

About a month ago Brother Walter preached a message he called “I Was There” and one of the events in the life of Jesus was the occasion where He healed the paralytic and forgave him of his sins.

This study is in no way an effort to “correct” what Walter said, but simply to take this one incident and expand it to a lesson of its own.

First let’s read the three references to the event.

Matthew 9: 1-8; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26 [ESV]

Matthew 9:1-9

And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city. ² And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." ³ And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." 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,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? ⁶ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said to the paralytic—"Rise, pick up your bed and go home." ⁷ And he rose and went home. ⁸ When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men. ESV

Mark 2:1-12

And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. ² And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. ³ And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. ⁴ And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. ⁵ And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." ⁶ Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, ⁷ "Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" ⁸ And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question these things in your hearts? ⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed 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 say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." ¹² And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Luke 5:17-26

On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal. ¹⁸ And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus, ¹⁹ but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus. ²⁰ And when he saw their faith, he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." ²¹ And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" ²² When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, "Why do you question in your hearts? ²³ Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise and walk?' ²⁴ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the man who was paralyzed—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home." ²⁵ And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God. ²⁶ And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."

In Capernaum, "His own city," perhaps he stayed with Peter?

He was "home," and the word got around quickly and soon the multitudes were gathered to hear His words and to see His power. The house was full and no more people could get inside.

Luke tells us there were Pharisees and doctors of the Law... Their motive?

This is probably the first occasion where religious leaders expressed their malicious antagonism that eventually resulted in Jesus' crucifixion on Calvary.

Whatever their motive, He preached to them all. He would not change His message to suit the audience. They all needed the same words.

As He was preaching, He was interrupted in an unusual way. Four men broke through the roof and lowered a paralytic man before Him.

The roofs were not very high and easily opened. They would not have needed ropes to lower the man nor heavy tools to open up the roof.

The poor man's bearers get him to Jesus.

Before a word is spoken, Jesus sees the faith of the four men.

He says to the man, "Be of good cheer {take heart}, your sins are forgiven you."

The man knew he was a sinner and that the guilt of sin was his real problem, not that his physical condition was not pitiful.

Not all sickness is a direct result of specific sin, nor was it to arouse the religious leaders, but the man's need was addressed.

The doctors and scribes were disturbed and Jesus read their hearts and thoughts.

Notice their logic: They start with a right principle, but draw the wrong conclusion.

They were correct that no one but God can forgive sin.

But it does not logically follow that Jesus blasphemed.

He had the authority which belongs to God alone.

Two possibilities: that Jesus was a divinely accredited messenger like Elijah or Elisha, or that He is indeed Messiah.

Jesus did not deny their premise, that only God can forgive sin, but claimed that prerogative for Himself, Luke 5:24.

The obvious conclusion is that the man was healed!
The man walked out of the house.

Anyone could say, "Your sins are forgiven," but how will you know?
With only the word of Jesus, the man who was a paralytic walks out of the house.

It is as true that God can heal with a word as to forgive sin. "Therefore that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins."

There was no room for the man to get in, but they make room for him to leave.
"We never saw it on this fashion." "We have seen strange things today."
WONDER!

Two cures on the man in one word; Spiritual and physical.

Lessons:

We cannot be Saviors of men but we can bring them to Christ.

The faith of the four men as well as the man had been noticed.

We can bring others to Christ in our prayers and we can get them to a place where the Gospel is preached.

Christ confers the ability with the command. It is true that repentance and faith are the gift of God, but they run coincident with obedience.

If we wait for a "feeling" we may never act.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and act!

If this man had waited to feel strength to move he would have never moved at all.