

Pray More Healing Retreat - Transcript

Jesus: Our Divine Physician

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Welcome everybody to the Pray More Healing Retreat. My name is Bob Schuchts, and I'm from the John Paul II Healing Center, and we're in for an exciting and, I hope, deeply healing four weeks together. Let's stop as we begin to pray and ask for the Holy Spirit to guide and lead us because, as I speak, I pray that He'll not only speak through me, but speak to you very personally in ways that only He knows.

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Father, I thank You for each person who's participating in this healing retreat, and I ask You to meet each one of them very personally, very individually, as only You know. I pray that You bring healing physically, emotionally, spiritually, healing to relationships, healing to understanding. And may Your Holy Spirit touch and minister to each one, and bring us each into a deeper encounter with Jesus' healing love. Blessed Mother, St. Joseph, please pray for us. St. John Paul II, please pray for us. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

So this is the first of a four-part series. The first is Jesus, the Divine Physician. And next week we'll be talking about the healing power of sacraments. In the third week, healing in suffering, redemptive suffering. And the fourth week is how do we pray for healing, and how do we receive healing through prayer? So as we look at Jesus as the Divine Physician - that's one of the titles that the Catechism gives for Jesus. He is the physician of our bodies and souls, and that means the whole person. And what He heals in us spiritually, He also has effects physically. And as He heals us physically, it also has effects spiritually and psychologically. And, as the Divine Physician, Jesus is moved with compassion for us. You read all the way through the Gospels that, as Jesus goes around, it says He was moved with compassion for the people.

And so His healing is an expression of the Father's mercy, of His own compassion, of His own feeling the pain of our suffering. And everything that Jesus did and everything that He said, from the time of His conception in Mary's womb to now, is part of His healing work. When Pope Benedict XVI studied the Gospels, and particularly studied Jesus' healing ministry, he made this conclusion. He said "Healing is an essential dimension of the apostolic mission, and if we understand it at a sufficiently deep level, it expresses the entire content of our redemption." Now that's a pretty big statement. Too often we think about healing as being this side

Pray More Healing Retreat - Transcript

issue, you know, that takes place on healing nights or healing services of some kind.

And that kind of relegates healing to a once-a-week, or once-a-month, or a special activity of some people in the parish. But that's not Pope Benedict XVI's understanding of healing, or Jesus for that matter. As he's saying, it expresses. If we understand it at a sufficiently deep level, it expresses the entire content of our redemption. It's essential to the apostolic mission. It's essential to the mission that Jesus gave to the disciples.

So I just want to give you an overview, kind of as a background as we move into this, of Jesus' healing mission, and how He's given that to the church, and what that means for each of us, and how do we relate to Jesus as the Divine Physician. And I want to end this time, as we do with each one of these, with some time in prayer, so that what we talk about you can also experience.

So if you study the Gospels, you realize they're in a context. That Jesus isn't just coming into the world like any other human being; He's coming into the world as the savior. In fact, His name, the angel gave the name "Jesus," meaning "Yahweh saves. Yeshua. God's salvation." All the way through the Old Testament, when God spoke to His people, He spoke to them about His salvation and His desire to heal them, His desire to heal them from the ravages of sin and the effects of sin. And so God's salvation is now in a person, and that person's name is Jesus. And as He comes and He comes to be with us and visit us, He comes to bring us the healing love of the Father.

And to understand that connection, we have to understand what happened at The Fall. At The Fall of mankind, what was in complete communion and wholeness; we were, as human beings, in wholeness - we didn't have suffering, we didn't have sickness, we didn't have ailments, we didn't have psychological disturbance. We were whole people in communion with God. In fact, those two things go together: The communion with God, being in communion with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, which is how God created us, in His image, leaves us whole. And yet, at The Fall of mankind, there was this huge break with sin, where there's separation.

And this separation deeply wounded us, left us less than ourselves, left us disintegrated in some ways, left us subject to sickness, left us subject to death, deterioration of our bodies, left us subject to emotional and psychological issues, subject to suffering of every kind, spiritual suffering, the suffering of shame, the suffering of guilt. That's all something that we were all born into. We all need healing because we were all born into this world with Original Sin, we were all born into a broken world. And it's not just us personally that needs healing; our

Pray More Healing Retreat - Transcript

relationships need healing, our world needs healing, our church needs healing. Every aspect of life is in need of healing because every aspect of life has been touched by that brokenness.

And so when Jesus grows and begins the ministry after His baptism, He begins demonstrating God's salvation. And He forgives sin, which is a deep place of healing, but He also restores people to the wholeness that God intended. Now, we still have to face death, but in resurrecting from the dead, Jesus shows us that He evens has power of death, and He demonstrated that on earth even by raising people from the dead. I mean, think of all of the stories of, you know, the widow's son that Jesus raised up, and the little girl that Jesus came and raised up. So Jesus has power over every aspect of the effects of The Fall. Every aspect of sickness, every aspect of death.

And as we notice in the studying of the Gospels, that there are some places Jesus went, like His hometown of Nazareth, where the people just didn't believe in Him and weren't open, there was very few healings. There was only a couple of people that were healed in those situations. But in other places, where people began to believe, and trust, and know, and recognize who Jesus was, it's said people would come to Him all night and He would heal all of them. That's the heart of the savior.

I think sometimes we have a hard time today believing that Jesus still desires the same thing. I know I had a conception that "Oh, Jesus heals people, but only partially, and only some people, and only some of the time." And that was really a lack of understanding of who Jesus is, and in who God is. Really, it was the trip I took to Brazil back in the year 2000 where I began to see differently. Up until that point I had probably seen a handful of people physically healed and, you know, that was moving, and I knew it was real - I read the Gospels, I knew Jesus still healed today - but I didn't see a lot of it until I went down on this trip to Brazil, and it was a healing mission trip with a ministry called "Global Awakening." And as we went and ministered to the people in Brazil, I literally saw hundreds and hundreds of people being healed physically, emotionally, spiritually. And some amazing things - people who were blind seeing, people who were crippled walking.

And when you see that, it's as though what you've been reading and hearing about in the Gospels for your entire life all of a sudden has as new immediacy. It goes from "Well, that was Jesus back then," to "This is Jesus the same today as He was yesterday." That's what the scripture says, that, you know, Jesus is the same today, yesterday, and tomorrow. That Jesus hasn't changed, His mission hasn't changed. When He gave the disciples authority, even before His crucifixion, when He gave them authority, He gave them authority to do everything that He had done: To

Pray More Healing Retreat - Transcript

heal, to deliver from demonic oppression, to raise people from the dead. He gave that authority to the disciples. And in the book of Acts, Luke is clear to show us that, just as Peter did each of those things, Paul did each one of those things. He healed people who were infirm, and sick, and lame; he delivered people from demonic oppression, and he even raised people from the dead.

And as we've studied church history, that's continued on for all twenty centuries as a church. Now, there have been times when it's waxed and waned, where there's been more or less belief, but even the Vatican Council 1, before we began to see a real increase in healing, the Vatican Council 1 said "Anybody who doesn't believe in the miracle power of Jesus, of God, to intervene in our lives is not a part of the church, because the church has always believed this." Now, if you study the lives of the saints, the saints have always believed and practiced Jesus' healing ministry in all of those ways. And, in fact, everything in the church, everything that we believe in as a church comes back to this, because everything brings us back into communion and wholeness. The sacraments, as we'll talk about, even our redemptive suffering brings us back into that wholeness, prayer, all of the teaching of the church is meant to bring us into that healing.

And so, as you look at your own life and the areas where your own life is in need of healing, recognizing that Jesus is not stingy or not reluctant, remember the person that said "You can heal me if You will," and Jesus says "I will. I will to heal you." That's God's will. God's will. He sent Jesus to heal us, and His will is to heal us. And so, as we look and understand the areas of our life where we need healing, that's half the battle, is to face and recognize our own need for healing. Then the next thing is to begin to believe that His desire is to heal us.

So as we end this first talk, I want you to take a couple of minutes and just, if you will, just close your eyes and maybe picture Jesus on the cross, which is the fount of our healing, or an image of the Sacred Heart, or some other image of Jesus, or maybe He'll just reveal an image to you now. And as you look at Him, recognize that He's your Divine Physician. And I ask you, just in the silence of your heart, allow the Holy Spirit to guide you, to think of the areas of your life that you're desiring healing. What physically in your life needs healed? Where do you need physical healing? Where in your life do you need emotional healing? Broken relationships, broken hearts, areas of your life that you're just struggling, that you struggle with the same areas of sin, the same areas of woundedness.

Where are you in need of spiritual healing? Where are you dealing with guilt, or shame, or something from the past that you just can't seem to get over? Or an area of unforgiveness in your life? Or areas of oppression that you feel that you need Jesus' deliverance? Or where do you just need more of God? You know, more of

Pray More Healing Retreat - Transcript

His presence, more of His love, more power of the Holy Spirit. That too is a deep healing. So I just ask you to enter into that and allow Jesus to meet you there.