

Third Presbyterian Church
Midweek Bible Study
Miracle Series
Miracle Healing of the Paralytic
Lesson 6 – The Miracle of Friendship

Mark 2:1-12 (NIV)

¹ A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. ² So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. ³ Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. ⁴ Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." ⁶ Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, ⁷ "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" ⁸ Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? ⁹ Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? ¹⁰ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." He said to the paralytic, ¹¹ "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." ¹² He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

1. Do you agree with the sermon in this regard: When God said in Genesis "it is not good that man should be alone," this was not completely centered around marriage but it was a larger context about people being in fellowship with one another. Agree or disagree
 - a. If this is the case does that give a different attitude or energy regarding fellowship with others?
2. Which is it easier for us to do—forgive others or care for them when they're sick?
3. What is your definition of true friendship?
 - a. Does God play a role in determining true friendship?
 - b. Can someone be your true friend if they are not a believer?
4. Give testimony of bringing a friend to Christ?
5. Give example of going the extra mile for someone to get them the help they needed and what was their response and the outcome of your efforts?
6. What does it mean to have unstoppable faith?
7. What connection is there between a person's faith and God's working in his or her life?
8. What does this story tell you is the difference between true spirituality and counterfeit spirituality?
9. Respond to our calling to be spiritual EMTs being trained in the study of the Word, given the tools of scripture and indwelt with the Holy Spirit and our job is to analyze the situation, use our training to stabilize the situation and with urgency get them to the doctor.....and the doctor is Jesus!
10. Share your main takeaway from the sermon and the lesson?

G. Jesus' Power to Forgive Sin and Its Impact: Forgiveness of Sin, 2:1-12

(2:1-12) **Introduction:** the man who seeks forgiveness of sins—truly seeks with a desperation that will not quit—will be forgiven. This is the great lesson learned from the man with palsy.

1. Jesus returned to Capernaum many months later (v.1-2).
2. The prerequisite to being forgiven (v.3-4).
3. The reality of being forgiven (v.5).
4. The question aroused by being forgiven (v.6-7).
5. The source of being forgiven (v.8-11).
6. The impact of being forgiven (v.12).

1. (2:1-2) Preaching—Minister—Mission: Jesus returned to Capernaum after many months of preaching throughout Galilee (Mark 1:39). The preaching tour had lasted about twelve months. He apparently returned to Peter's house; and as always, the news spread quickly, and the crowds began to gather and flood the house.

Note what Jesus did. He went about His *primary mission*: "He preached the Word to them." No doubt some had come for ministry, that is, to have some need met or to be healed; and some had come out of curiosity. However, note what Jesus did first of all. He did the main work of God: He proclaimed the Word of God to men who were lost eternally.

2. (2:3-4) Forgiveness—Perseverance—Faith—Invitation: the prerequisite to being forgiven was clearly demonstrated by what happened.

1. The man came to Jesus. Actually, this man was brought to Jesus by four other men carrying him on a cot-like pallet. Note two significant things.
 - a. The man was desperate for help and very hopeful, having heard about Jesus.
 - b. The man was counted as a very dear person by the four men. This is indicated by the extreme action they took to reach Jesus.

The point is clear: the first prerequisite to forgiveness is coming to Jesus. A person must come to Jesus for forgiveness, even if he has to be brought. Compare the invitation of God to "come":

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isaiah 55:1).

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).

DEEPER STUDY #1 (2:4) Houses—Persevering Faith

3. (2:5) Forgiveness: the reality of being forgiven. Note what happened.

1. Jesus saw their faith (*pistin*^{PWS: 1425})—the faith of the man himself and the faith of the four men who brought him. The faith of the friends played a large part in the man's being healed and in his receiving forgiveness of sins.

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Romans 15:1).

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2).

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Galatians 6:9).

"I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I search out" (Job 29:15-16).

"She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy" (Proverbs 31:20).

"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him" (Luke 10:33-34).

2. Jesus proclaimed forgiveness of the man's sins. Forgiving the man's sins was far more important than healing him (Mark 2:10). A sound body assures life for only a few years at most; a sound soul assures life forever (see Deeper Study #4—Matthew 26:28).

- a. Jesus forgave the man's sins first. By so doing He taught that the most important thing in a man's life is for a man to seek forgiveness of sins. A man should always seek to be forgiven before anything else. Jesus wishes man to live eternally, not just for a few short years. But before he can live eternally, man must willingly come to Jesus for forgiveness of sins.
- b. Jesus proclaimed forgiveness in tenderness and compassion. When a man comes to Jesus for forgiveness, Jesus does not...
 - accuse the man of past sins.
 - find fault with the man: what he has done—why he has come—from where he has come.
 - begrudge or hesitate in forgiving the man.

When a man comes to Jesus, Jesus responds tenderly and compassionately. This is seen in the word "son." In the Greek "son" (*teknon* ^{PWS: 3649}) means child. Looking upon the man lying at His feet, Jesus saw a child, and Jesus responded to the man just as any of us would respond to a child lying helpless at our feet—tenderly and compassionately.

- c. Jesus proclaimed forgiveness in His own authority. It is critical to see this. He did not say, "God, forgive this man," or "God, I wish You would forgive this man." Jesus said, "Child, thy sins be forgiven thee." He forgave the sins Himself, in His own name, by His own power and authority.

The point is unmistakable. Jesus is proclaiming to be God, the very Son of God, and the people understand exactly what He is doing (Mark 2:6-7).

Thought 1. Combine the two points: (1) Jesus proclaims forgiveness, tenderly and compassionately, and (2) He possesses the power to forgive sins because He is truly the Son of God. A man becomes a fool if he does not come to Jesus for forgiveness of sins.

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31).

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts 13:38).

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephes. 1:7).

4. (2:6-7) Blasphemy—Forgiveness: the question aroused by being forgiven. Apparently, the ruling body in Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin, had heard about a prophet in Galilee who was carrying on an unusual ministry. Unbelievable miracles were being claimed. The prophet, who called Himself Jesus of Nazareth, needed to be

checked out to make sure He was not teaching error and misleading the people; not threatening insurrection against the Jewish religion and nation which was under Roman domination.

The Sanhedrin sent a delegation to Capernaum to investigate Jesus. The Scribes mentioned in these verses are that delegation. When the Scribes heard Jesus forgive the man's sins, they immediately saw the point Jesus was making. They began to reason in their minds and hearts: "Why does this man blaspheme? Who can forgive sins but God only? Is He claiming to be God? The promised Messiah?"

Thought 1. The question was logical and reasonable.

- 1) Most people and religions in the world ask the very same question: "Who can forgive sins but God only?" They view Jesus only as a prophet or some great man. In their minds He could never possess the right or power to forgive sins.
- 2) Some in the world simply ask, "Who can forgive sins?" And they rejoice when they find out that Jesus is the Son of God and that He does forgive sins.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

"Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee" (John 9:35-37).

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (John 11:25-27).

Thought 2. Note: If Jesus was not the Son of God, then the Scribes were correct. Jesus was speaking blasphemy. However, since He is the Son of God, He truly forgave the man's sins. The conclusion is glorious: He can forgive our sins, too.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

5. (2:8-11) Forgiveness: the source of being forgiven. Jesus revealed His power to forgive sins in four strong steps.

1. Jesus revealed that He knew the human heart: exactly what man thinks, His motives and reasonings (see note, pt.1—' Matthew 9:4-7 for discussion).

2. Jesus revealed His God-like wisdom and fearlessness. He suggested that He be tested with the impossible (see note, pt.2—' Matthew 9:4-7 for discussion).

3. Jesus stated His purpose: to prove that He is the Son of Man (see note, pt.3—' Matthew 9:4-7; Deeper Study #3—Matthew 8:20 for discussion).

4. Jesus proved His power to forgive sins. He must be able to forgive sins, for He healed the man and caused the man to arise and walk. His power is indisputable.

Note the proof of His power to forgive sins.

- ⇒ Jesus *willed* the man to walk. He simply *spoke the Word* "arise," and the man arose and walked. The power was in Jesus' *will and Word*. His will is His Word, and His Word is His will.
- ⇒ It follows, then, that if Jesus *wills* to forgive sins, all He has to do is *speak the Word*, "Thy sins are forgiven"; and the sins are forgiven. (Cp. Ephes. 1:7; 1 John 1:9; 1 John 2:1-2; Acts 5:31; Acts 13:38; Luke 24:47.)

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter 2:24).

"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Psalm 103:3).

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).

6. (2:12) Witnessing— Faithfulness: the impact of being forgiven.

1. The man walked before all as a living testimony to the power of Jesus to forgive and heal a man's whole being.
2. The crowds marvelled and praised God.

Thought 1. Jesus forgives the sin of any man, no matter how terrible the sin. When a man's sins are forgiven, it should dramatically affect both him and those who know him. However, the great tragedy is that few pay attention to the claim that sins are forgiven. They ignore the fact and go on their merry way, continuing to walk in the selfishness of this world (cp. 1 John 2:15-16).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).

DEEPER STUDY #1

(2:4) Houses— Persevering Faith: many houses of Jesus' day had an outside stairway that climbed up to a second floor. The roof was easily reached from this stairway. The roof was flat and made of tile-like rocks matted together with a straw and clay-like substance. The roofs were sturdy enough for people to sit upon and carry on evening conversations and other activities. These men dug and scooped out an opening through the roof. They were so sure of Jesus' power to help, nothing was going to prevent them from getting to Jesus—they had an unstoppable faith.