

The human conflict with God's nature. **Matthew Ch. 9**

When it comes to what people would rather have, whether Jesus or their own thoughts about Him, they will fight to the death for their own thoughts. Christoph Friedrich Blumhardt.

"Gallup and Barna hand us survey after survey demonstrating that evangelical Christians are as likely to embrace lifestyles every bit as hedonistic, materialistic, self-centered, and sexually immoral as the world in general." There is a difference between the God we worship and the God we apply in our lives. Meanwhile, the secular public looks on in amusement. Michael Kinney, commenting on a quote by Michael Horton, editor of Modern Reformation.

Though chapter 9 continues with the now active ministry of Jesus, and includes healing, miracles, and teaching, the primary focus here is on the human reaction to him. The religious leadership in Judea is, in particular, challenged and offended by the ease of his power and calling.

9:1-8, a paralytic cured

- The issue: the scope of Jesus' power
 - "Take courage, My son, your sins are forgiven," v.2 _____
 - "This fellow blasphemes," v.3. _____
 - In other words, "how dare he presume the power of God?" _____

9:9-17, the dinner at Matthew's

- The issue: the conflict of Jesus' purpose with that of Jewish leadership
 - "Why is your teacher eating with tax-gatherers and sinners?" _____
 - "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick." _____
 - "Learn what this means, I desire compassion, and not sacrifice." _____

9:14-17, here we encounter the epic statement, formed as a question, that the bridegroom of the kingdom of God (the bride), followed by one of the great enigmatic and often misused declarations regarding the fulfillment of God's purpose, "*no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment . . . Nor do men put new wine into old wineskins.*" The eternal kingdom has replaced the earthly kingdom.

9:18-26, raising the dead daughter of the synagogue official

- The issue: the sovereign, all encompassing power of Jesus.
 - But first, a little detour, v.20-22. Jesus turns momentarily from his mission toward a dead child in order to add his blessing to the woman healed of hemorrhaging. _____
 - The crowd initially laughed at Jesus declaration that the girl has only "fallen asleep." _____

9:27-34, healing the blind and casting out demons.

- The issue: faith in God (correctly), not men who claim to be the conduit to God, brings healing.
 - *Do you believe that I am able to do this?* _____
 - And even a man bound in speech, possessed by a demon and rendered "dumb." _____
(There is an even deeper message here, that when one is rendered by Satan incapable of asking for grace, God will render Satan bound. _____)

9:37-38, a final kingdom truth, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few, pray the lord of the harvest to send out workers.

As Jesus prepared to send his disciples out on their first mission journey, he knew there was a battle ahead, and not just a battle, but the finale of the war from the beginning between God and the sentient part of His creation. The goal of men: to wrest sovereignty from the hands of God. The goal of God: to guide mankind to the truth of His unassailable sovereignty. Today, more than ever, humanity, or the world, refuses to reconcile with this. Yet, while the world seethes at God, our mission is still the same.