



ST. PATRICK'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

4797 Curtis Rd Port ST John FL 32927

The 19th Sunday in Trinity
October 10, 2021

May the words of my mouth, and the meditations of our hearts, be acceptable in Thy sight,
O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

✠ In The Name of The Father and of The Son
and of The Holy Ghost. Amen.

Sermon Matthew 9:1-7

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In today's Gospel, Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to His own town. Some men brought to Him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven." And, behold, certain of the scribes, - teachers of the law, - said within themselves: This man blasphemeth.

And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith He to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house. And when the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men.

"Your sins are forgiven." As Anglicans, we hear those words quite often. You hear them at just about every church service. You hear about the forgiveness of sins again when you take the Lord's Supper. Do you ever get tired of hearing those words? Do they seem to lose meaning after a while? Just think about it – what would you rather hear – that your sins are forgiven, or that you have just got a new job? Which one has more value, more meaning, more joy to you?

Your sins are forgiven - Four words, they were just 4 words. Let us focus on this moment during Jesus' ministry, when He spoke those 4 words. Those words are the most important words that you will ever hear. In fact, if someone were to ask me, what is the difference between the Christian religion and all the other religions of the world, I would tell him, "4 words, just 4 words". The 4 words which set Jesus apart from everyone else. - Your sins are forgiven. May God bless our understanding of these words, - and increase our faith in - and appreciation for - these four special words.

In our Gospel today, Jesus is sitting in a house. He is surrounded by all kinds of people. Some have come because they like Him. And some have come because they do not, and they're trying to find fault. - A man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed, was brought to Jesus, and Jesus, seeing their faith, said unto the man; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. He doesn't say, "You are healed," but "Your sins are forgiven." Now why did Jesus say that? Perhaps there was something going on, in the heart of this man. Maybe he was feeling a lot of guilt – after all, in those days everyone was taught that if you were sick or suffering, you were being punished for something you had done in your life. We don't know exactly what was going on in this man's heart, but whatever it was, Jesus wanted him to know, - above anything else – that his sins – every single sin, - was totally forgiven - and he was loved by God. Jesus wants us to know this as well.

When we come to church on a Sunday morning, it is faith that brings us here. And we all come here with different earthly problems that we would like God to fix. Maybe we don't come to church with paralysis, but we all have something. A health problem - A financial problem. - A family problem - Or you're worried about the future - Your prayer hasn't been answered yet. And maybe, just maybe, we feel guilty about something, like that paralyzed man perhaps was feeling. Guilt is regretting the past. Blaming yourself. Guilt is one of the leading causes of depression and sleeplessness. Guilt can destroy the strongest and most confident person in the world.

And so we come to Jesus with faith - that He can help us. And when we come here, Jesus speaks to us, - and before anything else, He says to us what we need to hear the most. He says, "My dear child, your sins are forgiven." Every single sin you have ever committed in your life has been "sent away." You don't have to feel guilty anymore. Your sins have been sent away – where? To the cross. And there, Jesus received your sins, He stood in your place, and suffered and died, so that you wouldn't have to suffer and die eternally, for your sins. When Jesus forgave the sins of that paralyzed man, not everyone in the room was happy. Some thought He was going too far. Who does this Jesus think He is – only God can forgive sins. Then Jesus performed a miracle, to prove that He can do this – He healed that man. - He was paralyzed, - he wasn't anymore. He was able to stand up. He walked out the door. There's your proof that this man's sin has been sent away.

Jesus has done something in your life to prove to you that your sins are forgiven. Yes, - He has done something, - a miracle bigger than the one in our Gospel for today – He rose from the dead on Easter morning – the greatest miracle of them all. This was Jesus' way of proving to you, that every time you hear those words – your sins are forgiven – every time – they have meaning, - and they are true. How do I know they're true? The tomb is empty, Jesus is alive – there's your proof. What about all of those other problems we bring to Jesus – our worries about money, health, family, the future. What does Jesus do about those? Why doesn't He just take those away, just like He took away that man's paralysis? Jesus does promise to help us, to take care of us, to work out all things for our good.

God the Father, who did not spare His own Son, Jesus Christ, - gave him up for us all – how will He not hear us through His Son. If God has already fixed our biggest problem – our sin – He will certainly take care of our other problems as well in time. If it is God's will, He will heal you of whatever problem you have in your life. And, I'm sure you will be

thankful. But you will also be realistic, because your life won't be perfect after that. That man's paralysis went away, but I'm sure he faced other issues in his life. The same is true for you. God takes one problem away. But then another may arise. We will always have something for which we will need God's help. But remember this – you already are the richest person in the world, - spiritually rich. You already are the healthiest person in the world – your soul is healthy. You already have a perfect family – you are a member of the family of God.

And, four words make all the difference in the world. They change everything for you. They bring you blessing upon blessing.

**Four words, just four words:
“Your sins are forgiven.”**

Amen.