the needy (Douglas, 1962, p. 26).

CHAPTER FOUR

HEALING AND MARGINALIZATION, PART II

Women, Lepers, and Gentiles

Introduction

This chapter will look at three marginalized groups reported in the Synoptic Gospels: women, lepers, and Gentiles.

Women

Another marginalized group in the healing stories of Jesus is women. Four of the healing stories in the Synoptic Gospels deal with women. These are: 1) the Syrophenician daughter cured (Matt 15:22-28), 2) the woman with an issue of blood (Mark 5:25-34), 3) the widow's son raised to life (Luke 7:11-17), and 4) the crippled woman (Luke 13:10-17). In this section I will give a synopsis of each story, historical information, and discuss the role of women during the time of Jesus.

Syrophenician's Daughter Cured (Matthew 15:22-28, Mark 7:25-30)

22A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession."

23Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us."

24He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

25The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said.

26He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs."

27"Yes, Lord," she said, "but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

28Then Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted."

And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

This story begins with Jesus leaving for Tyre and Sidon. The Syrophenician woman was described as a Greek and as a Syrian of Phoenicia. During the time of Jesus Phoenicia belonged administratively to Syria. Mark probably used the term Syrophenician in order to distinguish this woman from the Libyan Phoenians of Africa (NIV, 2002).

This mother came to Jesus and cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." One would think Jesus would immediately tend to this woman's needs and cure her daughter, but the Bible says, "He answered her not a word." To make matters worse, the disciples tell Jesus to send her away because they felt that the blessings of salvation would be wasted if given to the gentiles (5 BC, 1956).

This woman had two strikes against her. First, Jesus ignored her and then the disciples pushed her away, as if she was worthless. But after a short dialogue Jesus acknowledged her faith and healed her daughter.

Woman with Issue of Blood (Matthew 9: 20, Mark 5:25, Luke 8:43)

25And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years.

26She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. 27When she heard about

Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, 28because she

thought, “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.” 29Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

30At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes?”

31”You see the people crowding against you,” his disciples answered, “and yet you can ask, ‘Who touched me?’ “

32But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. 33Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. 34He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

The woman in the story had an issue with her blood for years. The sickness was probably a chronic hemorrhage (The Interpreter’s Bible, 720). A woman who had such an ailment would be considered unclean. The Bible says that she spent all the money she had on physicians but had gotten worse. However, when this woman heard about Jesus she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His clothes. This disease must have been extremely embarrassing, hence the reason why she did not ask Jesus publicly to heal her. This woman truly believed if she could just touch the garment of Jesus she would be healed. Mark says when she touched His clothes, “straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.”

Widow’s Son Raised to Life (Luke 7:11-17)

11Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him. 12As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out—the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a

large crowd from the town was with her. 13When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry."

14Then he went up and touched the coffin, and those carrying it stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" 15The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

16They were all filled with awe and praised God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said. "God has come to help his people." 17This news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding country.

The raising of this dead man takes place the day after Jesus healed the centurion's servant. The Gospel of Luke is the only place this story is recorded. This may perhaps be because Luke was a physician, and wanted to record that a dead man had been brought back to life. The woman never makes a verbal request to Jesus for her son to be healed. Jesus simply stopped the funeral procession and commanded the young man to rise from the dead. The man was then given to his mother and all who witnessed the healing begin to praise God.

Woman's Infirmary Cleansed (Luke 13:10-17)

10On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, 11and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. 12When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, "Woman, you are set free from your infirmity." 13Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God.

14Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue ruler said to the people, "There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath."

15The Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Doesn't each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? 16Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?"

17When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing.

Luke tells the reader that the woman had a spirit of sickness for eighteen years. Luke, being a physician, was specific in giving the number of years the woman had been inflicted by the spirit. When Jesus healed the woman the ruler of the synagogue was angry because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath day. This was not the only time He healed on the Sabbath (see Mark 3:1-6 and Matt 12). The Jews believed that as little as possible work was to be done on the Sabbath, but were allowed to lead their animals to water, but were restricted from lifting the vessel to its mouth. Jesus' actions were justified by the worth of this woman's life. No ox on earth is more important than a human life that God personally created (Interpreters, 1952).

Gender perspective during the time of the New Testament

In Jesus' time, women were not as liberated as they are today. They were not even allowed to worship with men, and had to keep silent in the churches (1 Cor. 14: 34-35). They were also restricted from teaching (1 Tim 2:12). Withering states, "Levitical laws were interpreted in such a way that women were prohibited from taking significant roles

in the synagogue due to their monthly period of Levitical uncleanness” (Withering, 1992, p. 957). However, women could participate in the religious exercises such as Passover, Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles (Baab, 1962).

In the New Testament time, women were considered blessed to have children. Their role was that of nurturer and teacher. According to 1 Peter 3:7, women are the weaker vessel, and were thought of as such. They had no place in public life, and men were even required not to talk at length with women. Rather, they should be with the other females of the household attending to household matters in appropriate private space (Nichol, 1953).

In history, and based on traditional values, Jewish men in that era had the common belief that to speak to a woman, even to their wives in public, was shameful. The rabbis were required to live at an even higher standard because they were not typical Jewish males but of high office, which meant leading by example. Not only were women not to be spoken to in public, but they were restricted from learning the law publicly (Bohanon, 1996). The rabbis held that to talk with such inferior creatures was beneath the dignity of doctors of the law. The Pharisees were termed, in some areas “insensitive religious leaders” because of the hard way they would look at women who were walking down the street (Taylor, 1996).

Women in the Roman Empire were looked upon as possessions by their husbands and fathers, and their household duties could be equaled to that of slaves. The Hebrew culture had a totally different concept of the marriage covenant. They looked at marriage from a more biblical model, which taught that marriage is carried out by both mother and father, and children were to strictly obey both parents (Lev 19:3). However, the Jews

could also divorce their wives at any moment, showing the power of Jewish males. (MacArthur, 2005).

Women usually did not choose their own husbands. The man who was interested in marrying the woman would pay a price to her father and then a contract would be made for the husband to have her sexually (Baab, 1962).

Males at that time were expected to be sexually aggressive, whereas females had to keep from sexual promiscuity in order to keep their virtue. Anthropologists who study culture and family have come to the conclusion that the people of the eastern Mediterranean used gender division as their standard for reality; meaning that men were honored in society and women were just viewed as child bearers and housewives. (Neyrey, 2006). The great philosopher Socrates thanked his gods on a daily basis that at his birth he was neither a slave nor a woman (McGarvey & Pendleton, 1914)

MacArthur (2005) says Scripture establishes the proper order in the family and accordingly in the church, assigning the duties of headship and protection in the home to husbands (Eph 5:23), and appointing men in the church to teaching and leadership roles (1 Tim 2:11-15). Roman law gave the husband absolute authority over the wife, even to put her to death; and Jewish contempt for women is made apparent by the ease with which Jewish men divorced them.

Women were more accepted in the social life of the community. They could be present at weddings and funerals and would dance to entertain the men. Women also participated in the festivals of the harvest, by participating in the pressing of the grapes (Baab, 1962).

In the socioeconomic life women were sometimes not excluded from gaining an income. For example, Ananias and his wife Sapphira sold property (Acts 5:1); Lydia who dwelt in Thyatira sold purple products (Acts 16:14); and Aquila and his wife Priscilla were both tentmakers (Baab, 1962).

Lepers

The fourth marginalized group mentioned in the healing stories of Jesus is the lepers. There are two stories recorded in the Synoptic Gospels that will be examined: 1) the healing of the leper (Mark 1:40-45), and 2) the ten lepers cured (Luke 17:11-19).

Leper cured (Matt 8:2-4, Mark 1:40-45, Luke 5:12-16)

40A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."

41Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" 42Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured.

43Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning: 44"See that you don't tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them." 45Instead he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere.

While Jesus was preaching in Galilee, a leper came beseeching Him, saying unto him, "if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The leper came to Jesus wanting to be healed and Jesus was moved with compassion. He put forth his hand, touched him, and said, "I will;

be thou clean.” As soon as Jesus spoke those words the leprosy was immediately gone and he was healed.

Ten Lepers (Luke 17:11-19)

11Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. 12As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance 13and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!”

14When he saw them, he said, “Go, show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went, they were cleansed.

15One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. 16He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

17Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? 18Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” 19Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”

In this account, ten lepers came to Jesus for healing. It is interesting to note Jesus’ attempt to integrate them back into their society by telling them to show themselves to the priest. Without the priests’ approval, they could not be accepted back into the community.

Medical Evaluation

According to Darouti et al. (2006), leprosy is one of the most common diseases of the peripheral nerves worldwide. It is an infection caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*, which was discovered in 1871 by Gerhard Armauer Hansen. Leprosy typically presents

with anesthetic skin lesions associated with thickened peripheral nerves. The appearance of the skin lesions varies according to the spectrum of disease. Leprosy was noticeable by its white “bright” color on the skin. The disease is not easy to catch, but the incubation time for the disease can exist for years before the symptoms appear, therefore making it hard to know when the disease was contracted. Approximately one hundred cases per year are diagnosed in the U.S. Most cases are limited to the South, California, Hawaii, and U.S. island possessions (Medline, 2005).

In a study done by Britton and Lockwood (2004), the damage to peripheral nerves results in sensory and motor impairment with characteristic deformities and disability. “Leprosy was once widely distributed in Europe and Asia but now occurs mainly in resource-poor countries in tropical and warm temperate regions. Nevertheless, patients may present with the disease long after leaving an endemic region.” However, it is generally agreed that Egypt was the place where leprosy originated (SDA, Vol. 1-7, 1953). In the fourth century, the disease was imported into Europe, where its incidence peaked in the thirteenth century (Harrop, 2005).

Perspective on Leprosy during the New Testament Period

After being healed lepers had to go to the priest for approval (Luke 17: 14). The leper also had to present him or herself to the priest if lesions appeared on their skin. As the leper was examined by the priest, if the lesion appeared to be superficial and the hairs are not affected, the patient was confined for seven days and, if necessary, another seven days for observation. “By then if the lesion has remained localized and is fading, it is simple ‘scabbing’; the patient must then wash his clothes and is declared clean” (Dictionary of the Bible, 1963, p. 575).

The leper would be declared unclean if the hairs turned white and if the lesions were spreading on the skin. In the most severe cases the joints of the fingers and toes fall off one by one (WDB, 1950). Thomson says, “The hair falls from the head and eyebrows; the nails loosen, decay and drop off; the gums are absorbed, and the teeth disappear” (WDB, 1950, p. 557). In some cases the body part where affected can experience numbness due to peripheral nerve damage.

The one who contracted leprosy would be banished from society; they even had to wear special clothes to distinguish them from others (Suydam, 2006). They had to keep a distance of a minimum of six feet from other people, including their family members (Belcher, 2001). One reason for excommunication was for religious or ceremonial purposes. The Hebrews considered the lepers to defile the holy camp and therefore had to be labeled as unclean. Josephus mentions that the Gentile lepers were not totally excluded from society but were allowed to attend major political functions (DB, 1963). Historically, leprosy was an incurable and disfiguring disease. It is traditionally believed that lepers were shunned and sequestered in leper colonies. There are still a few leper colonies around the world in countries such as India and the Philippines (Wikipedia, 2006).

The Jews thought that leprosy was a divine judgment because of sin (Lev. 13:2). Not only was leprosy seen as a judgment for sin, but the afflicted individual was looked upon as abandoned by God (White, 1898).

The healing of the lepers as recorded in the Synoptic Gospels is another indicator of Jesus' sympathy for the marginalized. In both accounts he asked them to go see the

priest because without the priest's approval, they would not be officially declared cleansed from leprosy, and they would not be reintegrated into their community.

Gentiles

The fifth marginalized group incorporated in the healing ministry of Jesus was those outside of the Jewish faith. Jesus' healing was not limited to the Jewish people. He extended his ministry to those from other races as well. This is particularly significant in that people from other races were considered gentiles and therefore not in God's favor. By extending his ministry to them, Jesus demonstrated that God's grace was for everyone. There are two healing stories in the Synoptic Gospels that deal with this issue. One is the story of the Syrophenecian woman that was discussed earlier. The other is the story of servant of a centurion soldier. These two stories will be examined in relation to the issue of race and discrimination.

Syrophenecian Woman (Matt 15:22-28, Mark 7:25-30)

I will discuss this briefly since it was mentioned earlier in the discussion on gender issues. This desperate mother came to Jesus begging him to heal her daughter who suffered demon possession. Jesus' reply was, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." When she repeated her request Jesus replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs." Then she responded, "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." This conversation clearly reveals the racial context Jesus was dealing with.

Centurion's Servant Healed (Matt 8:5, Luke 7:1-10)

5When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help.
6"Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering."

7 Jesus said to him, "I will go and heal him."

8 The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

10 When Jesus heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. 11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! It will be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was healed at that very hour.

In the story at hand a centurion, a Roman soldier, comes to Jesus and asks for his servant to be healed. According to the Bible (v.6) the servant's ailment was that of paralysis. Jesus responds to the centurion's request by saying, "I will come and heal him." The centurion then replies, "Lord I'm not worthy that you should come under my roof. But only speak the word and my servant will be healed." In saying these words the centurion is exercising his faith in the words of Jesus.

Luke's description of the healing is different than Matthew's account in that Luke says that it was the centurion's friends who came to Jesus and made the request for the healing of the servant. Luke 7:6 says, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, "Lord do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy that you should enter under my

roof...but say the word and my servant will be healed.” Is the Bible contradicting itself? It is possible that the friends were first sent to Jesus, but Jesus may have wanted to see the centurion for Himself and hence the account of the centurion speaking to Jesus. Jesus responds to the centurion’s faith and heals his servant.

Historical Context: Roman Empire

The Roman Empire ruled the world during the time of Christ. Roman citizens had special privileges in which Jews were excluded. The law stated that Romans could not be flogged (severe beating), or receive death by crucifixion, and they were able to appeal to the emperor when on trial (Reumann, 2000).

Julius Ceasar, being the first emperor of Rome, decided not to take away certain rights from the Jews, because their ancestral laws were instated before the form of the Roman Empire. Jewish society had certain rights as a *collegia* (defined by Roman law as religious and legal entities). Their rights included permission for them to assemble together, to eat with one another, and acquire property (Nanos, 1996).

This authority given to the Jews was to be carried out with the support of the Synagogue and Sanhedrin, which was its legal. A great benefit for the Jews was the fact that they did not have to worship the emperor’s gods or enlist in the military. The Roman culture stood in contrast to that of the Jews and their Torah, which taught moral absolutes, separation from the pagan ways of Rome, and belief in one God. They were the only non-pagan religious group in the Roman Empire to have these rights pertaining to worship and the military.

The Jews were hated for their belief in one god. Under Roman law, no new religions were allowed and all other religious societies (other than Judaism) were

forbidden by Caesar to be present in the city of Rome. All of these factors led to much resentment and the formation of a social anti-Jewish sentiment among the population (Nanos, 1996).

Anti-Jewish commentaries can be found in many of the writings of popular Roman authors of the time such as; Tacitus, Poseidonius, Apollonius Molon, Damocritus, Apion, Quintilian, Cicero, Plutarch, Philostratus and Aelius Aristides. Most of their slurs centered around Jewish separatism, the Sabbath, dietary laws and circumcision. The Roman world was pagan and centered around the worship of many gods. Idolatry was woven into Roman life. (Feldman, 1993, p. 123).

The Jewish people were also taxed heavily by the Roman government, which they hated. There were some Jews who would even work for the Romans and collect taxes from their fellow Jews. These tax collectors were despised by their own race, and shunned because they worked for the Roman occupation. During Jesus' time two types of tax collections were in existence. The first was for the empire and building fund, and the second was for assistance in religious purposes. Some taxes were paid in goods, by way of a farmer's crop. The main bulk of the taxes were to support the governing elite (Cranfield, 1985).

Racism and discrimination in Jesus' time

The Gentiles consisted of all the nations of the world other than the Jewish race (Isa. 49:6; Rom 2:14; 3:29), (Gehman, 1950). The Israelites (Jews) were the chosen people of God, and were to be an example to the nations (Isa. 49:3, 6). The Jews were Abraham's descendants through Jacob, whose name was changed by God to Israel after wrestling with an angel. The Jews did not want any contact with Gentiles for fear of

being defiled while in their presence (Driver, 1963). Israelites could not marry outside of their race in order to keep purity among the Jewish nation; Gentiles' houses were defiled by many idols, hence no intermarriage (Davies, 1963). Not only did they reject intermarriage because of defilement, but also for faith commitment concerns (Ex. 34:10-16) (Huffman, 2000).

The Gentile race was even shunned by Jesus' disciples. In Matthew 15 the disciples tell Jesus to send the Syrophenician mother away. They had malice toward the "inferior" race. "Deuteronomic theology taught that Israel, as God's favorite people (Deut. 7:6), had no responsibility for outsiders" (Miller, 1961, p. 220).

Gentiles were not allowed to worship in the temple, because Jews believed that they did not worship God correctly (Matt 6:7; 18:17; and Gal. 2:15), (Huffman, 2000). "They were allowed in the outer courtyard of the temple of Jesus' day, but Greek and Latin inscriptions threatened death if they ventured further into the temple precincts" (Huffman, 2000, p. 494). Some gentiles were regarded as "potential" Jews in different stages of development toward Christianity (Cranfield, 1985). Eventually the gospel message of salvation spread to the Gentile people by way of a converted centurion named Cornelius (Acts 10:45). The church ultimately accepted the Gentiles as worthy for salvation, being predominant in the first century (Douglas, 1962).

"Connection between Jesus and the inclusion of Gentiles into the people of Israel lies with understanding that the death of Jesus has the power to be genealogically efficacious in a cultural context where patrilineage and sacrifice are integrally related" (Eisenbaum, 2004, p. 676).

CHAPTER FIVE

Healing, Faith, Forgiveness, and Sabbath

This chapter will explore three concepts related to the healing ministry of Jesus. These concepts are the role of faith and forgiveness as they relate to healing, and the meaning of the Sabbath that Jesus wanted to convey to his disciples and the people of his time. The aim of this chapter is to show that there are important messages Jesus wanted to convey through his healing ministry.

Healing and Faith

Faith is another very important aspect in the healing ministry of Jesus Christ. Of the twenty-two healing stories in the Synoptic Gospels nine specifically pertain to faith. The stories pertaining to faith are as follows: 1) the centurion's servant healed, 2) Jairus' daughter healed, 3) the Syrophenician's daughter healed, 4) the two blind men cured, 5) the paralyzed man healed, 6) the woman with the issue of blood healed, 7) the devil cast out of the boy, 8) blind Bartimaeus healed, and 9) the ten lepers healed. Since these stories have already been discussed, I will mention only briefly how faith is the focus of Jesus' ministry.

Healing and Faith in the Gospel

In the story of the centurion, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith...Go and it will be done just as you believed" (Matt 8:10, 13). When Jairus brought his daughter to Jesus, Jesus said, "Don't be afraid; just believe" (Mrk. 5: 36). To the Syrophenician woman who begged him to heal her demon possessed daughter, Jesus replied, "Woman you have great faith" (Matt 15:28)! Jesus told the two blind men who asked for healing, "According to your faith will it be done to you"

(Matt 9:29). When the paralyzed were brought before Jesus, Mark reported that Jesus “saw their faith” (Mark 2:5). To the woman with the issue of blood Jesus said, “Daughter, your faith has healed you” (Mark. 5: 34). Jesus told the father of the boy possessed by the demon, “Everything is possible to him who believes” (Mark. 9:23). In the story of blind Bartimaeus Jesus told him, “Your faith has healed you” (Mark.10:52). And to the leper that returned to thank Jesus for his healing, Jesus responded, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well” (Luke 17:19).

These accounts show the importance of the role of faith in his ministry. Almost half of the healing stories contain an emphasis on faith. These stories suggest that perhaps Jesus used physical healing to teach lessons of faith and the right understanding of faith. Jesus did not have to say anything after he had healed these individuals, and the people were amazed at his healing power. But he kept emphasizing the word faith in all these stories. According to White, faith “Is simply taking God at his word; it is believing that God will do just as he has promised” (ST, September 9, 1889 par. 2).

Faith in Christ is not the work of nature, but the work of God on human minds, wrought in the very soul by the Holy Spirit, who reveals Christ, as Christ revealed the Father. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. With its justifying, sanctifying power, it is above what men call science. It is the science of eternal realities. Human science is often deceptive and misleading, but this heavenly science never misleads. It is so simple that a child can understand it, and yet the most learned men cannot explain it. It is unexplainable and immeasurable, beyond all human expression (White, 1961, p. 117).

In describing the story of a woman with the issue of blood, White writes:

“Somebody hath touched Me,” Jesus said, “for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.” He could distinguish the touch of faith from the casual touch of the careless throng. Someone had touched Him with a deep purpose and had received answer.

Christ did not ask the question for His own information. He had a lesson for the people, for the disciples and for the woman. He wished to inspire the afflicted with hope. He wished to show that it was faith which had brought the healing power. The woman’s trust must not be passed by without comment. God must be glorified by her grateful confession. Christ desired her to understand that He approved her act of faith. He would not have her depart with a half blessing only. She was not to remain in ignorance of His knowledge of her suffering, or of His compassionate love and His approval of her faith in His power to save to the uttermost all who come to Him (White, 1990, pp. 16-17).

Faith

Faith seems to play a significant role in the overall well-being of individuals. In his book, *Spirituality in Patient Care*, Harold Koenig describes how a negative understanding of faith can be detrimental to health. Although faith is important in the eyes of Jesus for physical healing, there are some who have experienced religion to have negative characteristics. If someone is not following their religion by the “rules,” others may feel compelled to cast judgment on that person because they may be doing something that conflicts with their theology or religious beliefs.

Religion, especially in the Christian tradition, can lead some to believe that God will answer their every prayer if they just have enough faith. This mode of thinking can

bring false hope to the individual who did not receive the healing they expected. They may even come to the conclusion that God is angry because of something they did, or that they do not have enough faith for their prayers to be heard and answered.

With some religious groups, the use of medicine is denounced in the belief that faith in God alone will take care of any ailment. For example, a diabetic may not see the need for taking insulin if they have enough faith in God for healing or sustaining of life. It is interesting to note that between the year 1975 and 1995, 172 children died because their parents refused medical treatment based on their religious convictions. For example, Jehovah's Witnesses, reject treatment with blood transfusions for their members. This thinking can lead the medical team, to question why the patient's health not improving but deteriorating if the proper medical advice has been given (Koenig, 2002).

On the other hand, faith has the potential to be redeeming as well. One is reminded of the life of Søren Kierkegaard when he struggled with the feeling that his misery was a punishment from God. He felt this punishment came because his father had cursed God because of a sense of abandonment. Kierkegaard felt that he was under this curse. This struggle led to a deep reflection on the meaning of faith. In April of 1848 he wrote:

“My whole nature is changed. My close reserve, my introversion, is broken—I must speak. Great God, give me grace!” A week later he recorded, “What marvelous boldness of faith is involved in believing that the sin is entirely forgotten, so that the memory of it has nothing alarming about it, thus truly believing oneself into being a new man, so that one can scarcely recognize oneself again” (Kierkegaard, 137-138). From here on, he found healing in his struggle with depression.

Faith can play a significant role in overall wellness and perhaps this is the reason why Jesus remained very focused on faith in his ministry. Perhaps he was trying to show that physical healing is only one dimension of life but that faith affects the entire being and thus is essential for wholeness.

Sin and Forgiveness

This section will discuss the impact of sin on one's physical health and explore the impact of forgiveness on the healing process. The story to be examined is that of the paralyzed man who was brought to Jesus by four friends.

Paralytic Cured (Matthew 9:2, Mark 2:3, Luke 5:18)

1A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. 2So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 3Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. 4Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. 5When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

6Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7"Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

8Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? 9Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? 10But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority

on earth to forgive sins” He said to the paralytic, 11”I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.” 12He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”

Jesus was in Capernaum at Peter’s house (White, 1905) and the house was filled with people wanting to hear Jesus’ message. The house was so full that there was no room even in the doorway. The Bible states that while He was speaking “they came unto Him bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where He was.” In an act of desperation, the four friends broke up the roof and lowered their friend to see Jesus. When Jesus saw the faith of the friends He healed the paralytic. He not only healed him, but forgave him of his sins. There are two foci in this passage: the relationship between sin and physical sickness, and the assertion of Jesus’ divinity, showing that only God could forgive sins.

The Concept of Sin and Sickness in Jesus’ Time

White says of the paralyzed man,

His disease was the result of a sinful life, and his sufferings were embittered by remorse. His great desire was relief from the burden of sin. He longed to see Jesus and receive the assurance of forgiveness and peace with heaven. Then he would be content to live or to die, according to God’s will. The paralytic found in Christ healing for both the soul and the body. He needed health of soul before he could appreciate health of body. Before the physical malady could be healed, Christ

must bring relief to the mind, and cleanse the soul from sin (White, 1905, pp. 73-74).

The Jews believed and taught that God was judging the one who was plagued with a disease, because of a certain sin he or she may have committed. According to the Talmud, "There is no death without sin, and there is no suffering without iniquity. A sick man does not recover from his sickness until all his sins are forgiven him. The Jews held that every sin had its peculiar punishment, and they believed that one can determine the nature of one's sin by his suffering" (5 BC, 1956, p. 996).

The rabbis taught that sin in the eyes of God was carefully dealt with, and that the person's illness was a just means of punishment, which the sinner deserved. For example, Samson went after a Philistine woman and as a result of his sin his eyes were cut out. Another example is of Adam and Eve eating of the forbidden fruit. They both ate the fruit and sin entered the world. Hence, humanity is now subject to death.

Whenever Jesus healed the body of a certain physical ailment He was illustrating the soul being healed from the results of sin. It was Jesus' way of providing humanity with a concrete, visible object lesson of our ultimate deliverance from the devastating effects of sin, whether in body, soul, or spirit.

We are physical, social, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual beings. If any of these five dimensions are neglected or disturbed, there is a resulting loss of the sense of wholeness we were designed to have. Jesus focused on the issue of sin and sickness in the story from Mark. For Jesus, healing was never accomplished for the sake of healing alone. It was an indication of the presence and power of God. The amazement the people in Capernaum experienced the day Jesus forgave the sins of the paralyzed man and then

sent him home carrying his mat, was all intended to bring the people to the point of glorifying God (Storms, 1990).

The next section will discuss the importance of forgiveness in the nature of Christ's healing ministry.

Forgiveness

The power of forgiveness is something that society may take for granted. Forgiveness has the ability to decrease one's stress level and improve the health of the individual. Those who study the subject of forgiveness have proposed many theoretical understandings of the construct. The issue of forgiveness is challenging to understand. It involves cognitive, affective, behavioral, motivational, decisional, and interpersonal aspects. Researchers do not agree about which aspects are most important.

Research has shown that there are two types of forgiveness—decisional and emotional. With decisional forgiveness, one treats their transgressor in the same manner they treated them before the transgression (Worthington, 2003). One can forgive on a decisional level and still have feeling of resentment toward that individual because the issue was not confronted, but treated as if it never occurred.

Worthington (2004) calls the second type of forgiveness emotional, and it is described as such: Forgiveness is rooted in emotions (Worthington and Wade, 1999; Worthington, 2000; Worthington et al., 2001), which affect motivations. Researchers theorize that people who are offended or hurt experience an injustice gap, which is described as the difference between the way one would prefer a transgression to be fully resolved and the way they perceive the situation currently is (Exline et al., 2003). The

injustice gap widens as subsequent events aggravate the person or narrows as subsequent events mitigate the injustice. (P. 386)

As stated before, forgiveness can be beneficial to the body, therefore unforgiveness can cause the body harm. There are four ways that research has done to prove that unforgiveness brings on stress.

The first form of evidence is that brain activity, when unforgiveness is involved, is identical to the brain activity of an individual who is stressed due to negative emotions. The second proof is the hormonal patterns in the body. The main hormone studied was glucocorticoid. Glucocorticoid is secreted when one is under tremendous stress and overwork. The same hormone is also secreted in unforgiveness, and the pattern is the same throughout the body. Sympathetic nervous system activity and tension in facial muscles are the third source of evidence for negativity in unforgiveness. When one experiences unforgiveness and he or she encounters their transgressor the muscles of the face can tense up without the individual being aware. Facial muscles being tense is common for an individual who is stressed and feeling negative emotions. The fourth proof that the feelings of unforgiveness is similar to stress is in the measure of blood chemistry. When one is experiencing unforgiveness their blood pressure rate and plasma protein can be affected in like manner to the one who is stressed or dealing with negative emotions (Worthington, 2004)

These findings help us appreciate the importance of the relief for the paralytic when Jesus told him “your sins are forgiven.” The healing was not limited to only the physical, but was extended to the spiritual. Jesus knew this man was suffering from

emotional distress, and He did not want the paralytic to leave with only one negative condition healed. Jesus' mission was to heal both body and soul.

The paralytic must have felt a great longing for forgiveness. When Jesus pronounced him forgiven, the healing extended beyond his ability to get up and walk. The conversation in this passage did not center around this paralytic's ability to get up and walk. It was Jesus' recognition that sin was affecting his soul and body and what his soul needed was forgiveness. And for forgiveness to be genuine, it must come from the One who has the power to forgive.

Healing and the Sabbath

In this section of the paper I will discuss the issue of Jesus healing on the Sabbath day. Two stories in the synoptic gospels will be examined. These are: 1) the man with a withered hand healed (Matt 12: 9-14), 2) the man cured of dropsy (Luke 14:1-6).

I will give a synopsis of each story, historical information, and how the Jews viewed healing on the Sabbath during the time of Jesus.

Man with a withered hand healed (Matt 12:9-14, Mark 3:1-5, Luke 6:6-10)

1At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. 2When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath."

3He answered, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? 4He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. 5Or haven't you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple

desecrate the day and yet are innocent? 6I tell you that one greater than the temple is here. 7If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent. 8For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

9Going on from that place, he went into their synagogue, 10and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"

11He said to them, "If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? 12How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."

13Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other. 14But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

The story begins with Jesus entering the synagogue to teach. The scribes and the Pharisees watched Him closely to see if He would heal on the Sabbath. They were looking for reasons to accuse Him of breaking the Sabbath. Jesus knew their thoughts and told the sick man to "Arise and stand here," Luke 6:8. The man stood up and came toward Jesus. Jesus then rebuked the thoughts of the scribes and Pharisees by saying, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" There was no response to Jesus' question. When all were silent, Jesus asked the man to step forward, stretch out his hand, and the man was healed. The Greeks believed that the withering of his hand was due to an accident or the result of disease rather than to a congenial defect

(5 BC, 1956). As a result of the healing, the Pharisees were angry and began to devise a plan to kill Jesus.

Dropsy cured (Luke 14:1-6)

1One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched. 2There in front of him was a man suffering from dropsy. 3Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in the law, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?” 4But they remained silent. So taking hold of the man, he healed him and sent him away.

5Then he asked them, “If one of you has a son or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath day, will you not immediately pull him out?” 6And they had nothing to say.

Jesus came to have a meal on the Sabbath and most likely the food was prepared the day before and kept warm because it was unlawful to light a fire on the Sabbath (Ex 16:23; 35:3); therefore, the food was prepared the day preceding the Sabbath (5 BC, 1956).

Jesus had come into the house of one of the chief Pharisees and performed a healing on the Sabbath for a man suffering from dropsy. Dropsy (known today as “edema”—symptomatic of congestive heart failure) wasn’t usually a life-threatening condition—just an uncomfortable one. Dropsy is edema, which refers to an excessive accumulation of serous fluid in tissue spaces or a body cavity (Anonymous, 2006). There is swelling in the joints because of the retention of water. Body cavities swell and often there is a red blotchiness across the body. It is uncomfortable and unsightly, but not necessarily a serious disease.

In this healing story, his symptoms were obvious to everyone in the room. The lawyers and Pharisees did not like the fact that Jesus healed this man on the Sabbath day so Jesus rebuked them as He did in times past. Speaking of the Pharisees, Jesus declared that they, “tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them” (Matt 23:4). In other words, the Pharisees seemed to care more about their rules, than they did about people made by God. But Jesus wanted to impress upon them that people and not rules form the basis of God’s kingdom.

Sabbath Observance and Healing

The Sabbath in the New Testament, by Samuele Bacchiocchi (Biblical Perspectives, 1990, p. 68), explains:

“Christ’s proclamation of lordship over the Sabbath is followed immediately by a second episode about the healing of the man with the withered hand . . . It is noteworthy that all of the seven Sabbath healings reported in the gospels are performed by Christ on behalf of chronically sick persons. These intentional healing acts by Christ on the Sabbath on behalf of incurable persons serve to demonstrate how Jesus fulfilled Messianic expectations nourished by the celebration of the Sabbath.”

The rabbis prohibited healing on the Sabbath day unless it was feared that the victim would die before the next day (The NIV Study Bible, 2004). According to the Mishnah the work of circumcision was permitted on the Sabbath day. Jesus wanted to free the scribes and Pharisees from all the rules they made for the Sabbath, which resulted in making it a burden. For example, in the Mishnah there are 39 types of labor not

acceptable to do on the Sabbath day. The first of these were steps that led to the production of bread: baking, sowing, reaping etc. (SDA Bible Commentary, 1956). The school of Hillel held that on the Sabbath one might comfort a mourner and visit a sick man and pray for him, this was considered “good” (The Interpreters Bible, 1951).

In addition to these major regulations there were countless other provisions concerning the observance of the Sabbath. Most commonly known, perhaps, is the so-called “Sabbath day’s journey” of 2,000 cu.—somewhat less than 2/3 of a mile. It was also counted as Sabbath breaking to look in a mirror fixed on the wall, or even to light a candle. Yet the same regulations permitted an egg laid on the Sabbath to be sold to a Gentile, and a Gentile to be hired to light a candle or a fire (SDA Bible Commentary, 1956, p. 587).

The Jews believed that as little as possible work was to be done on the Sabbath; however, a man was allowed to lead his ox to a well, but was restricted from lifting the vessel to its mouth. Jesus’ actions were justified by the worth of this woman’s life. No ox on earth is more important than a human life that God created (Interpreters, 1952).

Sabbath was never meant to be a burden for man, but time of celebration and reflection. Jesus said, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27 NKJV). The institution of the Sabbath is to be beneficial for the human race. Although the Jews kept the Sabbath the Council of Jerusalem did not force their day of worship on the Gentile church and community (Acts 15:29) (Gehman, 1950).

In the first story of healing, most attention was focused on the issue of Sabbath keeping. Prior to the story of the man with shriveled hand, Mark 2:23-27 contains a discussion on the observance of the Sabbath. Mark 3:1 continues the conversation but the

context is not the healing of a man with shriveled hand. From Mark 3:1-Mark 6, the only two statements related to healing are: “Stand up in front of everyone,” and “Stretch out your hand.” It is interesting to see that right before he said “Stretch out your hand,” Mark recorded, “He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts.” Similarly in the second story, before Jesus healed the man with dropsy on Sabbath he asked the Pharisees and experts in the law, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?” The only thing mentioned about healing was that Jesus healed him and let him go. These two accounts suggest that Sabbath is the focus of Jesus’ healing.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

Christians often look at the healing ministry of Christ from a biological/physiological perspective. Hence when they face severe physical ailments, they hope to witness the power of healing in their lives, they want God to intervene and restore their physical health. When interventions do not take place, they become discouraged. Perhaps this problem emerges because they do not realize the healing ministry of Christ needs to be viewed within the greater context of salvation itself. To be saved is to be restored to wholeness. God wants to restore and redeem the whole person. Christ's ministry of healing aims at bringing about redemption in the various dimensions of human existence, not just the physical. God's plan of salvation is to address socioeconomic, spiritual, political, physical, and emotional dimensions. This thesis shows the healing ministry of Jesus while on earth aimed at restoring the whole person. His method of restoring the whole person is implied in the name Emmanuel, God with us. God coming to earth to dwell with His people is astounding. God incarnate (Jesus) did many wonderful works, such as feeding the four (Matt 15) and five thousand (Matt. 14), calming rough waters (Mark 4), walking on the water (Matt. 14) etc. Calming the sea and walking on water were good, but the real ministry took place when Jesus walked, worked, healed, and lived among the people. Emmanuel is the source of healing for human brokenness resulting from oppression, alienation, discrimination, and isolation. This is where the real ministry of healing took place in the life of Jesus. That is what this study intends to show.

In the Synoptic Gospels there are twenty-two accounts of Jesus' healing ministry. It is interesting to note that of the accounts, fifteen addressed the marginalized population, two addressed the issue of the Sabbath and the misunderstanding of its meaning and one story describes the importance of forgiveness as it relates to healing. Four of the stories are to be records of physical healing.

Marginalized Population

More than half of these stories describe Jesus' ministry to those who were scorned by their societies. Fifteen stories record healing of the marginalized. They include women (Peter's mother-in-law, Jairus' daughter, the Syrophenician's daughter, woman with the issue of blood, widow's son raised to life, woman's infirmity cured), lepers (one leper in Mark 1:40 and ten in Luke 17), demoniacs (demoniac in Mark 5, devil cast out in Mark 9, dumb spirit in Matthew 9, blind and dumb demoniac in Matthew 12, and demoniac in the synagogue in Luke 4), beggar (blind beggar in Mark 8), and those who were discriminated against the Jewish community during the time of Jesus (the Centurian and his servant in Matthew 8). Although the biblical passages do not categorize these as neglected, the significance lies in the fact that fifteen of the twenty-two accounts are stories of Jesus offering healing to the ignored in the community. It is also clear that during the time of Jesus, these people experienced marginalization.

Sin and Forgiveness

Besides Jesus' ministry to the marginalized, his healing ministry also seeks to address the theological issue of sin and forgiveness, as in the story of the paralytic (Mark 2). In this account of the paralytic, the setting indicates that physical healing was a primary concern for Jesus. Although Jesus empathized with the man about his condition,

He recognized that the paralytic needed forgiveness. The context of this experience addresses primarily the relationship between sin, forgiveness, and the power of Christ to heal.

Sabbath

Two accounts report Jesus' attempt to speak to the issue of Sabbath keeping---the healing of the man with the withered hand (Matt 12:1-14) and the man who was cured of dropsy (Luke 14:1-6). To the reader these may appear as just another account of Jesus' healings. However, in healing the men of their diseases Jesus was giving evidence that all the laws the Pharisees had concocted were spiritually binding them as to what was proper to be done on the Sabbath. Hence, the healing of these two men was physical as well as spiritual in nature.

Physically Jesus wanted to heal both men of their sicknesses, but He also knew the minds and hearts of the Pharisees, and how they put much emphasis on keeping the rules of the Sabbath. The Sabbath had become a day which focused more on rules and rituals than worshiping and loving the Creator and loving the people He made.

Spiritually the men healed were liberated to know that the Sabbath was a day to remind humankind of God's creative power and love for them. Jesus also wanted to teach this to the Pharisees who were watching. He modeled for the people of His day the fact that the health of a human being is more important than man made rules and rituals.

Faith

The importance of the role of faith is seen in the next healing story. Of the twenty-two stories nine specifically call for having faith in the healing process. Without these healing accounts, the Bible reader would not realize how essential faith is in the

matrix of physical healing. Faith was of such importance that Jesus even healed while not in the presence of the person who was ill (Matt. 8), but their faith made them whole.

Also of significance is when Jesus asked the sick, “Do you have faith that I can do this,” or “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” In making these statements Jesus pointed to Himself as the source of healing and the One who should be trusted for spiritual wholeness.

Without faith Jesus cannot work. Matthew 13:58 reads: “And He (Jesus) did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.” Jesus making mention of faith throughout the nine stories gives evidence to the reader that the one who was sick needed to believe and trust in His healing power.

Lastly, faith was not limited only to the sick, but was a benefit for Jesus himself. To have faith in Christ was to believe in who He was. In biblical times, as today, faith in Christ was pertinent for salvation; therefore Jesus was satisfied with those who came to Him in faith for physical and spiritual restoration.

The intention of this study is to show that physical healing, although important, does not seem to be the primary focus of Jesus’ healing ministry as recorded in the synoptic gospels. The emphasis as shown in both the content and context of healing stories offers insights into the focus of His healing ministry which are bringing comfort to the marginalized, providing relief to those burdened with guilt, reframing the community’s understanding of Sabbath, and showing the importance of the role of faith for healing and wholeness.

What was the purpose of Jesus’ healing ministry to the outcast and overlooked? In Jesus’ healing ministry to the outcast and marginalized a question must be asked: Did

Jesus demonstrate His healing power to win people over to Christianity or did he truly want people to be made whole? Bible commentators agree that Jesus' main intention was to lead those he healed to believe by faith that their sins were forgiven. Therefore healing and salvation are synonymous when the New Testament language is closely studied from the original languages of the synoptic accounts.

Jesus was greatly troubled by the social, mental, and physical illness He saw among the people. The primary purpose of His healings was to restore the relationship with Him. Jesus knew that harsh illnesses separated people from God and each other, and He wanted to mend those vertical and horizontal relationships. His compassion led Him to heal, not only to increase the size of the synagogue, but for the wholeness, physically and spiritually of those He created.

When Jesus healed one who had faith, the faith of the sick person established an intimate connection to Jesus. The purpose for healing with faith was to show the kingdom of heaven to the sick. Jesus wanted to demonstrate that faith is the language of heaven. When Jesus experienced great faith from an individual they both shared the kingdom of heaven. In regards to faith, the ministry of Jesus was twofold. He wanted the healings connected with faith to show to the individual healed that not only His presence, but their faith was vital in the salvific transaction (Canale, 1985).

Jesus wanted the Jewish leadership to realize that He was the Messiah. The religious leaders possessed all the knowledge and had all the rules necessary to keep the Jewish standards. Jesus' healing ministry was to demonstrate His divinity. He wanted the rabbis to realize that He was the fulfillment of their Messianic hopes. He knew the hearts of the Pharisees and scribes and that a sure way to capture their attention was through

healing the sick. When a person was healed and a Pharisee was present Jesus wanted to engage him in spiritual dialogue (MacArthur, 1988).

When Jesus came in human flesh, He displayed empathy toward humanity. His healing ministry was a precursor of the restoration of humanity in God's kingdom. When He raised Lazarus from the dead, He was showing that He was the resurrection and the life. When He restored physical deformity, He demonstrated the will to restore man to his condition before sin.

Jesus also wanted to show that He took the initiative in many of the healings. He wanted those who witnessed the healings to be aware of his willingness to heal mankind from their sicknesses. Jesus took the initiative in the story of the woman with the spirit of infirmity (Luke 13:12). In this story Jesus called the woman to himself and then declared her healed. Jesus also took the initiative in the healing of the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:6). In this story Jesus came to the paralyzed man and asked, "Do you want to be healed?" Jesus healed him of his sickness and then entered the temple. A third example of Jesus taking the initiative is found in the story of Malchus (Luke 22:51). After Peter cut off the ear of Malchus Jesus touched his ear and restored it without asking him if he wanted to be healed. The last example of Jesus taking initiative is in the story of the widow's son at Nain being raised from death to life (Luke 7:14). In this story the woman did not ask for her son to be raised. Jesus took the initiative, raised the boy from his coffin and gave him over to his mother (Wilkinson, 1998).

Jesus healed a man at the pool of Bethesda, where there were many other sick individuals. Although many at the pool were sick, Jesus only healed one. This goes to show that Jesus healed for a purpose. Jesus could have said, "Israel is healed," and all

sickness would have ceased. That is why He came preaching and teaching the good news of the kingdom of God, that there would be no sickness, mistreatment of the marginalized, or pain in the coming kingdom. The example used to prove this statement is in Mark 1:38 (and Luke 4:43), where Jesus says, "Let us go on to the next towns that I might preach there also; for this is why I came out." Jesus wanted the people to hear the message of salvation and turn to Him for eternal life and spiritual restoration.

The following chart gives a visual synopsis of the results of this study.

Texts	Narrative	Marginalized	Faith	Forgiveness	Sabbath
Matt. 8	Centurion	Race	X		
Matt. 8	Peter's Mother-in-law healed				
Mark 5	Jairus' daughter healed		X		
Matt. 12	Man with withered hand				X
Matt. 12	Blind and dumb demoniac	Demon possession			
Matt. 15	Gentile woman	Race Gender	X		
Matt. 9	Two blind men	Poverty	X		
Matt. 9	Dumb spirit cast out	Demon possession			
Mark 1	Leper cured	Lepers			
Mark 2	Paralytic healed	Sin	X	X	
Mark 5	Demoniac cured	Demon possession			
Mark 5	Woman with issue of blood	Gender	X		
Mark 7	Deaf and dumb man cured	Poverty			
Mark 8	Blind man cured				
Mark 9	Devil cast out of boy	Demon possession	X		
Mark 10	Blind Bartimaeus	Poverty	X		
Luke 4	Demoniac in synagogue	Demon possession			
Luke 7	Widow's son raised	Gender			
Luke 13	Woman's infirmity	Gender			
Luke 14	Dropsy cured				X
Luke 17	Ten lepers cured	Lepers	X		
Luke 22	Malchus healed	Race			

References

- Anatomy. (2006). *Vaginal bleeding*. Retrieved May 7, 2006, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vaginal_bleeding
- Ayers, D., & Stucky, J. (2005). Abnormal vaginal bleeding. *Nursing Journal*, 35(6), 51.
- Baab, O. J. (Ed.). (1980). *The Interpreters dictionary of the Bible* (1st ed., Vols. 1-4). New York: Abingdon.
- Belcher, M. (2001). *An Attitude of Gratitude*. Retrieved May 2, 2006, <http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermon.asp?SermonID=41069&ContributorID=6831>.
- Bohanon, P. (1996). *The Woman at the Well: Part Two*. Retrieved May 1, 2006, <http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/charlene/atwell.html>
- Box, G. H. & Jones, D. R. (1963). Poverty. *In the dictionary of the Bible* (pp. 784-785). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Bradley, D. L. (2005). Abnormal urine bleeding. *Nurse Practitioner*, 30(10), 38-51.
- Bratcher, D. (2006). *The Gospels and the synoptic problem the literary relationship of Matthew, Mark, and Luke*. Retrieved April 23, 2006, <http://www.cresourcei.org/synoptic.html>
- Canale, A. (1985). *Understanding the human Jesus*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.
- Collins, G. (1976). Psychological Observations on Demonism. In J. W. Montgomery (Ed.), *Demon possession* (pp. 237-250). Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House
- Cranfield, C. E. B. (1985). *Romans: a shorter commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans.
- Dawson, J. P. (1997). *Synoptic gospels: harmony/disharmony of the gospels*. Retrieved May 1, 2006, <http://www.jp dawson.com/synopt/synopgos.html>
- Demon (2006). *Demon Possession*. Retrieved May 1, 2006, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demonic_possession
- Douglas, J. D. (1962). Widow. *In the new Bible dictionary* (pp.1326-1327). Grand Rapids: Eermans.
- Driver, G. R. (1963). Leprosy. In F.C. Grant & H. H. Rowley (Eds.), *Dictionary of the Bible* (pp. 575- 578). New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons.

- Eisenbaum, P. (2004). A remedy for having been born of woman: Jesus, Gentiles, and genealogy in Romans. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 123, 671-702.
- Feldman, L. H. (1993). *Jew and Gentile in the ancient world*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Gehman, H. S. (1950). *The new Westminster dictionary of the bible*. Pennsylvania: Westminster.
- Guzik, D. (1997). *David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible*. Retrieved May 3, 2006, http://www.studylight.org/com/guz/view.cgi?book=mr&chapter=5&verse=25#Mr5_25
- Harrison, R.K. (1975). Demon, demoniac, demonology. *In the Zondervan pictorial encyclopediadia of the Bible* (Vol. 2, pp. 92-101). Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Harrop, E. (2005). *Leprosy*. Retrieved April 20, 2006, <http://www.emedicine.com/derm/topic223.htm>
- Hartin, P. (2000). Poor. *In Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible* (pp. 1070-1071). Grand Rapids: Eermans.
- Koenig, G. H. (2002). *Spirituality in patient care: Why, how, when, and what*. Radnor, PA: Templeton Foundation Press.
- MacArthur, J. (2005). *The Biblical Portrait of Women*. Retrieved May 3, 2006, http://www.crosswalk.com/faith/ministry_articles/1385513.html
- MacArthur, F. J. (1988). *What does Jesus mean when He says "follow me"?* *The gospel according to Jesus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House
- McAdam, J. D. (2002). *Demonology*. Retrieved May 1, 2006, <http://www.djmcadam.com/demons.html>.
- McEnroe, A., Denise, M., Lappin, S., Liptok, J., McIntosh, L. (2004). Abnormal vs. dysfunctional uterine bleeding: What's the difference? *Nurse Practitioner*, 29, 11-14.
- McGarvey, W & and Pendleton, P. Y. (1914). *Commentary on John 4: The Fourfold Gospel*. Retrieved May 3, 2006, http://www.studylight.org/com/tfg/view.cgi?book=joh&chapter=4&verse=27#Joh4_27

- Medlineplus (2005). *Leprosy*. Retrieved May 1, 2006, <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001347.htm>
- Miller, M. (1961). The poor. In *Harpers Bible dictionary* (pp. 567-568). New York: Harper & Brothers.
- Mohammad A., Hussein, S., Marzouk, A., Nabil, N., Hunter, N. S., Mahgoub, D., et al. (2006). Histopathological study of apparently normal skin of patients with leprosy. *International Journal of Dermatology*, 45, 292-296.
- Nanos, M. (1996). *The mystery of Romans*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Neurosis(2006). *Neurosis*. Retrieved April 19, 2006, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neurosis>
- Neyrey, J. H. (2006). *What's Wrong With This Picture? John 4, Cultural Stereotypes of Women, and Public and Private Space*. Retrieved May 3, 2006, <http://www.nd.edu/~jneyrey1/picture.html>
- Nichol, F. D. (Ed.). (1953). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (1st ed., Vols. 1-7). Washington: Review and Herald
- Oxman, T. E., Freeman, D. H., & Manheimer, E. D. (1995). Lack of social participation or religious strength and comfort as risk factors for death after cardiac surgery in the elderly. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 57, 5-15.
- Reumann, J. (2000). Romans. In *Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible* (pp. 1135-1138). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Rice, R. (2004). Toward a theology of wholeness: A tentative model of whole person care. In S. Sorajjakool & H. Lamberton (Eds.), *Spirituality, health, and wholeness* (pp. 15-36). Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press.
- Smith, S. (1965). *Samaritan*. Retrieved April 11, 2006, <http://www.bibletexts.com/glossary/samaritan.htm>.
- Stevens, D., & Lewis, G. (2001). *Jesus, MD*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House
- Storms, S. C. (1990). *Healing and holiness: A biblical response to the faith-healing phenomenon*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing.
- Suydam, M. (2006). *Lepers*. Retrieved April 18, 2006, <http://www2.kenyon.edu/Projects/Margin/lepers.htm>

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
LOMA LINDA, CALIFORNIA

- Synoptic Gospel. (2006). *The synoptic Gospels in the New Testament*. Retrieved March 8, 2006, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/synoptic_gospels
- Taylor, B. (1996, February 28). Face to face with God. *Christian Century*, 113, 7.
- The Columbia encyclopedia* (6th ed.). (2004). New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- The Healing Ministry of Jesus Christ.(2005). *Western Catholic reporter*. Retrieved February 22, 2006, <http://www.wcr.ab.ca/bishops/alberta/2000/healthcare022100.shtml>
- Torgerson, H. (2005). *The healing of the bent woman*. Retrieved May 1, 2006, <http://www.highbeam.com/library/docfree.asp?DOCID=1G1:135121657&ctrlInfo=Round19%3AMode19a%3ADocG%3AResult&ao=>
- Warwick J. B., & Lockwood D. (2004). Leprosy and poverty. *Lancet*, 363, 1209-1219
- Waterhouse, S. (2005). Life's tough questions: *What the bible says about suffering, depression, demon possession, and mental illness*. Amarillo, TX: Westcliff Press.
- White, G. E. (1898). *The desire of ages*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press.
- White, G. E. (1905). *The ministry of healing*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press.
- White, G. E. (1961). *Our high calling*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press.
- Wikipedia (2006). *Leprosy*. Retrieved May 1, 2006, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leprosy>
- Wilkinson, J. (1998). *The Bible and healing: A medical and theological Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing
- Witherington, B. (Ed.). (1992). *The Anchor Bible dictionary* (1st ed., Vols. 1-6). New York: Doubleday.
- Worthington, E. L., & Scherer, M. (2004). Forgiveness is an emotion-focused coping strategy that can reduce health risks and promote health resilience: theory, review, and hypotheses. *Psychology & Health*, 19(3), 385-405.
- Yancey, P. (1995). *The Jesus I never knew*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.
- Yeboah, C. (2000). Demon. In *Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible* (pp. 337-338). Grand Rapids: Eermans.