

Sermon Outlines

Be Of Good Cheer

References

- Matt. 9:2 - To the man sick of the palsy
- Matt. 9:22 - To the woman with the issue of blood (translated “comfort” in KJV)
- Matt. 14:27 - To the disciples in the boat
- John 16:33 - To the disciples
- Acts 23:11 - To Paul

Introduction

There are five times when our Lord said, “Be of good cheer” and I want to consider the background of each, the persons to whom the Lord spoke, and the blessing that was brought to each individual.

Let me preface my remarks on these situations by observing how the awareness of humanity to need help is universal.

- a) Today there are multitudes of books, periodicals etc., all dealing with self awareness and feeling worth while, finding life’s value in ancient religions, and pep talks by motivational speakers.
 - i) Today the latest publishing trend is “self help books” produced to help people think better about themselves when dark days, dejection and despondency are upon them.
 - ii) What words of hope did Socrates say, or Plato or the Aga Klan?
 - iii) In looking at all the philosophies of man they all fail. They can produce nothing permanent. The individual needs to constantly go back to get another “pick me up”.
 - iv) There is only one who can speak words of cheer and in reality strengthen the individual to be all that they can be, for the greater glory of God.
 - v) To troubled hearts, either of sinner or saint, our blessed Lord who alone can speak peace to a troubled heart saying, “Be of good cheer”.
- b) Personal and practical level
 - i) The need for genuine encouragement. So many discouragement's in life from those around us, it may be a look, a word, and action, but the individual can feel utterly worthless.
 - 1. The need to speak a word of encouragement to a little child, a teenager in their difficulties. Sometimes it can just mean a hug or taking an individual out for a coffee, or bring a shut-in or elderly individual a box of biscuits or a meal. This is what our Lord did when He said, “Be of good cheer”. It was a word of encouragement.

The Speaker

The speaker is none other than God manifest in flesh. This man is God. When He speaks He speaks the words of God, so in listening to Him it is as if we were in the circumstances of the persons we shall consider, and God standing beside us speaks the words, “Be of good cheer”.

- a) The question is, “Does He know what it is like to have the death of a loved one or to be out on a stormy sea”?
- b) Thank God this is the man who lived a human life with all its attending joys and sorrows.
 - i) He knew what it was to pray, weep, feel pain, suffer for righteousness, honoring God and living for the glory of God.
 - ii) He knew dark days as when none of his family believed in Him and thought he was mad.
 - iii) Consider that after three years of teaching, preaching and discipling, He had 12 men and of them, one betrayed Him, one swore he never knew Him, the others ran away, and He was left alone.
 - 1. He was so desolate and in the words of the Psalm He could have said, “Lover and friend hast Thou put far from me” (Psa. 88:18) or, “I am like a pelican in the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert, I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top” (Psa. 102:6-7). He knew the need for encouragement for none ever was afflicted as He was.

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Those To Whom He Spoke

In every case except one, the Lord spoke to individuals.

- a) How precious this is, whether individually or a number of disciples in a dark situation, the Lord speaks, “Be of good cheer”.
- b) Later Peter will write, “Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you” (1 Pet. 5:7).
 - i) The interesting thing is not just the truth conveyed but the fact that the first word “care” is a plural word meaning, “Casting all your cares upon Him”. The second word is singular indicating God has only one care, and that is you or I. So the verse can read, “Casting all your cares upon Him; for He had only one care and it is you”.
 - ii) Isaiah, who wrote of He who carried our sorrows, also wrote, “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young” (Isa. 40:11).
 - iii) What about when I am old, then He says, “And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you” (Isa. 46:4). The Almighty God, creator of all, speaks peace and encouragement to our hearts. The Lord is saying, “Be of good cheer”. With Such a one speaking, how could the individual not be encouraged?
 1. He who carried my sins carries me in His arms, the arms outstretched on the cross for my sins are outstretched to me in love, offering comfort.

The Unnaturalness of The Situations

When the Lord spoke it was not just words or a nice little cliché. It was a command of comfort, “Be of good cheer”! Our natural response is, “It’s impossible”. To Jairus who had just heard heart breaking news when the servant said, “Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the master” (Lk. 8:49), what devastating news for any parent, and in that dark hour the Lord says, “Be of good cheer”. If anyone else said it, it would be verging on a wicked mockery, but not the Lord. Consider the disciples being in the boat in the storm tossed sea and drowning appears imminent. In that frightening situation when hearts of a lion melt in fear, the Lord says, “Be of good cheer” (Matt. 14:27). It’s not natural to be of good cheer in such dire situations.

- a) This outline will consider the first of these lectures dealing with the palsied man.

Matt. 9:2 - To The Man Sick of The Palsy

- 1) Thank God for the times when we do not get what we are expecting.
 - a) The women came to the tomb of the Lord expecting to see the corpse of the Lord lying in a stone cold tomb. However, they did not see that. What they saw was the angels, one at the head and the other at the feet of the place where the body of the Lord had been laid. They never expected to hear the words, “Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen” (Lk. 24:5, 6). What they did receive was far superior to what they had expected. The Lord always gives us more than we hope for and the same was true of the man sick of the palsy and his friends. In the darkest of hours He can give a light and a hope that is far superior to anything we can expect.
 - b) What did they expect or perhaps hope for was just a shadowy hope for healing? Their desire was for the Lord to release the man from his disease and in giving him health, restore him to a normal life. But would the Lord heal him? That was the question.
- 2) The environment of the miracle.
 - a) Dr. Luke informs his readers that in that house were Pharisees and doctors of the law (Mk. 5:17). There they sat clothed in the robes of religiosity having no time for the man Jesus, and being the hierarchy of spiritual standing, they did not need spiritual healing. Yet it was on this point that Luke makes a very important statement within the context of these religious individuals, “The power of the Lord was present to heal them” (Lk. 5:17).

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- i) Religious humanity do not have opened eyes to understand that they need healing, not of the body but the spirit!
- 3) What the Lord saw contrasted with what the people saw.
- a) The people in that house suddenly saw a body lying on a bed being let down from the roof.
 - i) They saw four men earnestly concerned about the physical well being of their friend.
 - ii) They saw a man unable to do anything to heal himself.
 - iii) They saw the religious leaders all standing helpless.
 - 1. Apply in the gospel or ministry
 - b) The Lord saw what the people saw, but He also saw more:
 - i) He saw the faith of the men (Lk. 5:20) and the palsied man.
 - 1. They had to believe that the Lord could heal else they would never have brought the man to the Lord. *(It is our responsibility to believe the Lord is willing and able to save every soul of Adam's race and in believing, show it by bringing people to where the gospel is heard or before the Throne of grace in prayer).*
 - 2. The man had to have faith that if the will of the Lord was to heal him, He could heal him. The sinner must believe that Christ is the only one who has the power and it is the will of God to save them.
 - c) The Lord saw a deeper need, the man needed his sins forgiven.
 - i) It would appear to me that the man pondered these things for when it came to the reasonings of the Pharisees, the Lord knew what they were thinking (Lk. 5:22). Surely He knew what the man had been musing on.
 - ii) This was the priority of every human being, "forgiveness of sins" not by a man but by God.
 - iii) The Pharisees were completely true in saying, "Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" (Lk. 5:21). They were blindly unaware that the man who spoke these words was God incarnate. He was deity.
 - d) The posed question.
 - i) The Lord asked the religious leaders, "Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Rise up and walk?" (Lk. 5:23). Then speaking to the palsied man the Lord said, "Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house" (Lk. 5:24).
 - e) The purpose of the healing was, "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins" (Lk. 5:24).
 - i) Upon hearing the command of the Lord the man immediately rose up, took up his bed and departed to his own house.

Concluding Thoughts

- 1) For the sinner:
 - a) What an encouragement, for an individual to come face to face with their sinner-ship, then coming to the Saviour hear his words, "Be of good cheer, they sins be forgiven thee". With what exuberance would the man take up his bed, with what delight would he go back to his home? This would not have been a long slow drudge but a light footed joyous pathway.
 - b) So with the sinner who under conviction hears the Lord's words, "Be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven", and leave this building knowing that from God Himself the pronouncement, "Thy sins be forgiven". Who would not be of good cheer at such an announcement?

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2) For the saint:

- a) The old hymn still rings true; “Under the burdens of guilt and care, many a spirit is grieving” and this is not restricted to the unsaved. Many a saint feels the burden of a spiritually unbalanced life, a “something missing in life” feeling. It may be the awareness of a sin committed or often the inability to forgive oneself for that which they have done. To all such the Christ of love and grace speaks these words of quietening power, “Be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee”.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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