

CHRIST'S HEALING TOUCH

Christ must be believed on for WHO He is as Lord-God as well as for WHAT He has done as Savior. Who He is as Lord has everything to do with His sovereign authority. That is what Matthew 8 is all about. It's about authority and Christ's rightful authority as the King Who brings in the kingdom. That is what was presented in Christ's earthly ministry.

"The choice of incidents in this section is in every case to bring out Jesus' authority in action." – *The New Bible Commentary*

He was the King with kingdom authority, presenting the kingdom on the condition of repentance. True repentance, true faith, personally recognizes Christ's Lordship authority as seen in the faith of the centurion, as noted in Matthew 8:5-13. The text now goes on to present further exhibition of kingdom authority.

Matthew 8:14 (NKJV)

14 Now when Jesus had come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother lying sick with a fever.

The parallel accounts in Mark 1:29-34 and Luke 4:38-41 make it clear that the setting is on a Sabbath. Jesus had just come from a synagogue in Capernaum, where He had cast a demon out of a man.

Mark calls the house Jesus entered into the "*house of Simon and Andrew*" (Mk. 1:29). So evidently, it was a fairly large house.

There, Jesus found Peter's mother-in-law was sick with a fever. Some have guessed it might have been malaria, but we are not given specifics.

Now let me point out the obvious. If Peter had a wife and a mother-in-law, then he was clearly married, contrary to the teaching of Roman Catholicism. They try to get around this by saying, "Yes, Peter had been married, but his wife died before he became an apostle. Just one problem: In 1 Corinthians 9:5, Paul indicates that Peter still has a believing wife as an apostle.

The Roman Catholic idea that the clergy should not be married has no foundation in Scripture. Peter was married, and elders clearly can be married as one of the qualifications is that they be "the husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3:2).

Matthew 8:15 (NKJV)

15 So He touched her hand, and the fever left her. And she arose and served them.

There is an emphasis on “*personal touch*” in Christ’s ministry. We have noted He didn’t have to touch in order to heal – in fact He healed the centurion’s servant from a distance.

But on various occasions, Jesus chose to touch – especially in contexts where Jewish law or tradition forbade it. Fever was one of those situations.

“Jesus was uncontaminated by contact with leprosy and disease, and He was not bound by Jewish narrowness from those whom the world despises.” – ***John Walvoord***

“As in v. 3, the touch did not defile the healer but healed the defiled.”
– ***D.A. Carson***

The authority and power of Jesus were instantly evident. As soon as He touched her hand, the fever was gone. And she arose and served Him. The older manuscripts read “Him” here instead of “them”, but in Luke 4:39 it says “them”. So, both are true. She ministered to Christ but also to the entire group.

The point is that Christ’s authority was absolute. There was no gradual recovery. The healing was immediate and complete. Normally, with a fever, even in recovery, some time is needed to get full strength back. But not in this case. She went from being down in bed sick to instantly being up and serving at full speed.

Many applications have been made that in our healing, we should use it to serve the Lord. Certainly, Peter’s mother-in-law is a great example of this principle. What do we do with our health and strength? We should use it to serve the Lord!