

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
“What Jesus teaches about mercy!” Matthew 9:9-13  
June 7, 2026  
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Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for this 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost is from our Gospel reading, Matthew 9:9-13.

**“9 As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “Follow Me.” So he arose and followed Him.**

**10 Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. 11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, “Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”**

**12 When Jesus heard that, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 13 But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”**

So far our text:

Jesus had just arrived in His hometown at the beginning of our Gospel chapter 9. He was preaching God’s Word and healing many. There were so many gathered that some friends lowered a paralytic through the roof so that Jesus could attend to him. And Jesus does. He heals the paralytic. But before the Physician of the body healed him, the Physician of the soul had administered the most necessary medicine. What was that medicine for the soul? Listen and watch how the Doctor worked.

**“Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.”**

Jesus, True God, saw the faith of this man who was brought to Him. And Jesus then gave Him the most precious words a person can ever hear. He didn’t say, “your cancer is in

remission, or with some therapy I think you're going to walk again". Sure these are words that a modern day doctor might say and they are words that cheer us up.

But what Jesus, the Great Physician, did was speak to an ailing soul and give it eternal cheer. "Your sins are forgiven you."

If that was all that Jesus did. That was enough. That is what every sick soul from sin needs...Jesus' mercy...Jesus attention...Jesus removing the cancer that has infected our souls and making us whole again. And only God, the God of mercy, has the power to do this.

Oh, the scribes who were watching all this unfold, burned to hear a mere man utter these words. **"And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!"**

And Mark's account adds these words: **"Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"**

But Jesus, true God, knowing their thoughts, though they were not spoken, for He knows all our hearts, says these words.

**"4 But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? 5 For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? 6 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"— then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."**

Jesus, the Great Physician, can and does heal both body, and most importantly soul. And He wants all people to receive this healing of their souls, so that their bodies would not only receive a temporal healing, but an eternal healing in heaven, where there is no pain of body, thirst, sorrow, tears, or death!

This is the healing Jesus first and foremost wants all people to receive...His great mercy! And so we see Jesus eating with tax collectors and sinners. His mercy is given to those sinners who recognize their own soul's sick condition. That is why Jesus came to us, out of mercy!

Out of mercy, Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. He found Matthew, and He found Abraham, in our epistle reading, and He found Paul who wrote our epistle reading from Romans.

And Jesus has sought and called you to know His mercy. And yes, we need a physician for our souls! We cannot claim to be healthy in our soul. We dare not claim that our own righteousness merits entrance into heaven! No! We gather here this morning once again to admit our sins to God, and not claim to be self-righteous, in no need of The Physician Jesus.

And Jesus calls you by name in your baptism. He calls you to believe in Him, forgives your sins, and then calls you to follow Him. As you follow Him, Jesus takes care of all the injuries to your body, according to His good will, and to your soul, always offering you His mercy as you hear His Word and gather with other saints at His Supper to receive your soul's forgiveness, your soul's healing!

Jesus makes sure you know that His mercy is not just for people like Matthew, and Paul and Abraham, but for all people!

Listen to the opening verses before our epistle reading from Romans 4.

**“3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” 4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.**

**5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,”**

Abraham's soul was healed and declared righteous. How? By faith in God's promises. And then Paul speaks to all people, to you and me... to him or her who believes...his faith, her faith... is accounted for righteousness.

Your account is balanced! No debt of sin...only Christ's overflowing righteousness. This is all by God's mercy alone. Grace alone saves a sinner.

And later in our epistle reading, Paul makes sure that we know we are included.

**“16 Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all 17 (as it is written, “I have made you a father of many nations”)**

To all the seed...that’s all Gentile believers, not just the believing Jews, of the law, but Gentile believers of many nations!

So Paul concludes that these precious words of healing, that Abraham’s faith received and reckoned him righteous, were written for us also!

**“22 And therefore “it was accounted to him (to Abraham) for righteousness.”**

**23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, 24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25 who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.**

Our justification! Our complete healing of the soul! And Paul tells us how this was only possible by the merciful work of Jesus. He was delivered up because of our offenses and raised for our justification.

And now we have learned what Jesus has taught and what all people need to know. God desires mercy, for it is by mercy alone that we are saved. And God’s people live alone in this mercy and must show it to others. For the moment that one thinks that one can heal oneself by one’s self-righteousness and is above others, and doesn’t need mercy, and looks down on others, one needs to repent quickly of one’s supposed self-righteousness.

**“For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”**

And thanks be to God, He does, over and over again, so that we receive through His Word and Sacraments what our souls truly need...Jesus’ righteousness, Jesus’ forgiveness, Jesus’ mercy, Jesus’ healing! Amen.

**And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)**