

JESUS HEALED EVERYBODY

(Matt. 12:15)

When Jesus claimed to be Lord of the Sabbath, the Pharisees rightly saw this as a claim to be Lord-God, for in fact God alone is Master over the Sabbath. Jesus proceeded to demonstrate that He was Lord over the Sabbath by healing a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath, saying that it is “**lawful to do good on the Sabbath**”. The response of the Pharisees was to plot how they might destroy Jesus (cf. Mt. 12:1-14).

Matthew 12:15 continues the narrative...

Matthew 12:15 (NKJV)

15 But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all.

With the hostility and opposition of the religious leaders rising to a murderous level, Jesus withdrew from the area of Capernaum. And as He did so, massive crowds followed Him, and once again we see the emphasis that He healed them all.

If you can heal everyone, you won't lack for a crowd. People love “healing” and understandably so. However, at this point the multitudes, while fascinated by His healing power, still did not really understand WHO He was. And that was the MAIN POINT!

They missed the point. Jesus was not merely healing for healing's sake; rather, His healing ministry was a SIGN ministry pointing out the reality of Who He was: the divine-human Messiah who had the authority to do KINGDOM miracles, showing that He was indeed the promised Messiah offering the kingdom to Israel on the condition of repentance.

But why did Jesus withdraw from the area? He was not afraid of the plotting of the Pharisees, but He did realize He was on God's timetable, and it was not yet time for Him to die. When opposition grew intense, Christ's pattern often was to withdraw from that context of hostility (cf. Mt. 4:12; 12:15; 14:13; 15:21; 16:5).

John 7:8 (NKJV)

8 You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come.”

Jesus, as the God-Man during His earthly ministry, was here as God's servant. He set aside the independent use of His divine attributes, doing

only the will of God in His role of humility. As God, He could have wiped out any and all opposition at any point, but yet the will of God was that, in humility as a man, He endure Satanic and human opposition in keeping with the purposes and sovereign will of God.

As a human, this meant at certain points avoiding the heightened tensions with the religious leaders. However, when the time was right, He set His face like a flint to go to Jerusalem where He would be crucified (cf. Isa. 50:7; Lk. 9:51). But it was not that time yet!

“The time to die, however, was not yet, not there in Capernaum, and not by the Pharisees’ method of stoning.” – **John Phillips**

God is sovereign over the days of our lives, and yet, as Jesus instructed, His children sent out as sheep in the midst of wolves are to be “wise as serpents and harmless as doves” (Mt. 10:16). In Matthew 10:23, He instructed the apostles, “When they persecute you in this city, flee to another.” Jesus is here modeling that reality. When He was soundly rejected by the religious leaders, He moved on to another area.

And as Jesus withdrew from where the religious leaders were, great throngs followed Him, and He healed them ALL (cf. 4:23; 8:16; 9:35; 12:15).

Mark 3:7–8 (NKJV)

7 But Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea. And a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judea

8 and Jerusalem and Idumea and beyond the Jordan; and those from Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard how many things He was doing, came to Him.

“This is the pattern of His ministry until His final and open rejection in chapters twenty-one to twenty-seven – opposition, withdrawal, and continued ministry.” – **Stanley Toussaint**