

5. Jesus Healed a Paralyzed Man

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why Jesus took the disciples with Him on a tour throughout the cities of Galilee. We also saw why Jesus told the man cleansed of leprosy to go and show himself to the priests as a testimony to them. In our topic today, we are going to see what happened when Jesus returned to Capernaum.

Jesus had been preaching throughout the cities of Galilee but then returned to Capernaum. Jesus had been at the house of Peter and Andrew before He began this tour through Galilee. The two brothers had traveled with Jesus thorough Galilee along with some of the other disciples. As a result, this was probably the house to which Jesus came when He returned to Galilee. Mark 2:1-4 says, “And again He entered Capernaum after *some* days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive *them*, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.” Here, we see that the people quickly found out that Jesus had returned to Capernaum and immediately started coming to see Him.

The crowd became so large that soon the house was filled with people. Others stood near the door so they could hear what Jesus was saying, even if they could not see Him. Jesus immediately began preaching the Word to the crowd of people that had gathered. Romans 10:17 says, “So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” However, as the crowd continued to grow, those people who were still coming could not even get near the door of the house. It was about that time that four men arrived. They were carrying their paralyzed friend to Jesus so Jesus could heal him. However, they could not even get close to the door of the house because of the large crowd gathered around the door.

That did not stop the four friends. The Jewish homes usually had a flat roof with the stairs to the roof on the outside of the house. Deuteronomy 22:8 says, “When you build a new house, then you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring guilt of bloodshed on your household if anyone falls from it.” The word translated “parapet” was the name for the low wall that was built on the sides of a roof or a bridge. When the weather was hot, the people would go up on the roof when the cooler evening breeze began to blow. Many of the people would even sleep on the roof during hot weather. These four friends carried their friend up on the roof of the house. Luke 5:19 says, “And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with *his* bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus.” We see that these four men worked together and they were determined to get their friend to Jesus.

Mark 2:5-9 says, “When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, ‘Son, your sins are forgiven you.’ And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, ‘Why does this *Man* speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?’ But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, ‘Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘*Your* sins are

forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk?’” We do not read about the faith of the paralyzed man. However, we do read about the faith of the four friends. Jesus saw their faith and said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven you.”

Immediately, the scribes who were there began reasoning in their hearts. The word translated “reasoning” means “*to bring together different thoughts or to deliberate.*” Here, we see that they were bringing together different thoughts in their hearts, rather than in their minds. Jeremiah 17:9 says, “The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” One of the parts of the human spirit is the conscience. The scribes showed by the thoughts of their hearts that they were not true followers of God. Genesis 6:5 says, “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.” After seeing and hearing about all of the miracles Jesus did as signs during the previous few months, these scribes were showing the same rebellion toward God in their hearts that had been shown in the days of Noah because they refused to recognize Jesus as God.

In the reasoning in their hearts, they were thinking, “Why does this *Man* speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” Jesus immediately perceived in His spirit what the scribes were reasoning within themselves. In 1 Corinthians 2:11, we read, “For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.” Mankind cannot perceive the thoughts of the heart of another person because we cannot look on the heart. In contrast, this very statement showed that Jesus is God because He could perceive the thoughts that were going on in the hearts of the scribes.

Jesus then showed that He knew the thoughts of the hearts of the scribes by asking them, “Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk?’” We see that Jesus told the scribes that He knew the thoughts of their hearts. Jesus then went on to point out the fact that He had the power to heal the paralyzed man just by speaking the word. Jesus pointed out that He could speak two very different statements but that both statements would have the same result. Jesus told the scribes that He could say, “Your sins are forgiven you.” Jesus said that He could get the same result by saying, “Arise, take up your bed and walk.” Here, we see that Jesus said that He had the authority to forgive sins. The fact that Jesus knew the thoughts of their hearts made it clear that He came from God.

As a result, Jesus went on to say, in Mark 2:10-12, “‘But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins’—He said to the paralytic, ‘I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.’ Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, ‘We never saw *anything* like this!’” A key name that Jesus used for Himself, as He made this statement, should have been a clear statement to the scribes, because they were the ones who made copies of the books of the Old Testament.

Daniel 7:13-14 says, “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, *One* like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near

before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom *the one* which shall not be destroyed.” This statement, from the book of Daniel, made it clear that the Son of Man would have an eternal kingdom. As a result, the statement of Jesus showed He is God. This made it clear that Jesus did have power on earth to forgive sins.

Then, Jesus spoke to the paralyzed man and said, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” The man immediately obeyed Jesus, got up, picked up the bed on which he had been carried, and went to his own home. Luke tells us that this man had also come to a true faith in Jesus. Luke 5:25 says, “Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.” We see several things in this verse. The man got up while the crowd was watching him. Probably at least part of the people there that day had known this man. They knew he was paralyzed, and now they saw him get up from his bed.

We also see that he took up what he had been lying on. This is a reminder that this man had been given physical strength in addition to being healed. He was able to carry home the bed or mat on which he had been lying. However, we see that the most important thing that happened in his life that day was the fact that his heart had been changed. He knew that his sins had been forgiven because of the first statement Jesus had made. However, we also see that there was a real change of heart. The man was giving glory to God for what had just happened in His life. Then, he walked out of the house as everyone watched.

This changed man also had an impact on many of the people who were gathered at that house that day. We see that all of the people who saw what happened began to give glory to God. They also said, “We never saw anything like this!” Many of these people had probably seen Jesus heal various people. However, this was the first time that they heard Jesus also forgive sins. The need for the forgiveness of sins is the greatest need of every person in the world. In Acts 26:18, Paul explained why Jesus had sent him to the Gentiles, when he wrote, “To open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.” Then, Ephesians 1:7 adds, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.” Christ made this forgiveness of sins possible by paying the penalty for sins on the cross. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn how to explain to others how others can also receive this forgiveness of sins that the paralyzed man received that day. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain this forgiveness to others.