

Sermon Summary
4th after Epiphany
3rd February 2013

- The gospel contains the report that Jesus is challenged to perform miracles in his home town
- “Physician, heal thyself” has the hallmarks of a proverb.
- We tend to treat doctors with a high degree of respect, and the phrase may thus seem Ok to us.
- In the ancient world things were different.
- Medicine was a messy business, and was usually carried out by slaves.
- Some fairly “quack” medical practice was associated with pagan cults and temples
- Only in modern times has the doctor become a respected figure.
- The old red and white barber’s pole is a reminder that for a long time, barbers were the doctors!
- The gospel also tells the sad story of the woman who had spent all her money on doctors to get no cure (Mark 5:26; Luke 8:43)
- This was not a compliment....Jesus is being challenged
- His response is provocative
- He has just spelled out what Luke makes the manifesto for his ministry- the fulfilment of the promises in Isaiah
- These promises were the gift of God through the Messiah to his faithful people.
- Jesus’ answer tells the faithful people that the promises aren’t for them, but for the outsiders, the non-believers, just as happened in the prophetic cycles of the OT.
- Right from the beginning, Jesus associates himself not with those who considered themselves, holy, pious or faithful
- There is a warning here to “holy groups” that God may well challenge the prestige and privilege which they would claim for themselves and deny to others.
- In God’s dispensation, his promises are never limited to the great and the good
- Those who profess to be his faithful people must cultivate a similar spirit of welcome and generosity to that shown by God and his Christ.

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