

## TWO MIRACLES AND FRIENDS

### Matthew 9: 1-8

Have church family members say something wonderful that happened to them this week.

Comments from the Sermon two weeks ago about love... reminders are good

**Remember what Patrick said about Matthew, Mark, and Luke.**

Matthew 9: 1-8

Getting into a boat, *Jesus* crossed over *the Sea of Galilee* and came to His own city.

<sup>2</sup>And they brought to Him a paralyzed man lying on a stretcher. And seeing their faith, Jesus said to the man who was paralyzed, “Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven.” <sup>3</sup>And some of the scribes said to themselves, “This man is blaspheming!” <sup>4</sup>And Jesus, perceiving their thoughts, said, “Why are you thinking evil in your hearts? <sup>5</sup>For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? <sup>6</sup>But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—then He *said* to the paralyzed man, “Get up, pick up your stretcher and go home.” <sup>7</sup>And he got up and went home. <sup>8</sup>But when the crowds saw *this*, they were awestruck, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

I love that God gave us all of the Gospels to teach all of us differently and Matthew is wonderful but it is also the shortest and describes the least of this amazing passage of the paralytic man. So we are going to be reading from Mark chapter 2 verses 1-12 today.

We are going to read this passage in its entirety and then break it down and talk through all of the wonderful points this has in it.

## Mark 2: 1-13

When *Jesus* came back to Capernaum a few days later, it was heard that He was at home. <sup>2</sup>And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer space, not even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them. <sup>3</sup>And *some people* \*came, bringing to Him a man who was paralyzed, carried by four *men*. <sup>4</sup>And when they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and after digging an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralyzed man was lying. <sup>5</sup>And Jesus, seeing their faith, \*said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” <sup>6</sup>But some of the scribes were sitting there and thinking *it* over in their hearts, <sup>7</sup>“Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins except God alone?” <sup>8</sup>Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were thinking that way within themselves, \*said to them, “Why are you thinking about these things in your hearts? <sup>9</sup>Which is easier, to say to the paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven’; or to say, ‘Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk’? <sup>10</sup>But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—He \*said to the paralyzed man, <sup>11</sup>“I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet, and go home.” <sup>12</sup>And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, “We have never seen *anything* like this!”

## Mark 2:1-2

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Before we get started I want you to take a minute and take a few big deep breaths. Ready? In through the nose, out through the mouth. And again. I understand that that was a big ask for some of us being that its allergy season and breathing through your nose is almost impossible. 😊

I thought about having the kids come up again, to remind us on how to use our imagination. Much like they did when we talked about love.

However I am giving you guys the benefit of the doubt. I believe that no one is too old to have an imagination. So that is what I am going to ask you to do today. In order to appreciate and understand this passage, you really have to put yourself in this moment, place and time.

We are going to start right off with breaking this all down and really experiencing this story. When I say story I don't mean to make it sound like something simple. This is a true historical account of 2 of Jesus' miracles...that's right I said 2 and I cant wait to show you I am honestly excited about this sermon.

Have any of you ever read a passage in the Bible multiple times maybe 20 times but then on the 21<sup>st</sup> time the Holy Spirit just opens up the scripture and it comes alive and speaks to you in a whole new way? That's what happened to me this week.

We are going to read and talk about this amazing account of Jesus doing Jesus things / God things, and this is going to take our imagination.

I want you to imagine for a second that you are one of the people in the crowd. That it is hot outside and you are standing shoulder to shoulder with many others but that even with this multitude of people that you could have heard a pin drop because all of you were hanging onto every word that was being taught. This Man that taught with such authority and conviction, maybe you were present for the sermon on the mount and heard Him teach a new way, a better way or maybe you heard about Him from a friend or a family member but one thing is for sure and that is much like Patrick said last week now that you are here, you are CHANGED. I'm sure that by this time you had heard of the miracles that this man Jesus had preformed, that He healed the Centurion's servant just by speaking for him to be healed and it was done. Or maybe you heard that Jesus had healed sicknesses and fevers, that He cast out demons and saved lives just from the words from His lips. This is the Man that turned water into wine and that even the demons recognized as the Son of God. In your mind you might have even asked yourself if this could really be the promised Messiah or maybe you already knew that He was.

**Mark 2:2b ...and He was speaking the word to them.**

So was Jesus preaching the old testament here? When it says that he was preaching the word to them? The definition of the word "word" in the original Greek is "Logos" Which refers to the new message of the Gospel and the kingdom of God that Jesus was actively bringing.

Jesus was speaking the "word" to them, He was preaching. A lot of times we see Jesus as a miracle worker that preached sometimes but even though His miracles were amazing and astounding. No one ever demonstrated the power of God on earth like Jesus did. please understand that a big part of Jesus' life here on earth was to teach us how to live, love, and serve

Mark 2:3-4 <sup>3</sup>And *some people* \*came, bringing to Him a man who was paralyzed, carried by four *men*. <sup>4</sup>And when they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and after digging an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralyzed man was lying.

First of all, I know a little something about distractions, I cant hardly focus on anything in particular, whether it be building something, writing a sermon, a Bible study lesson or even using the restroom without having at least 5 people, or more, interrupt. So, in a way I really feel for Jesus right now.

Remember we have 5 men here, the paralyzed man, and the four that carried him. So let's first talk about the paralyzed man. This man would have had a very hard life, his physical ailments were hard enough in that time period. Most of the people would have shunned him because they may have thought that he was cursed or that God was punishing him, that he was unclean. He would have had to rely solely on others to care for him in every way and most people would have seen this man as a burden. Friends would have been very hard to come by. This man probably felt worthless and useless. BUT this man even in his state had faith. But how was he going to get to Jesus?

Well, that's where the four men came in, but who were those men?

The Bible doesn't say hardly anything about these men other than that they had good maybe great faith.

Lets look deeper into what these four men actually did. These four men that carried the paralytic. Did they have anything to gain? Do you think we would be safe saying that they were pretty amazing friends? The Bible doesn't say they were friends, but that's what it sounds like. First of all, their faith to even consider carrying this man through crowded streets and then to a house that was completely blocked off, to then deciding to hoist him up onto a roof that would have been between 8 to 12 foot high and dig through that roof which in itself would have been quite the task.

Roofs in that time were either constructed of wooden support beams, brush / reeds / and thatch and hardened mud and clay or all of that and tile. These roofs were strong enough that people walked, prayed, and grew gardens on them.

To dig through that roof would have been extremely difficult and would have taken a while but not only that but it would have been illegal.

These men didn't care about appearances or what it took to get this man to Jesus they loved him enough and had enough faith to do whatever it took. Let me ask you a question, what would you do to get a friend to Jesus? What would you sacrifice? Would you care about appearances? And no I'm not saying to break the law haha.

Now go back to imagining you are in the crowd. You are doing your best to try and hear what Jesus is saying. To listen, and you hear this scraping and pounding and as you look through the doorway, you see debris falling all over and on the heads of the people standing inside, but Jesus remains calm, and steady. Then all of a sudden the roof opens up, and the paralyzed man is slowly lowered onto the floor in front of Jesus.

Mark 2:5 <sup>5</sup>And Jesus, seeing **their** faith, \*said to the paralyzed man, **"Son,** your sins are forgiven."

I want you to take note of the word that Jesus used to greet this man. "son" wow what a beautiful term of endearment, this is the one time in the new testament that Jesus directly addresses someone as son. Why do you think that he did that? Do you think that possibly this man was afraid of what Jesus might say or how He would react to interrupting Jesus while He was teaching? Do you think that this man may have needed to hear that word more than anything else in his whole life the life that he was shunned and ridiculed and put down, and then the Son of God called him SON.

Do you know that our Father in heaven calls you SON or DAUGHTER. No matter what you think that you have done in your life, no matter how far you may have drifted, no matter how many times that you have been put down or ridiculed YOU are His child and He loves you.

Now we are going to talk about the first of two miracles and possibly the most important one, at least in this story.

Jesus forgave his sins. I would imagine that everybody around was probably saying or at least thinking HEY Jesus that's great that you said that you forgive him but uh I think that he maybe came to you because he cant ummm walk. BUT Jesus saw the real issue.

Of course Jesus was going to heal this man physically however the most important issue was his soul. Jesus was far more interested in his soul than his body, He was far more interested in his walk with God than in his ability to walk on earth.

There are two types of forgiveness, one is what we are commanded to do as believers, and that is to forgive others. We are to forgive others, to seek restoration, because true Agape love requires it. We are to forgive because Christ forgave us.

The other type of forgiveness that only God can give. It's an eternal, unconditional forgiveness of our sins that Jesus' blood paid for. So when Jesus said that He forgave the paralytic man, He did what only God could do, because He is.

Mark 2:6-7 <sup>6</sup> But some of the scribes were sitting there and thinking *it* over in their hearts, <sup>7</sup> “Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins except God alone?”

Were the scribes doing anything wrong by questioning this? No that was their job, that's what they were taught. They were likely sent there for that purpose. See one of the neat things that I hope you catch is that Jesus was about to not only **claim** to be God, but **prove** that He was God.

DO you think that Jesus was surprised that the scribes questioned Him? Do you think that He was surprised that they were even there? Or that the roof opened up and a man was lowered down in front of Him?

No! Jesus knew what was going to happen from the very beginning to the very end of this event.

Let's dig a little deeper as to why the scribes seemed to question when Jesus said "Your sins are forgiven."

The process of having your sins forgiven by God under old testament law was fairly extensive.

**Leviticus 17:11 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood and I have given it to you on the alter to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement'.**

I would love to go over that more thoroughly with you in the Bible, but that would take another couple hours and I am sure you are all getting hungry. So as homework look up Leviticus chapters 4 and 5, it's a fun read! But to sum it up... depending on who you were and what you did, you would have to take a bull, ram, goat, or doves without defect, and take them in front of a priest, put your hand on their head, and sacrifice them. Then the priest had to take some of the animals blood and place it on the horns of the alter, and pour out the rest of the blood, lets just put it this way, there was blood, and then more blood, and then some more blood and a whole lot of things that were done with the blood. But to get the point across, it was a huge process and it was not a permanent solution.

So when Jesus said “you are forgiven” The scribes were like, “wait what?!?” Where’s the goat? Where’s the blood. But Jesus was about to show them that He was the only way, and He would prove that later on the cross.

Mark 2:8-9 <sup>8</sup> Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were thinking that way within themselves, \*said to them, “Why are you thinking about these things in your hearts? <sup>9</sup> Which is easier, to say to the paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven’; or to say, ‘Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk’?”

Sometimes when we read the Bible we look at exactly word for word what the text says. Then there are times when we read that we look at what the heart of the text says. When Jesus says that He ”knew” what they were thinking. That is literal. He was doing another God thing and read their minds. A surprise to the scribes but again, not a surprise to Jesus.

Why does Jesus say, “Which is easier”? Jesus **Knew** what the cost of forgiveness was.

Then Jesus tells them plainly, I am God.

Mark 2:10a... <sup>10</sup> But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”...

Then Jesus proved it.

Mark 2:10b-12 He \*said to the paralyzed man, <sup>11</sup> “I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet, and go home.” <sup>12</sup> And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, “We have never seen *anything* like this!”

Look at how Jesus did this, He said that the man’s sins were forgiven but knew that some of the crowd may not believe Him so He solidified this miracle of forgiveness through the paralyzed man’s physical healing.

Sometimes I fall into the trap of asking for and thanking God for healing or for things, or for money, or for whatever it may be but I really need to be on my knees thanking Him for the forgiveness that was poured out in His blood for my sins.

What is the most important thing that we as believers should be grateful for?

Ephesians 1:7

In Him we have redemption through His blood, and forgiveness for our wrongdoings, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us.

Let's pray