

# Receiving Deliverance But Refusing Obedience

Matthew 9:27-31

Brett McBride

## Consider

In 1 Cor 13, we are provided the fullest descriptions of God's love: *"Love is patient, and kind, it does not envy, or boast, is not proud, does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth, keeps no records of wrong... It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."*

As we celebrate Mother's Day, we are reminded that a mother's love is one of the most powerful examples of God's love in action. A mother's love often takes different forms: there is the compassion and caring expression of love, then there is the tough love that comes in the forms of warning and stern form of love! The stern form of love is still love – but it is meant to warn us of something that is wrong – a dangerous path we could be heading down!

## Let's Examine

### Read Matthew 9:27-31

We are going to look at an event in the life of Jesus that opens us to this same idea. Today we are going to look at an event in the life of Jesus that reveals God's love – as a warning sign. Just to frame the context:

- Jesus has displayed His authority to forgive sins
- He has proceeded to call Matthew – a tax collector – into discipleship
- He has just healed a woman subject to bleeding for 13 years
- He raised to life a 13-year-old girl from the dead

Matthew 9:27-31 reminds us that Jesus raised the dead back to life and that the news of this event spread throughout the whole region. He then proceeded to heal two blind men in a display of His power and compassion. He then commands the healed men, in a very stern manner, to tell no one. Throughout the Gospels – Jesus sometimes tells the people who have just been healed or delivered to testify and other times He forbids them to say anything.

*Why do you think Jesus told the healed man of his paralysis not to say anything to anyone? Why the secrecy?*

## Let's Apply

Matthew's placement of this account is no accident. He specifically writes this intentionally to draw our attention to something deeper. These men had faith to be healed but they were completely disobedient. We can be drawn to Jesus by a great need in our lives but once that need is met, we are no longer interested in walking in obedience. This relentless pursuit of self-fulfillment is a very narcissistic approach that produces a self-centered faith focused on what Christ can do for us rather than what we could for Him. We want the deliverance of Jesus but not the obedience to Jesus. We want the mercy but not the sacrifice.

- *Why did the men completely ignore Jesus' command not to tell anyone?*
- *This account was written specifically to draw our attention to the fact that we can come to Christ seeking mercy and healing, receive it and then not obey His commands. Is that a pattern in our own lives?*

Many of us are interested in what Jesus can do for us in our lives but the moment He asks us to do something, we become unwilling. Jesus extends mercy to those who are seeking – but warns us about the real danger of simply listening to His message without obeying it. Matthew 9 reminds us that someone may have faith for healing but yet be missing out on the fullness of what He has for us. It is not lips service that qualifies us in the kingdom of God. Obedience is the fruit of repentance. Our faith is qualified by our deeds and not just by our works. James 2: is very explicit: "Faith without works of dead." Mere belief without obedience is dead faith. May our confessions be matched with sacrificial obedience.

- *What about you? Is His mercy met by your loving obedience or are you looking to receive deliverance but not embrace obedience? Explain your thoughts.*
- *What part of your life would you ask him to bring into alignment with his will and his desires?*

## Let's Pray

Lord Jesus, we thank you for your love that comes to us in the form of mercy. We also thank you for your love that comes to us in the form of rebuke. We pray that we would be open to your loving discipline in our lives this day. Call to our mind the part of our lives that we want to align with your will and desires. May we learn this very important lesson from these two blind men, that our behaviours match our beliefs. Give us what we need and not always what we think we want or what we desire. Let us be children of obedience. Let us be those who will receive from you and then grow in obedience that produces a changed life full of maturity and stature just like you intended. Your will be done in our lives! In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.