

OVERCOMING THE MONSTER: CONQUERING OUR FEARS

VIDEO TWO

We may not face the same dangers as Malala, but we all have deadly adversaries that we long to see defeated.

Sometimes these adversaries come in the form of illnesses that relentlessly seek to harm us, like an unseen enemy bent on our destruction.

Luke introduces us to a woman who understood these fears all too well. She is plagued by a fever, and without access to antibiotics, her infection is likely to be fatal.

Everything changes when Jesus meets her:

“Jesus bent over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up at once and began to wait on them”

Gone! Jesus’ words heal her of the fever’s threat.

We might assume that in a less scientific culture, people were more inclined to accept miracles. However, what happens next suggests otherwise.

Crowds flood around Jesus, bringing their sick friends and family members. They knew that something extraordinary was happening. They sensed a renewed hope for those who suffered.

So imagine waiting in line. Anticipation... and then disappointment.

Because as day breaks, Jesus leaves. Has his compassion waned?

No, quite the opposite.

Jesus is inviting us to recognize that a deeper solution is needed for the world's problems than mere physical healing. He explains his absence, saying,

“I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God... that is why I was sent”.

Jesus’ commitment to remaking our broken world goes beyond physical healing. We face a threat greater than the Taliban or even cancer.

According to Jesus, the reason our universe is in disarray is because it has turned away from its Creator. Sickness and sexism are symptoms of this deeper problem. And death serves as God's judgement on a world that disregards Him.

That world includes us.

It's like in our turning from God, a virus has taken up permanent residence inside us – causing us to contribute to the world's pain. So, if Jesus is going to eradicate all suffering, He must also conquer the threat we pose.

That's why Jesus leaves Capernaum. His vision is bigger than just one town. And it's bigger than just changing circumstances. Even physically healed people will one day die.

His vision will later take him to Jerusalem. Like Malala, he is fully aware of the danger. And he's killed.

Yet what looked so futile was the means of Jesus' victory.

In dying, Jesus deals with the root cause of all that is wrong. He takes our monstrosity upon himself. He absorbs the judgement that is rightly ours – defeating humanity's biggest problem. That's the good news he's come to proclaim.

Today, we live in a world where deadly forces persist. Malala's story fuels our desire for their eventual defeat.

Jesus' story declares that this hope is not in vain. Our greatest enemy has been defeated. And everything that is wrong in the world will one day be gone.

His death and resurrection guarantee that no hostile force will have the final say.

Though our world may be terrifying, we can have hope... because nothing and no one can ultimately threaten those who belong to Jesus.