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## Jesus Heals

### 1. Intro: Crying out for healing [SLIDE]

- We live in a world that is crying out for healing
- Over the last few weeks I've been confronted with the pain of suffering and death in the world
  - Earlier in January, Nathan Barry, a 16 yo boy from Jannali and student at Sutherland Shire Christian School died from cancer
    - Various tumours in his heart and brain that were terminal
  - On Australia Day caught up with good friend who was grieving the sudden death of her close friend and colleague from the church they work at
    - She had contracted meningococcal meningitis > started feeling unwell at start of the week and by Friday she had died
- Of course suffering and death is around us all the time
  - It's just its been a bit closer to home for me in the past few weeks
  - All of us no doubt have our own experiences with this and probably much more personal and devastating than I've just described
- And what's clear is we live in a world that is crying out for healing
  - Whether it be
    - Cancer
    - Leukaemia
    - Mental illness
    - Dementia
    - Chronic pain
    - Heart disease
    - List goes on
- When we're confronted with the reality of suffering, disease and death ... it inevitably gets us searching for a solution
- So we have all fund raising initiatives to help raise money to find solutions
  - Pink ribbon = breast cancer
  - Red ribbon = HIV / AIDS
  - Movember = Men's health
  - Etc
- And when people do make significant advancement in the field of medicine we rightly treat them as heroes! [SLIDE x3]

- The men<sup>1</sup> who discovered penicillin were awarded the Nobel Prize for medicine in 1945
- Victor Chang
  - lauded for his pioneering work in heart and lung transplants
  - Life size statue at Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute
- Fred Hollows
  - Famous for his work in restoring eyesight for thousands indigenous Australians
  - Australian of the year in 1990
- They were men who bought relief to a world crying out for healing

**[SLIDE]**

- 2,000yrs ago Jesus Christ came into the world with the power and authority to heal any disease, disability or condition in way that had never been seen before or since
- And for a world crying out for healing, what Jesus can do and has to offer shows he has the solution we're crying out for
  - He has something to offer that we can find nowhere else
  - He brings healing to our brokenness and our world
- This morning going to look at
  - What's Jesus doing?
  - Who's it for?
  - How can he do it?

**2. Context**

- We're starting a new series for this term focusing on Matt 8-10
- You can see there in v1 that Jesus has just come down from the mountainside where he's just finished giving his famous Sermon on the Mount
  - He's been teaching about the Kingdom of Heaven and what it looks like to be a disciple in the Kingdom of Heaven
- Here in Matt 8-10 Jesus is showing that he's **king** over the kingdom
  - All the miracles that Matthew highlights for us throughout these chapters point us to the fact that
    - Jesus has arrived as the king of God's kingdom
    - And that he's come with all God's power and authority to usher in the Kingdom

**[SLIDE]**

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Alexander Fleming, Ernst Chain and Sir Howard Florey

- All this is happening up in Galilee in and around Capernaum
  - It's likely that the sermon on the mount happened on a hill to the east of Capernaum
  - Now Jesus has come down the mountain
  - And in v1-17 he heals many

### 3. What's Jesus doing? [SLIDE]

- In these verses Matthew recounts 4 specific instances where Jesus heals people
  - Leper
  - Centurion's servant
  - Peter's mother in law
  - Many
- Why's he doing this?
- As he heals ... he's laying down the proof for who he is
  - He's demonstrating with absolute clarity that HE IS the king of God's kingdom who has come with power and authority
- We see in this in each of the healings he performs
  
- **Leper** (v1-4)
- In the first century leprosy was feared as much as cancer
- The medics tell us that as a patient's condition deteriorates the skin becomes scaly and white and the sufferer takes on the appearance of a dying man
- As a result lepers were considered unclean – both medically and spiritually
  - They were forced to live outside the city
  - They had to cry out "Unclean! unclean!" to anyone who came near them to ensure they didn't become infected and unclean as well
  - They weren't able to worship in the temple
  - They were completely excluded from the community
- It was devastating
  
- And this leper comes and throws himself at Jesus feet and says
  - *"Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."*
  - And at a touch! ... just like that ... the man was healed!
  
- For the Jews looking on and seeing this miracle they would've been left in no doubt what it meant

- Because they knew from the OT God had healed Namaan a commander in the Assyrian army of his leprosy<sup>2</sup>
- And here is Jesus touching a man and healing him of his leprosy
  - With just a touch!
  - And in doing so he does what only God can do
- And for those watching on it would have been crystal clear
  - Here is a man who has all God's power and authority to heal
- **Centurion** (v5-13)
- Jesus moves on and goes to Capernaum
  - A Centurion comes to Jesus and says his servant is suffering from some type of paralysis that's causing him much suffering
  - Initially Jesus was going to go the Centurion's house to heal the servant
  - But the Centurion says
    - *"You don't need to go out of your way Jesus. Just say the word and I know he will be healed"*
  - Jesus says
    - *"Go, it will be done just as you believed it would"*
- How's that for power and authority!
  - With just a word! - *"Go, it's done"*
  - And from afar! > he didn't even need to be in the same vicinity
  - The Centurion's power and authority extended over a company of soldiers
  - But Jesus power and authority extended over all people of all places ... without limitation
- **Peter's MIL** (v14-15)
- We see more demonstrations of Jesus power and authority with the healing of Peter's mother-in-law
  - She's lying in bed with a fever
  - To have a fever in those days almost always ended in death
  - Yet Jesus walks in, touches her hand and restores her full health
- **Crowds** (v16)
- It's apparent that these three healings are
  - just the tip of the iceberg

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<sup>2</sup> 2 Kings 5

- just a few examples of the **many** healing Jesus did
- Because in v16 Matthew tells crowds of people came to Jesus that evening and he healed ALL the sick
  - He basically put all the local doctors and hospitals out of business in one day and saved Medicare a fortune!
- With just a touch ... with just a word ... and from afar ... Jesus heals all kinds of sickness, disease, and death
- And in doing so he emphatically says ... I am the King of God's kingdom who has been given all power and authority
- But Jesus is doing much more than pointing to his power and authority to heal
  - Jesus is also pointing to a time when sickness, disease, and death will be no more
  - He's giving us a glimpse of what it will be like when as the King of God's kingdom, he ushers in the kingdom of heaven in all its glory and fullness
- We get a hint of that in what Jesus says in v11
- In response to the Centurion's trust in Jesus, Jesus says
  - *"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."*
- What's the significance of this?
- In the OT ... the KOH was often described like a great and glorious banquet
- For example in Isaiah 25 God says [SLIDE]
  - **Isaiah 25:6-9** <sup>6</sup> *On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine-- the best of meats and the finest of wines. <sup>7</sup> On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; <sup>8</sup> he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. <sup>9</sup> In that day they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."*
- It's a wonderful picture of the new creation
  - It will be like the most wonderful wedding banquet you could ever imagine
  - The food on the menu will be a combination of Jamie Oliver and Marco Pierre White

- The wine is the finest vintage from the Barossa Valley
- The benefits of being at this banquet
  - *he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth*
- The people of Israel were waiting for God's promised King who was going to come with all God's power and authority to overthrow disease, sickness, suffering and even death itself ... and institute God's glorious banquet!<sup>3</sup>

**[SLIDE]**

- His healings show that Jesus is no happier with the way things are any more than you or I
- And he shows with utter clarity that he has the power and authority to do something about it
- Jesus is saying ... "The healing I offer now is what you will experience for eternity when I usher in the Kingdom of Heaven"
- And so he gives us a foretaste of the way things will be when he ushers in the Kingdom of Heaven
  
- He hasn't just come to provide a solution to a world that's crying out for healing from sickness and disease
- Because he's come to provide the solution for a world that's crying out for healing from death itself!
  
- **Application**
- And this is important because the point of the passage is NOT to say that Jesus is going to heal you and I and all our loved ones of all our sicknesses, diseases and afflictions
- Yes Jesus can heal without limitation
- But
  - He didn't heal all people everywhere
  - He didn't give them us the cure for cancer
  - He didn't take away all sickness, disease and suffering in the world there and then
- The reason is because he healed for a purpose ...
  - And that purpose was to reveal who he was and what he had come to do
  - While he didn't take away all sickness, disease and suffering there and then ... he has shown us there will come a time when he will

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<sup>3</sup> We see the same thing in the last book of the Bible (Revelation) John has a vision of the new heavens and earth And it will be a place where there will no more need for us to cry out for healing. Refer Revelation 21:1-5

- He didn't give Nathan Barry and his family the cure for cancer ...
  - But he's shown he has the power and authority to overcome everything ... and the day will come when cancer is no more
  
- Can Jesus heal you now?
  - Yes! Absolutely!
  - And he has shown he has the power and authority to do it
- Will he heal you now? Maybe
  - And whether he does or not, doesn't change the truth of what Jesus is doing here
  
- Because what he's doing is making it clear
  - I am the king of God's kingdom
  - And I have all the power and authority to overcome all the sickness, disease, and death of this world
  - And there will be a day when I usher in the KOH when it will be no more

#### 4. Who's it for? [SLIDE]

- Who gets what Jesus is offering?
- Who gets to experience the KOH where there will be no more sickness, disease and death?
- We see the pattern of it right here in those that Jesus heals
  
- First of all we see all those that Jesus heals are outsiders
  - The leper ... was ostracised and excluded from Jewish society
  - The Centurion's servant would have been a Roman
    - Which means he was a Gentile > a pagan
  - Peter's mother in law was an outsider because she was a woman
    - In those times women were treated as property
    - Their word counted for nothing in legal terms
- All of them are outsiders > all of them are social rejects ... and Jesus healed them all
  
- And for the Jews watching on this would have been totally confronting
- Why would God's king ... bless and heal the outsiders?
  - They're social rejects Jesus
  - They're not the ones who will be part of God's kingdom Jesus
  
- And yet Jesus makes it clear that his offer to a world crying out for healing extends to people just like them

- And in doing so, Jesus shows that his kingdom is an upside down kingdom
  - The kingdom that he has power and authority over doesn't fit with our culture's view of things
- Our culture says if you want to get into anything ... you need to be successful, beautiful, skilled and powerful
  - Get into a top tier law firm ... have to be smart
  - Get into a professional sports team ... have to have amazing skills
  - Get into the right group ... have to be cool or beautiful or good looking
- But Jesus turns all that on its head and says ... none of that matters
  - All are welcome into the kingdom
  - It doesn't matter
    - who you are
    - what station of life you come from
    - what sins you committed
    - what failures you've had
    - what circumstances life has thrown at you
  - Jesus offer goes out to all
- Secondly, we see it's not just the outsiders who are welcome ...
  - It's **all** who come to him and recognise him as the one who is the king of God's kingdom who has all power and authority
- We see this with the leper
- In v2 the leper comes and kneels before Jesus
  - Word translated 'knelt' = in original language means prostrated or worshipped<sup>4</sup>
- The leper falls before Jesus in worship and calls him 'Lord'
  - Because he recognises Jesus' authority
- Then he says ...
  - "If you are willing, you can make me clean"
  - Not
    - "Hey Jesus I've heard rumours, but I'm not really sure what you're on about ... and so if you can help me out that would be great"
  - He knows Jesus can > He knows Jesus has the power
- And so he comes, trusting in Jesus as the one who is king of God's kingdom with power and authority

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<sup>4</sup> Same word used to describe what the Magi did when they came to Jesus when he was a child - Matt 2:2, 11

- **Centurion**
- See it also with the Centurion
  - He has total faith and trust in Jesus power to heal his servant
  - He knows Jesus has an authority that extends waaay beyond the authority he has a leader of soldiers
  - Knows that Jesus words can be trusted
- And Jesus is blown away
  - "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great **faith**" (v10)
  - "Go! It will be done just as you **believed** it would" (v13)
- Jesus is astonished at his faith
  - And he's a Gentile!
  - He didn't have the privilege of OT revelation to help him understand Jesus
  - But he understood Jesus power and authority better than anyone in Israel
- These two points are backed up by what Jesus says in v11
- In v 11 Jesus is saying that that heavenly banquet is for everyone
  - It's a picture of all nations coming to the banquet<sup>5</sup> to join the patriarchs > Abraham, Isaac & Jacob
  - All people from all directions of the compass will come to the feast
  - It's not just for the Jews ... Gentiles like this Centurion will be part of the kingdom
- But then shockingly Jesus goes on to say in v12
  - *But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth*
- Who are the subjects of the kingdom?
  - He's referring to those Jews who thought they had automatic entry into the KOH by virtue of their birthright
  - Those who thought they could enter by their religious rituals and obedience
  - Those who failed to acknowledge Jesus as the king who had come with all God's power and authority

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<sup>5</sup> See also Luke 14

- **Application**
- You see the pattern?
- We live in a world crying out for healing
- And Jesus comes and says I've got the solution
  - I'm going to usher in the kingdom of heaven
  - And it's accessible to everyone
  
- Entry into the kingdom is not based on
  - Success, or status or heritage
  - Not based on religious ritual or obedience
- Entry into Jesus kingdom is for all who
  - come to Jesus
  - and bow down to him
  - and recognise him as the king of God's kingdom
  - the one who has power and authority usher in the KOH

## 5. How does he do it? [SLIDE]

- So how does Jesus do it?
- How can Jesus provide the solution to a world crying out for healing
- How can he overcome sickness, disease, and death by ushering in the KOH?
  
- Again ... we see the pattern here in the passage
- When Jesus heals the leper ... what's he do?
  - He touches him ... even though he was both medically and spiritually unclean
- In touching him ... Jesus was willing to become a leper
  - Jesus was willing to become unclean in order to make him clean
  - Jesus was willing to be rejected, so that he would no longer be rejected
  - Jesus was willing to suffer, so that he would no longer suffer
  - Jesus was willing to die, so that the leper could live
  
- And if you and I are going to enter into the KOH ... we need to be made clean
  - Our pride, our greed, our lust, our idolatry, our lack of forgiveness, our selfishness – all our sin needs to be wiped clean
- And that's exactly what Jesus Christ did went to the cross and bore the judgement of God for our sin

- And this is exactly the point Matthew makes in v17 at the end of these healings
  - In v17 he quotes from Isaiah 53 in the OT and says
    - *This was to fulfil what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: "He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases."*
- If you read Isaiah 53 you'll see it's painting a picture of one who would come and not just take up our infirmities and carry our diseases
  - But it goes on to speak of the one who will be
    - pierced for our transgressions
    - crushed for our iniquities
    - punishment would bring us peace; and
    - by his wounds we would be healed
- Matthew is making it clear ... that the true healing Jesus brings will come when Christ goes to the cross to deal with sin<sup>6</sup>
- And in going to the cross ... Jesus was willing to become not like a leper ... but a sinner like you and I
- You see at the cross
  - Jesus was willing to become unclean in order to make you clean
  - Jesus was willing to be rejected by the Father, so that you won't be rejected by the Father
  - Jesus was willing to suffer judgment, so that you won't suffer judgment
  - Jesus was willing to die, so that you can live

### Application

- So friends, when you or those you know are suffering with
  - Cancer
  - Leukaemia
  - Mental illness
  - Dementia
  - Chronic pain
  - Heart disease
- Know that there's one who has come to provide the solution to a world crying out for healing
- He's the king of God's kingdom who has all power and authority
- And he's shown that when he ushers in that kingdom ...

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<sup>6</sup> Matt 1:21 > *you shall call him Jesus for he will save his people from their sins*

- It will be a place where there is no 'more death or mourning or crying or pain'
- For in the KOH all those things will have passed away
  
- But just as importantly ... is that the physical healing we so desperately desire ...
  - Is not as important as the healing Jesus provides for us at the cross
  - For it's only because of the cross can we be cleansed and enter into the kingdom
  
- And friends ...
- If you want that hope > if you want that assurance
- Then know the cleansing Jesus offers is for everyone
- No matter how much of an outsider you think you are
- Because it doesn't depend on how good or religious or successful or powerful or beautiful you are
- It's about coming to Jesus
  - Believing that he can make you clean
  - Worshipping him
  - Recognising him as the one who is the king of God's kingdom
  
- And if you have loved ones who are suffering ... and you want them to have that same hope and assurance
  - Tell them about Jesus
  - Tell them about the one who will bring an end to sickness and disease
  - Tell them about the one who can make them clean
  - Tell them about the one who died so they can live
  
- Nathan Barry wasn't cleansed of his tumours sickness that he and all his family and friends so desperately prayed for ... but he was cleansed of his sin
  - Because like those that Jesus healed ... he trusted in Jesus
  - And because he trusted in Jesus ... he will get to experience the reality of what Jesus so powerfully demonstrated
  - A place where disease, suffering, sickness and death are no more

## **PRAY**