



SERMON BASED STUDY GUIDE

Pastor Charlie Riley

MORE THAN A NAME WEEK 4

OPENING & PRAYER:

God is introduced as Jehovah Rapha — Yahweh who heals — and this name becomes the lens through which every story and teaching is read. The bitterness of Marah and the tree that made the waters sweet are offered as a vivid Old Testament type: God meets practical need and deeper emotional poison at the same time. Healing is not limited to physical ailments; it includes the soul (mind, will, emotions) and the spirit (the inner thirst only God can satisfy). The narrative stresses that Jesus modeled healing as authority, not petition; he spoke and people were made whole rather than praying for permission. That pattern reframes Christian expectation: believers are called to rise to the Bible's promises instead of lowering Scripture to fit prior experience.

"Lord, thank You for bringing us together at this moment right now. We ask that You would stir our hearts and minds to be curious about You and kind to one another. Please reveal more of Yourself to us as we grow closer to You and one another. We thank You for this small group time we're about to have. In Jesus' name, amen."

SCRIPTURE:

So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah. **Exodus 15:22-23**

And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" So he cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. **Exodus 15:24-25**

There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them, and said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you (Jehovah- Rapha)." **Exodus 15:25-26**

who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. **1 Peter 2:24**

And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. **Matthew 4:23**

Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented." And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him." **Matthew 8:5-7**

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. **Hebrews 13:8**

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." **Luke 4:18-19**

looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; **Hebrews 12:15'**

who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. **1 Peter 2:24**

Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." **John 4:13-15**

GO DEEPER:

A theological throughline insists that sin brought sickness, Christ bore those effects on the cross, and therefore the atonement carries provision for body, soul, and spirit. Preaching and teaching are both necessary: preaching convicts and moves the heart; teaching reforms the mind so people understand what they can expect from God. Bitterness is named as a chief barrier to entering the promised life — the people at Marah mirror how resentment and unforgiveness foul spiritual progress — and the cross is presented as the “tree” that turns bitterness to sweetness. Contemporary testimony is given: several healings and reversals of medical prognosis are recounted as signs that God still heals today.

Practical pastoral application flows into an invitation: a call to believe Jesus as Lord and Savior, an encouragement to command healing in Jesus’ name when appropriate, and a corporate prayer for physical, emotional, and spiritual wholeness. The message balances assurance (God desires and is able to heal) with responsibility (faith must rise to meet God’s promises; unresolved bitterness must be exposed and surrendered). The conclusion is a direct pastoral exhortation to accept Christ, to refuse fear, and to expect God’s restorative presence in every dimension of life.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. God is the Lord who heals. The name Jehovah Rapha locates healing in God’s identity, not merely as an occasional action. When God declares himself a healer, healing becomes a theological promise to be received, not a series of exceptions to explain away. This shifts the believer’s posture from petitioning for scraps of mercy to claiming what divine character provides. **[06:11]**

2. Don’t shrink Scripture to experience Scripture intends to raise faith, not be reshaped to fit what has already been experienced. Lowering biblical promises to match skepticism forfeits the possibility of seeing new realities; raising personal expectation to Scripture invites God to act. This is an appeal to intellectual and spiritual humility: let the Word stretch present belief rather than letting present failure narrow the Word. **[07:26]**

3. Healing spans body, soul, spirit. The atonement addresses physical illness, emotional disorder, and spiritual thirst; these are related but distinct arenas of restoration. Prioritizing one while neglecting another leaves people only partially whole. True ministry recognizes the layered nature of human need and offers remedies that correspond to body, mind, and heart. **[13:47]**

4. Bitterness is healed by the Cross. Bitterness roots itself like poison and blocks entry into promised blessing; the Marah story diagnoses the problem and the tree (the cross) provides the cure. Forgiveness and transferal of grief to Christ are not optional niceties but necessary graces for advancement. Letting the cross touch old wounds transforms what made a person bitter into soil for greater fruit. **[31:32]**

LEARNING AND GROWING:

- 1.** What pattern did Jesus consistently use when healing people, and how did it differ from simply asking God to do it **([11:35])**?
- 2.** The name Jehovah Rapha means "The Lord who heals." How does understanding this as part of God's identity, rather than just an action He sometimes performs, change our expectation of Him?
- 3.** The sermon emphasizes raising our faith to the level of Scripture's promises, not lowering Scripture to match our experience. What are the practical consequences for a believer or a church that chooses to explain away biblical promises instead of believing them **([07:26])**?
- 4.** God's healing encompasses body, soul, and spirit. Which of these three areas do you find easiest to believe God for, and which is the most difficult for you to trust Him with? Why do you think that is?
- 5.** The woman at the well had a spiritual thirst she tried to quench with relationships. What are some of the "wrong wells" you tend to go to in an attempt to satisfy the deep spiritual thirst that only God can fill **([35:41])**?

CLOSING PRAYER:

"Father, thank you for the opportunities to grow in our faith. We will continue to lean on Your Word as we grow to bring people to know you. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."