



gracepoint church

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HOME GROUP & DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL “A Time of Healing and Transition” – Paul Verryrn – 13.6.2021

NB Group Leaders:

If you are meeting face to face have some oil in readiness in case members of your group desire to be anointed for healing purposes.

Sermon link: #SoundCloud

<https://soundcloud.com/gracepointsa/a-time-of-healing-transition>

Scripture

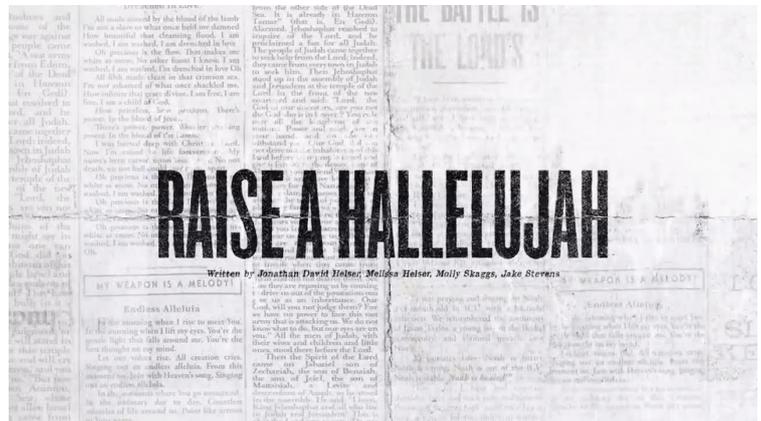
Read the Scripture passages as you read each section in the Observation below.

Open your mind and heart as you read the passage of Scripture aloud and then again quietly to yourself. Listen for God’s word to you.

Observation

John 4:7-18

The woman walked half a mile to get to the well in the middle of the day. There was water in the town where she lived (Sychar) and it was usual for women to draw water early in the morning. Yet here she was. John describes Jesus as a weary traveller resting in the heat of the day, but still He is sympathetic to the woman who is there too. The conversation itself is healing. Here at last is someone who understands what the woman has been through, who listens to her speaking, who respects her as a person. What is amazing to her is not just that Jesus was willing to talk to her as a Samaritan but that He was willing to speak to a woman. No self-respecting Jewish rabbi would be seen talking to a woman of uncertain reputation. As John tells the story he affirms that God so loved the world, not just in theory, but in action.



Spend some time in worship.

The woman believes they are having a literal conversation about water. She is blind to the spiritual element within their words – until Jesus tells her to go and fetch her husband. Then suddenly it is as if she can now understand what they have been talking about all along.

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John 5:1-9, 14

Superstition held that the person who went into the water after it had bubbled up would be healed. (The water bubbled as a result of an underground stream which was a fact not known by people in Jesus' day.) Jesus' question may seem strange. But after lying paralysed for 38 years it may well have been too big a challenge for the man to step out of his comfort zone and be healed and so take on all the responsibilities of day to day living. This man did not hesitate. He wanted to be healed. In response, Jesus told him to get up. The man had to make the effort and take action for himself. He did so – and walked away – healed.

In this story the man had to desire to be healed; had to obey Jesus' command and do his part; and he was healed. When Jesus met him again in the temple He told him not to sin any more. The Jews considered sin and illness to be connected. God had given him so much, so to continue to sin would break the heart of the One who had healed him.

John 8:1-11, 31-41

To the Jews, adultery was one of three major sins and was punishable by death. They asked Jesus a difficult question. If He agreed to the stoning He would lose His reputation for showing love and mercy; and He would be encouraging the Jewish authorities to act in direct violation of Rome, for only Rome had the authority to sentence someone to death. If He pardoned the woman, He would be accused of going against the law of Moses (Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:13-24). Jesus' action of writing in the sand may well have given Him time to consult with God. His response made the woman's accusers drift away. Once again, as He had done in other cases, Jesus instructed the woman to go and sin no more. He gave her a second chance. He forgave her and challenged her. In the mere act of sending her on her way, He showed her He believed in her. Yet He also warned her – return to your own ways or choose a new way with Me. It's your choice. He set the woman free – from fear, from herself and her own inability to change in her own strength, from others and their opinions of her, and from sin.

Icebreaker:

What word would you use to describe the time we are living in now? Briefly share why you would choose that word?

Application

- These stories are recorded so we may know what our agenda is as followers of Christ. What is your agenda at this time as a Christ-follower? How do you feel about it at this moment?
- Would you describe yourself as merciful – or not? Why do you respond this way? Where have you shown/not shown mercy this week? Or have you not come across a situation where mercy was required?
- Jesus asked the man if he really wanted to get better. Do you? What is holding you back, physically, emotionally, spiritually that stops you from serving Jesus fully? Brainstorm together and make a list of potential issues in all three spheres that may be preventing you or others from serving God fully.
- Spend some time looking at the list. Is there anything on it that is relevant to your own life? Briefly share this with the group.

- Where have you seen or experienced generational disease impacting people's lives. This may be through tradition, family genes or beliefs, or what has been taught in schools or universities. How have you been impacted? (Be careful not to assign blame here – try to speak and listen with mercy).
- How have you personally dealt with the changes that have happened at Gracepoint recently? (Again be careful not to let this become a complaining / blaming session. The question asks about you, nothing else.)
- How has this service or discussion helped you / not helped you? Why do you feel this way?
- How can the group help you with the struggles you have mentioned during this session?

Prayer

Pray for one another in regard to the issues that have been raised during your discussion time. Be prepared to anoint one another for healing if people request it. Also pray in regard to other needs of the group.

Service

This week be aware of God's call on you for mercy and a continuation of Jesus' ministry in the world today. How can you follow and obey that call? Show mercy, pray for healing for others, be gracious. Pray for help in these things where you find them challenging.

Bibliography

Barclay, William. The Gospel of John – Volume One. The Saint Andrew Press, Edinburgh, 1982
Barclay, William. The Gospel of John – Volume Two. The Saint Andrew Press, Edinburgh, 1981