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On the Mend: Healing What Ails Us “Healing Trust”

Mark 10:13-16

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If the truth be told, I have never been comfortable preaching on this scripture. Because, I say to myself things like “you never had any biological children.” So, I’ve often thought, I just don’t have the credentials to saying anything, much less anything with teeth, because “what do I know.”

Yet, I realized while thinking about the text this week, that I was stuck on the street and hadn’t allowed myself to drive up the driveway, much less get to the front door and go in. What I mean by that is, I just hear the word “children” and freeze. At least, that’s what I did till Friday.

That’s when I got beyond the word “children” to see what they did in the story. Can you imagine them coming to Jesus without getting up in his arms? And off course, they got a blessing from him.

Yet, that may be true for them, but is it true for us. For many of us, there is something foul that happens on the road from childhood to adulthood. We loose how they came to Jesus. We get leary of or feel unworthy to get up in his arms. Or maybe we don’t trust his goodness, because too much bad has happened in our life.

So, we end up staying back, standing aloof, on the periphery instead of in the center of his embrace and blessing. So, we remain scared and/or skeptical of the goodness of God.

So, then what do we need to do, as children do, so as to be able to reside in the healing wholeness of God? What they did first, was to realize that Jesus meant them no harm, he had no ill will toward them. Before they dared approach him, they had to conclude that he was trustworthy, and had nothing, but good will toward them.

Whenever we keep our distance from the One who can heal and help us, it usually boils down to trust. We are not sure the God/man Jesus is trustworthy. We are not that confident about the nature and character of God.

Some of this, has to do with what could be called transference. We may have developed some feeling about Jesus and God not based on our experience with them, but our experience with other people.

I recently had someone ask me about my relationship with "God the Father". To which I said, I don't view God that way anymore. To which she said, but your 17 year old spiritual self does. And the reason she said that, was because my 59 year old self, had recently responded to something as if I was my 17 year old self. Yes, the original circumstances and situation happened long ago, but I was bringing it into my present day, and the results were not good.

This happens in our life, including in the arena of faith. Even though we might have worked hard to deal with those tough times from long ago, they can and sometimes do creep back into our present, even our present life of faith, if we are not alert, and then chosen to be intentionally responsive.

Sometimes, consciously or unconsciously we cut ourselves off, from the One, we need the most. Why is that? Why do we end

up with a case of mistaken identity? I will never forget getting really angry at a friend, and during the altercation, she asked me, "Whose face do I have?" To which she replied before I could speak, "It couldn't be mine."

Sometimes when we look at God, and see someone else's face to turn a cold shoulder to God. We project onto God, someone else nature, actions, and character. And thus, we conclude God is not trustworthy, because they were not trustworthy. God is not good, because they did ill, they harmed me.

Yet, when we do this, we shoot ourselves in the foot. We end up wounded and not healed, because we have chosen to keep our distance, to yell and rail at God, to see someone else's face, instead of walking right up and getting into good and blessing Jesus' lap.

I have seen time and time again, when life gets really hard and uphill or maybe it is more accurate to say, when it is all going downhill – I have heard in words or through actions, "God has done this", made "this mess" or at best failed to intercede or fix it.

We stand at arm's length or even go to the next county or state as a way to thumb nose God. We put our arms across our chest and say, "Nope, I'm not coming when you act like that." Yet, God did not cause the failure of a marriage or divorce – human beings did what happened there, nor did God make you sick – disease did that, nor did God cause someone to end their life through suicide or overdose – no addiction and mental health or should I say, mental illness did that.

When we look into the face of our tragedy we see all kinds of bad, evil, and destructive things. Yet, whenever we look into

the face of God, the true face of God, not the transferred projected face we put on God, we see nothing but goodness, not a streak, pinch or particle of ill. For God is good, all the time. All the time, God is good.

The true catastrophe is not the event, the real catastrophe is that we let the event keep us from receiving the blessing of Jesus we need. We need to curl up in his arms, not push him aside, or turn our backs on the Lord, for he has never, ever, no never, turned his back on us. Rather, he is waiting for us to fall into his arms and be surrounded by his embrace, so he can bestow on us - the blessing and good stuff, the goodness we need.

Years ago, Monroe Parker was traveling through South Alabama on one of those hot, sultry Alabama days. He stopped at a watermelon stand, picked out a watermelon, and asked the proprietor how much it cost. "It's \$1.10," he replied. Parker dug into his pocket, found only a bill and said, "All I have is a dollar."

"That's ok," the proprietor said, "I'll trust you for it."

"Well, that's mighty nice of you," Parker responded, and picking up the watermelon, started to leave.

"Hey, where are you going?" the man behind the counter demanded.

"I'm going outside to eat my watermelon." "But you forgot to give me the dollar!"

"You said you would trust me for it," Parker called back.

"Yeah, but I meant I would trust you for the dime!"

"Mack," Parker replied, "You weren't going to trust me at all. You were just going to take a ten-cent gamble on my integrity!"

We can take a gamble with God and put our trust in God's integrity. For when it comes to bestowing a blessing and good, God can be trusted.

So then, let us pull off the distorted face we have put on God, and instead look into the loving, grace-filled, and tender face of God/man Jesus and then jump into his lap for the embrace and blessing all of us need. Yes, I mean, all!