

*The following sermon was preached at Redemption Baptist Church on Sunday, 7 January 2024. We encourage you to look up the Scriptures that are referenced and see the context for yourself. May the Lord speak to your heart as you study His Word.*

## **Christ's Authority over Disease**

### **Matthew 8:1-17**

In the town of Minusinsk, Russia, in 1990, a former police officer named Sergei Torop claimed to have had a “spiritual awakening”; and he formed a new religion which he named “The Church of the Last Testament.” Sergei claims that he was “re-born” as the reincarnation of Jesus; and he took on the name “Vissarion” (which means “He who gives life”). He claims to be “the Word of God” and “the Son of God”; and he goes around with long hair, and a long, white robe, to imitate the traditional “look” of Jesus in the paintings. For his followers, he abolished the celebration of Christmas, and replaced it with the celebration of *his* birthday on January 14; and in the “calendar” of Vissarion-followers, years are numbered not from the year of Jesus’ birth, but from the year of “Vissarion’s” birth (1961)!<sup>1</sup>

Now, as bizarre as it may seem, Torop was quickly able to gain a large following of adoring followers, from the very inception of his religion back in 1990. Some 20,000 people worldwide now weep at the mere sight of his bright blue eyes, and hang on his every word. How could people actually believe that his man is Jesus? Well, let’s just say that in the early nineties, as Russia was coming out of seventy years of brutal, godless, atheistic communism, people were starving for any kind of spirituality, to fill the void in their hearts: and for some, “Vissarion” seemed to fill that void. Torop and his followers (who came to number about 5,000) started a commune deep in the wilderness of Siberia, and worked together to form a cashless community that was in “harmony with nature.” In their religion, they combine elements of Buddhism (reincarnation and veganism) with Russian Orthodoxy, and also throw in some “Ufology” and aliens, “Mother Earth” worship, and worship of “Vissarion,” himself.<sup>2</sup>

However, this community of Vissarion-worshippers came to an abrupt end in 2020, when Russian authorities arrested him on counts of fraud. Some of his followers, who had gotten a belly-full of his lies, reported the ugly truth that people in their community (including small children) had died for lack of medical attention, from diseases such as Rubella. Though Vissarion claimed to be able to heal diseases such as cancer with a mere touch of his hand, it turns out that he could do no such thing. In fact, in his writings (which he calls *The Last Testament*), he “covers himself” for his failure to heal people by saying things such as: “Know thyself. From now on, the flesh must heal itself. In most cases, illness is a punishment for the inability to keep one’s flesh in harmony with nature.”<sup>3</sup> In other words, Torop claims that if you get sick, it’s somehow your own fault, because you aren’t in “harmony with nature.”

What a far cry from the true Saviour of the world, Jesus of Nazareth! As we will see in our Scripture this morning, Jesus not only healed people, but He healed **“*all that were sick.*”** Literally no one who came to Jesus for help went home unhealed! Unlike “Vissarion” (and every other fake “Jesus”), the Lord Jesus Christ *proved* His divine authority by performing mighty miracles. This morning, and over the coming weeks, we will examine the *authority* of the Lord Jesus Christ, as shown by His miracles. The title of this message is ***Christ's Authority over Disease.***

**Read Matthew 8:1-4.**

#### **I. Christ's authority over leprosy (vv. 1-4)**

Back in **Matthew 4**, we were told that Jesus **“*went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.*”** In that one statement, we see that Jesus’ ministry was three-fold: He **preached**, He **taught**, and He **healed**. In **Matthew 4**, we saw that

Jesus *preached*. In **chapters 5-7**, we saw that Jesus *taught* His disciples by the Sea of Galilee. Now, in **chapters 8 and 9**, we will see that Jesus *healed* the sick.

One of the very identifying marks of the Messiah is that He would *heal* the sick. That is why Matthew is pausing to give us some examples of Jesus' mighty healing power. In **Isaiah 35**, Isaiah said, ***“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing.”*** This is a prophecy of the *miracles* that Jesus would do. By the way, if you look at the context of **Isaiah 35**, Isaiah was clearly talking about the 1,000-year Kingdom! According to Isaiah, the Messiah will *heal people* during the Kingdom Age. This means that the healing that Jesus did during His 3 ½ -year ministry was just a small foretaste of what He will *yet* do in the future! After Christ returns to earth and sets up His Kingdom, blessings will flow from Mount Zion, as people come from all parts of the world to worship Jesus Christ, and to hear His preaching, *and* to receive healing from diseases!

Now, **chapters 8 and 9** are not merely about Jesus' *healing*; ultimately, they are about His *authority*. Remember, what was the last thing that Matthew said about Jesus, at the end of **chapter 7**? He said, ***“For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”*** Matthew said that Jesus taught with astonishing *authority*; and so now, in **chapters 8 and 9**, he is going to give us *examples* of Jesus' authority. He gives us examples of Jesus' authority over disease; over nature; over demons; over sin; and over death. These miracles are grouped into three sections, with three miracles in each section; and wedged in between these three groupings of miracles are two brief discussions on *discipleship*. By the way, there is a *reason* why Matthew puts these discussions about discipleship right in the middle of the records of Jesus' miracles. Since Jesus has all power in heaven and earth (as demonstrated by His miracles), *we*, therefore, have the responsibility to *follow Jesus*! If Jesus be the Lord over disease, nature, demons, sin, and death, then He is Lord over *us*; and we *must* obey Him!

With this in mind, let's take a close look at the first miracle that Matthew records. (**Read verses 1-4 again.**) This account of the healing of the lame man teaches us a couple powerful truths. First, we see a powerful truth about **Christ's Person**. You'll notice that the leper ***“worshipped”*** Jesus. The Greek word for “worship” is *proskuneo*; and it is made up of two words. The word *pros* means “forward”; and the word *kun* means “dog.” This word *proskuneo* literally has the idea of a dog crouching forward on the ground to lick his master's hand. By extension, it means to fall to the ground before someone, and grovel in admiration. There is no getting around it: *proskuneo* means “to worship.” Throughout Jesus' earthly ministry, people were constantly falling down and worshipping Him; and He accepted their worship. This shows that Jesus is *God*: for only God is to be worshipped!

Now, look at how Jesus, the God-Man, responded to this leper. The Bible says that Jesus ***“put forth his hand, and touched him.”*** Think about that! Jesus could have simply said the word, and healed him; but He didn't. In love and compassion, He used His *hands* to heal him. This reminds me of what the Apostle Paul said about Jesus' “hands” in **Hebrews 1**.

### **Read Hebrews 1:8-10.**

Have you ever stopped to think about the “hands” of God? *Many* Scriptures talk about God's “hands”! Of course, God certainly doesn't *need* hands. The Bible teaches that God is infinite, and has no human body. Nevertheless, the Bible does often use human features to describe the Lord. Take our eyes, for example. The Bible says that ***“The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.”*** God doesn't have (or need) a pair of “eyes”; yet, this phrase “the eyes of the Lord” helps us to understand that God sees and knows everything that we do, say, and think. There is nothing that is hidden from Him. The Bible says that ***“All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”***

Well, in the same way, the Bible often speaks of God's "hands." Even though God is infinite, and is not confined to a human body, God speaks of Himself *as though* He had "hands" in order to help us understand His might and power. So, then, what does God do with His "hands"? According to our Scripture, God created the world with His hands! "***The heavens,***" Paul says, "***are the works of thine hands.***" In six literal days, God created the sun, the moon, the stars, this earth, the plants, the animals, the birds, and all living creatures; and He did so by simply speaking them into existence! When God says that the universe is the work of His "hands," He is using a term to which we, in our finite minds, can relate.

Yet, there *is* one part of creation that God *did* literally form with His hands! On the sixth day of creation, God assumed a human form, so that He might *personally* shape one particular creature with His own hands. That creature was man! In **Genesis 2:7**, we are told that God "***formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.***" Obviously, the word "***formed***" implies the use of hands! Likewise, in **Genesis 2:21-25**, we are told that God took a rib from Adam, and with it "made" a woman. Again, the word "***made***" implies the use of hands.

What dignity God has given to man! God did not create us from ape-like creatures through a process of evolution. God didn't create chimpanzees after His likeness: He created *man* after His likeness. What's more, He formed us with His own hands! Why does God prize man so much? I don't know; but I'm glad that He does! The Psalmist David couldn't understand it, either. In awe, he wrote, "***When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.***" God values us so much, that He made Himself a "***little lower than the angels,***" and took on human flesh, so that He might save us from our sin.

With this thought in mind, let's fast-forward to that time, four thousand years after Creation, when the Son of God entered our world. At God's perfect time, Christ took on human flesh, and became one of us! As John put it, "***The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.***" Think of that! The Creator of all things actually took on a pair of human hands! And what did He do with those hands? For one thing, He practiced the trade of carpentry, which He learned from His adopted father, Joseph. The same "hands" that created the worlds worked hard to make furniture and appliances for people. Though Jesus is the King of Kings, He stooped to do a lowly peasant's job. He worked hard with His hands.

However, that's not all that Jesus did with His hands. The Bible says that Jesus picked up children with His hands, and held them in His arms, and blessed them. Jesus also used His hands to *heal people*. When this leper came to Jesus for healing, Jesus "***put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean.***" Everyone else was scared to death of the lepers; but not Jesus. Jesus could have merely said the word, and healed this man of his leprosy; yet, He personally showed His love and compassion toward him by *touching him*! That is the kind of Saviour that Jesus is!

So, we've seen Jesus' **Person**. We've seen that He is God in human flesh, and that He used His divine *hands* to heal this leper. Now, let's examine His **practice**. What did Jesus do after he had healed the leper? First, **He commanded him to go and show himself to the priest**. Why did Jesus command him to do this? In order to fulfil the Law! God had commanded, in the Law of Moses, that if and when a leper were *cured* of his leprosy, he had to go to a priest to be examined, in order to prove that he truly was healed; and if he *were* healed, certain animal sacrifices had to be done. (For fourteen centuries, these instructions regarding healed lepers had been unused, because *no Jew* had been healed of leprosy; but now, the priests had to get out the scrolls, and remind themselves of exactly what they needed to do!) It didn't

matter how old and obscure the law for healed lepers was: it *had to be followed*. As the Author of Scripture, Jesus *always* kept the Law!

### **Read Leviticus 14:1-12.**

Now, what else did Jesus command this man to do? He also commanded him not to tell anyone about his healing. *Why* did Jesus not want the man to tell anyone? First of all, Jesus knew that the more the news of His miracles went public, the more popular He would become; and the more popular He became, the more fervently His enemies would work to put Him to death: and He couldn't die until the right time. **Jesus had to die at the right time and place**, to fulfil all that had been prophesied of Him in the Scriptures. The other reason why Jesus commanded this man not to tell anyone about his healing is that **He wanted to keep His teaching at the forefront of His ministry**. Jesus wanted the primary focus of His ministry not to be on *physical healing*, but on *spiritual healing*. Jesus wanted His *teaching about salvation* to be front and central.

You see, the Jewish people were eager for the *physical* blessings of the Kingdom; but they had no clue that there is a *spiritual requirement* to enter the Kingdom. They didn't understand that merely being a Jew wasn't enough. They *needed to be saved* by repenting of their sin and believing on Jesus. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost; but in order for the lost to be saved, they first needed to hear that they were *sinners in need* of salvation!

Actually, this miracle is, in itself, a *picture* of salvation. Look at what the leper asked Jesus when he came to Him. He said, **“Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.”** The leper was *asking* Jesus to heal Him! In order to be made clean of his leprosy, he had to *want* to be made clean, and *ask* to be made clean! So it is with salvation. In order to be saved, sinners must *want* to be cleansed of their sin; and in simple faith, they must sincerely *ask* for it.

Now, make no mistake about it: it is *always* the Lord's will to make sinners clean. **Second Peter 3:9** says that the Lord **“is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”** The question is not whether *Jesus* is willing to make us clean: the question is whether *we* are willing to be made clean! In the case of the lame man by the pool of Bethesda, Jesus actually *asked* the lame man, **“Wilt thou be made whole?”** The very fact that Jesus asked the man whether he wanted to be made whole shows that Christ *does not force* Himself upon people. The lame man had to desire to be made whole of his infirmity before Christ would show him mercy. Well, so it is with salvation. God does not force salvation upon people. He *offers* salvation, and calls us to it, and woos and draws our hearts to Himself; yet, sinners must *choose* to receive God's gift of salvation. A sinner, after being drawn by the Spirit of God, *can decide to reject the offer*, or to receive it.

This leads me to the question: “Have you received God's gift of salvation? Have you responded to Jesus' call, and *asked* Him to save you?” Wilt *thou* be made whole? Are you tired of your sin yet? Have you gotten a belly-full of your own wickedness yet? Do you hunger after righteousness and purity? If you *don't* desire righteousness, and if you are *not* broken about your sin, then the door to the Kingdom is closed to you. If you would enter the Kingdom, you must ask Jesus to wash your sins away, and to come into your heart, and make you into a new creation. If you have not been saved, I urge you to *ask* Jesus for His wonderful gift of salvation!

## **II. Christ's authority over epilepsy**

### **Read Matthew 8:5-13.**

In these verses, we are told that after Jesus had come down from the mountain, He returned to the town of Capernaum. Remember, Peter's home in Capernaum was the new “headquarters” of Jesus' ministry. Jesus spent a *lot* of time in Capernaum; and *because* He spent so much time in Capernaum, He healed *many* people in that town (probably hundreds). Yet, of all the

people who received healing from Jesus, Matthew went out of his way to mention the Roman centurion's servant, who, he said, was grievously tormented with "*palsy*," or "epilepsy." (Luke recorded this miracle in his Gospel, as well.) What is so significant about the healing of the centurion's servant, that both Matthew and Luke chose to record it? I believe there are a couple reasons; and I believe the foremost reason is **the quality of the centurion's faith**. This centurion is the only man of whom it was ever said that that Jesus " *marvelled* " at his faith!

Now, think about that! How is it that Jesus Christ, the God-Man, could " *marvel* " at anything? As God, He is the one who knows everything about us. He knows our "*downsitting*" and our "*uprising*," and understands our "*thought afar off*." He is the God who compasses our path, and our "*lying down*," and who is acquainted with all our ways. He is the God who knows every word in our tongue. He is the God who knew everything about us before we were born. He is the One of whom Peter testified, "*Lord, thou knowest all things*." Jesus is the God who searches the hearts, and tries "*the reins*" (the innermost part of our being).

Since Christ sees the innermost thoughts of our hearts, how is it, then, that He " *marvelled* " at the centurion's faith? The word "marvel" comes from the verb *thaumastos*, which means "to admire, to wonder, or to be astonished." Was Jesus *surprised* at the centurion's implicit faith in Him? Was Jesus caught off guard by the fact that this Gentile *believed* that He could heal his servant simply by speaking the word, just as surely as *he* spoke a word to his servants, and *they* obeyed him? Was Jesus "astonished" that this man had a humble, believing heart?

The answer is: No, Jesus, He was not "astonished," or "surprised." When Jesus " marvels " at something, it is not in the same sense that *we* marvel at things. Jesus had known everything about this centurion from eternity past; and He already knew that this man would believe on Him. **Yet, He did "admire" the centurion's faith**. He considered this man's faith to be worthy of sitting up and taking notice. He considered it to be something which should make men raise their eyebrows in wonder. *Why* did Jesus "marvel" so much at this man's faith? Well, it is precisely *because* Jesus knows men's hearts so well that He admired this man's faith. You see, Jesus knows how fickle *most* people's "faith" really is.

### **Read John 2:23-25.**

In **John 2:23**, we are told that during the first Passover celebration of Jesus' ministry, many people "*believed*" on Him because of the miracles that they saw. Yet, John says that Jesus did not "*commit*" Himself to them. Why? Because "*he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man*." Jesus knew that many of these people had a superficial *head* belief that He was a miracle-worker, but not a *heart* belief that He was their personal *Saviour*. Jesus did not commit Himself to such people, because He knew that they had not truly committed their souls to *Him*. *Because* Jesus knows what a rare thing it is for a man to humble himself before Him, and believe on Him, He " marvels " whenever that rare soul—that one person in 10,000—actually believes on Him.

You see, God does not marvel at people's money, or at their career achievements. Nor is He impressed by people's good looks. The Bible says that "*The LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart*." God does not marvel at physical fitness. **Psalm 147:10** says that God "*delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man*." He doesn't marvel at our good works, either. **Isaiah 64:6** says that "*all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*." Furthermore, He doesn't marvel at the beautiful temples of worship that men build. In **Isaiah 66:1-2** the LORD says, "*The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all these things have been, saith the LORD*." In the case of this centurion, he had *literally* built a house of worship for the Jews; and it was for this very reason that the elders of the Jews had come to Jesus on behalf of the centurion, to ask if He would

help him. Usually, the Jews regarded Gentiles as scum; but in their estimation, *this* Gentile was different. This man was a *Jew-lover*; and he had used his wealth to build a synagogue for them. The Jews considered this man to be *worthy* of Jesus' help. Yet, what did Jesus think of this man's good deed? Let's look at **Luke 7**, and see.

**Read Luke 7:1-10.**

Did Jesus marvel at this man's good deed of building a synagogue? Nope! He didn't say a single word about it! Yet, there *was* something about this man that made the Lord marvel: and that was his faith in Him! **Psalm 147:11** says, "***The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.***" **Isaiah 66:2** says, "***But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite heart, and trembleth at my word.***" That is what Jesus saw in this man—a contrite, trusting heart! While other Jews considered this centurion to be "worthy" because of his good works, the centurion himself did *not* consider himself to be worthy. (And he was right! He *wasn't* worthy!) This man didn't even consider himself worthy to have Jesus come under his roof! Yet, he *believed* so strongly that Jesus was the Son of God, that He requested Jesus simply to say the word, and heal his servant from afar. That is what impressed the Lord! Jesus healed the centurion's servant not because he had done a "good deed" to earn it, but simply out of his kindness, mercy, and grace; and by that same amazing grace, He *saved this man's soul*, as well.

My friends, faith is not a "good work" that *earns* us salvation: faith is simply the "hand" by which we reach out to the Saviour for help, and by which He pulls us up out of the quicksand of sin, and sets us upon the solid Rock of Himself! Faith is the *only* thing that God regards. **Hebrews 11:6** says, "***But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.***" It doesn't matter who you are, or what your background is, or how educated you are, are how "good" you think you are: the only thing that the Lord will regard is *faith* in Him! True faith in Christ is rare; but it is the only thing that God will accept. In the case of this centurion, his faith in Jesus was so rare, that it was a rebuke to most of the *Jewish* people. By the way, I believe that this is the *second* reason why Matthew went out of his way to mention this miracle: **he mentioned this miracle because it shows that Jesus came to save *Gentiles* as well as Jews!** As Jesus was speaking to this man, he made it clear that multitudes of *Gentiles* will come from the east, west, north, and south, and will sit down in the Kingdom of Heaven, along with the godly Jews of all ages! Jesus loves His own covenant people, the Jews; yet, Christ's love for the *Gentiles* is no less than His love for the Jews. He wants *all people* to be saved! God's plan is that the *Gentiles* might one day come from all nations, and help to build the glorious Temple in which He will sit as King and Priest!

**Read Isaiah 60:1-18.**

**III. Christ's authority over fever, and over fiends (vv. 14-17)**

**Read Matthew 8:14-17.**

In these verses, we see that Peter had a mother-in-law, who lived with him and his wife. Yes, my friends, contrary to what the Catholic Church teaches, Peter had a *wife*! According to **Mark 1:29**, Peter's brother Andrew lived with them, as well. (This house was probably the "homestead" of their father, Jonas.) Now, according to **Mark chapter 1**, Jesus had just been in the synagogue, where He had healed a man who was possessed with a devil; and now that they had arrived back at Peter's house, they met with another problem: Peter's mother-in-law was very sick with deathly fever.

In Bible times, death came often, and suddenly. However, a high fever was no problem for the Son of God! Once again, the God-Man *reached out His hand*, and touched *her* hand; and the fever left her immediately! In a world in which women were second-class citizens, Jesus

Christ showed His love and compassion for this woman by touching her hand; and by His mighty power, He healed her. Jesus had *authority* over disease; and it wasn't hidden in a corner, either. Matthew says that as the day drew on, the people of Capernaum brought *many* more sick and demon-possessed people to Jesus; and Jesus healed *every one of them*. All this, Matthew said, was in fulfilment of what Isaiah wrote. Let's look at that Scripture.

### Read Isaiah 53:1-6.

Matthew went out of his way to point out that Jesus healed the sick, so that "***it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.***" The words "*griefs*" and "*sorrows*" in **Isaiah 53:4** can be understood as *physical* "infirmities" and "sicknesses"; and in **Matthew 8:17**, Matthew applies it in this way. Matthew is teaching us that Christ "bore" our physical sicknesses. No one who asked Jesus for physical healing was ever denied. In His love and compassion, Jesus *healed every single one of them*. He *literally* bore people's sicknesses, as He *laid his hands* on those who had deadly, contagious diseases, such as leprosy!

However, *when* did Christ "bear" our physical sicknesses? *That* is the important question. Matthew says that He bore them **during His earthly ministry**, as He went about healing people. Right up to the night of Jesus' arrest, He was still bearing people's sicknesses. Remember in the Garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus healed Malchus's ear, after Peter had had cut it off with his sword? We have no record that Malchus ever believed on Jesus, or that he even *thanked* Jesus for healing him; but Jesus healed him, anyway. Jesus *did* bear people's *physical* sicknesses during His 3 ½-year ministry. **However**, He bore our *spiritual* sickness on the cross, when He was wounded for our transgressions.

For 3 ½ years, Jesus poured out His love to the sick and sorrowing. Yet, what was the response of the people? Isaiah puts this way: "***yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.***" When Isaiah says "*we*," he is talking about his own people, the nation of Israel. In spite of all the love that Jesus had shown to His people, most of them still viewed Him as a criminal. When they saw Jesus hanging on the cross, they assumed that He had done some terrible sin to merit this judgment from God. They failed to understand that the Messiah would be "***numbered with the transgressors,***" and "***bear the sin of many.***"

Now, how can we apply this passage to our lives today? In a couple ways. First, we who are saved should be ready to give an answer to those who *think* that they are saved because they were healed of some physical ailment. Many people in Capernaum were healed of physical diseases; yet, Jesus later had to denounce Capernaum for their *rejection* of Him! Being healed of a physical disease does *not* make a person saved, and reconciled to God! Christian, when you meet with someone who *thinks* he is on his way to Heaven because "the good Lord was looking out for me at that time when I nearly died," don't just smile and nod, and let him go on thinking that he is right with God. God is merciful to lost people every day, and He *does* often heal them of physical diseases; but your loved ones have a much greater ailment that needs to be healed—and that is the deadly disease of *sin*. In order to have eternal life and enter Heaven one day, they must place their faith in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Your loved ones must hear and believe the Gospel message—the message that Christ died for our sins, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

**Conclusion:** In closing, I would ask, "Have *you* placed your faith in the Son of God?" Have *you* desired to be made whole? Has there been a time in your life when you realised that you are not worthy of God's mercy—yet, in faith, you took Jesus as His word, and *asked* Him to save you? If not, please do so this morning! If you know Christ as Saviour already, I would ask, "Are you pointing people to the Saviour?" Are you letting people know that there is a Balm in Gilead who heals the sin-sick soul? Should you be lacking in your witness, let Christ fill your heart with a burning passion to lead others to Him!

<sup>1</sup> “Vissarion,” <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vissarion>.

<sup>2</sup> “Is This Russian Cult Leader a Fraud?—BBC News,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvKOOmpbPWA>.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*