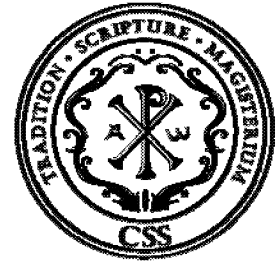


**Lesson 9 . . . Physician of Souls and Bodies**  
**The Gospel of Matthew**

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**Notes From the Podium**

By Fr. Matthew Kauth

**These notes are intended to augment your own reading and study of the lesson. Please use as an aid to help document the main message of the lecture.**

**Matthew 9:1-38**

- I. “And getting into a boat he crossed to his own city.”
  - A. Just as Jesus commanded the demons in the Gadarenes to “Go”, the people tell Jesus to leave.
  - B. He is received by the people of His own city.
    - 1. They were fundamentally aware of their need.
    - 2. A paralytic is brought to Jesus.
- II. Healing
  - A. Healing begins with realization of a need.
    - 1. Need is part of the recognition granted by humility.
    - 2. Our fundamental state is one in which we need Him.
    - 3. All that we are and all that we have comes from Him.
    - 4. All who received Christ’s Grace first recognized their need, then reached out to him, and then were healed.
  - B. “...Jesus saw their faith...” - How do you *see* faith?
    - 1. Faith cannot be seen until it is enfleshed.
    - 2. Matt 7:21 - "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven."
  - C. Physical Healing vs. Spiritual Healing
    - 1. ““Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven.” - We see here the primacy of spiritual health over physical health.
      - a. Our spiritual health is the reason He has come.
      - b. Jesus did not come to save us from physical suffering but rather through it.
    - 2. Suffering
      - a. Suffering is often the means of making one cognizant of need for Him.
      - b. Suffering is never caused *by* God, but by the fall of man.
      - c. God uses suffering as an instrument for our own salvation.
        - i. “...all things will work together for good for those who love Him and are called to His purpose.” -Rom. 8:28
        - ii. Suffering is never wasted when it is united to Him.
  - D. Murmurings
    - 1. The Scribes think Jesus a blasphemer.
    - 2. Jesus reads their thoughts and says, “Why do you think evil in your hearts?”
  - E. A Paradox: “What is easier...?”
    - 1. “Your sins are forgiven.” – perceived easier to say because no one can prove whether the sins are forgiven or not.
    - 2. “Rise and walk.” - perceived to be harder because the proof will be obvious.
    - 3. The paradox:
      - a. For Christ, to bear our infirmities (physical healing) is easy.
      - b. To bear our sins will cost Him His life. The price of forgiveness of sins is His precious blood.

- F. A Sign
  - 1. “But that you may know...”
  - 2. “Rise, take up your bed and go home.”
- G. Authority
  - 1. Author’s rights
  - 2. The *exousia*
  - 3. The power given the apostles:
    - a. “Whose sins you forgive are forgiven, whose sins you retain are retained.”
    - b. Priests are His instruments, wielding His authority on His behalf.
      - i. Like the hyssop branch used by the priests of the old covenant to sprinkle blood on the people to purify them; Every priest’s hand, raised in absolution, is in effect sprinkling that precious blood on the penitent.
      - ii. Another paradox: while the priest is the instrument that sprinkles Christ’s precious blood, the priest is also a penitent that must seek absolution himself.
  - 4. A Sign of His Glory
    - a. “Take up your mat...”
    - b. The very thing that was a sign of infirmity becomes a sign of God’s Glory.
    - c. So it is with every infirmity, every cross, that we bear they become trophies that give witness to God’s power.
    - d. Note artists depiction of the instruments of our Lord’s Passion in a painting on the ceiling of a church in Portugal:
      - i. Cherub twirling the crown of thorns
      - ii. Cherub playing with the spear used to pierce our Lord
      - iii. Cherub tossing the dice used for casting lots
    - e. The instruments involved in our Lord’s sufferings have become things to be rejoiced in because they no longer hold power of suffering and death.

### III. Matthew, The Tax Collector

- A. Matthew is sitting, not acting.
- B. Painting “The Calling of St. Matthew” by Caravaggio (see resources at [www.cssprogram.net](http://www.cssprogram.net))
- C. Matthew follows Jesus with immediacy.
  - 1. Jesus is moving; to follow Him you must move *now*.
  - 2. Note also: the emphasis is on Jesus’ action not Matthew’s response.
- D. Matthew eats with our Lord.
  - 1. “For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”
  - 2. Jesus teaches His followers how to feast with Him.
    - a. The principal reason to follow Jesus is not to serve Him, for he doesn’t need such service.
    - b. The principal reason is to be able to sit intimately with Him at the table where he feeds His flock.
      - i. This is the Divine service.
      - ii. In this life this is the Divine Liturgy in which the Lamb feeds us with His own flesh.
    - c. He desires that we suffer with others around the same table.
      - i. To have mercy, *misericordia* (literally, “suffering of the heart”) for others.
      - ii. Mercy *is* sacrifice. It is sacrifice that is more difficult to offer than animal sacrifice because it is the rending of one’s own heart and not another’s.
- E. “Why do ... your disciples not fast?” – asked by followers of John the Baptist
  - 1. Wedding analogy
    - a. John the Baptist previously described Jesus as the Bridegroom.
    - b. Wedding guest fast before the wedding feast.

- c. John knew that the point of fasting was Jesus, Himself and that once He is present fasting should cease and feasting begin. We feast *on* our Lord.
  - 2. The whole point of fasting is to subject the lesser appetites to the fundamental appetite (desire) for Him.
  - 3. Fasting is a means to Jesus, so why should one fast once Jesus is present. The “means” to that end is no longer necessary.
- F. “Neither is new wine put into old wineskins...”
  - 1. New wine = new life given in Baptism (Divine Life)
    - a. The divine life is not a *principal* by which we imitate Christ; it is a *life* that we are to *live*.
    - b. Just like the human life conceived in your mother’s womb, the divine life is conceived in us at Baptism.
    - c. In order to grow the divine life must be fed, tended and cultivated.
  - 2. Old wineskin = the person you were before Baptism
    - a. Our old life cannot contain the new divine life. (When new wine is put into old wineskins and begins to ferment, the old wineskins cannot contain it and they explode.)
    - b. Just as a child cannot stay in its mother’s womb, so too the new life conceived in Baptism will outgrow your present life.
  - 3. We are all going to need a new body to contain our new life, and we will get one at the resurrection of the dead.
    - a. A soul remade.
    - b. A heart remade.
    - c. A mind that sees truth as it really is.
    - d. A new body resurrected.

#### IV. Other Healings

- A. The ruler’s daughter
  - 1. “...Come lay your hand on her and she will live.” –the ruler
  - 2. “Jesus rose and followed him with His disciples” –Matthew the Evangelist
- B. The woman with a hemorrhage
  - 1. “If only I touch His garment, I shall be made well.” –the woman
  - 2. “...your faith has made you well.” -Jesus
- C. The ruler’s daughter
  - 1. “...the girl is not dead but sleeping.” – Jesus
    - a. Jesus also said this of Lazarus
    - b. Implication is that it is no more difficult for Jesus to raise the dead than it is for us to wake someone from sleep.
  - 2. “They laughed at Him...But...the girl arose.” –Matthew the Evangelist
- D. Note the way the story of the woman with the hemorrhage is recounted within the story of the ruler’s daughter.
  - 1. The woman with the hemorrhage encounters Jesus as he journeys to the little girl.
    - a. The woman demonstrates that coupling of faith and humility.
    - b. She *dares* to just touch His garment.
  - 2. Because Jesus was doing the will of His Father, He was also in the path of the woman with a hemorrhage.
  - 3. So it is with us, as long as we are doing the will of our Father, we will always be exactly where we are supposed to be, where you need to be.

#### V. Sleep: Preparation for Death

- A. Recall the story of the ruler’s daughter and Lazarus.
- B. In sleep, there is a quieting of all faculties, a loss of control, and a placing of ourselves in another’s hands.

- C. In the Liturgy of the Hours (prayed by religious) one of the last things said before retiring is “Into your hands I commend my spirit”
  - D. Sleep is practice; a preparation for death.
  - E. Only those who have hope can sleep.
    - 1. If you are nervous about tomorrow you will not sleep.
    - 2. If you are concerned about waking up you will not sleep.
- VI. The Two Blind Men
- A. “Have mercy on us Son of David.” –the blind men
  - B. “By your faith let it be done to you.” –Jesus
- VII. Like Sheep Without a Shepherd
- A. Those who come to Him do so because they realize their state.
    - 1. mangled
    - 2. helpless
    - 3. cast away
  - B. They realize that Jesus is the source of healing.
  - C. Jesus heals us by exchanging Himself with us so that we might have life in abundance.  
He becomes:
    - 1. mangled
    - 2. helpless
    - 3. cast away
  - D. The motivation for this exchange is Divine Love, nothing else can explain it.