

Mark

“The Healing of Forgiveness”

2:1-12

- I. **Introduction**
- II. **Vs. 1-5 Unorthodox faith**
- III. **Vs. 6-12 Right logic, wrong answer**

I. **Introduction**

In chapter 2 Mark records for us another day in Capernaum with the Son of God and the authority of His word. The story breaks apart into two sections:

- 1. Vs. 1-5 The healing of the paralytic
- 2. Vs. 6-12 The opposition from the scribes to the healing

II. **Vs. 1-5 Unorthodox faith**

Vs. 1-2 Mark tells the reader that this story again has a familiar place as Jesus was in THE HOUSE in Capernaum. The only house that we have been introduced to so far in Mark is Peter’s home. So many had come that they spilled out into the street, clearly as chapter 1 verse 28 had indicated Jesus’ fame had spread throughout the region. Yet with that said notice that Jesus’ method had not changed in spite of His fame and popularity as we see Him employed at “*preaching the word to them*”. The word “*preached*” in the Greek is different word than a public proclamation, instead it is a word that means a conversation and it is in the imperfect tense which emphasizes a continuous action. So Jesus taught conversationally for an extended period of time. Mark’s point is again is to show the focus of our Lord upon preaching the word.

- No adapting His method to fit His popularity

- No change of direction to accommodate the pressing demand of the needy people

Many come to Jesus for varying reasons, they may be lame in this area of their life, or blind in that area, some may like the leper by rotting away but still their greatest need hasn't changed which is to be transformed by the word of God. Jesus is never interested in just restoration, He want's recreation through our transformation and that can only happen though our receiving His word.

Vs. 3-4 Into this determination by Jesus to “*preach the word*” come five men one of them the paralytic equally determined to reach Jesus with their pressing need despite the program. I say **THEIR** “*pressing need*” deliberately as it is never the afflicted that suffer alone they have family and friends who “*carry*” and “*bare*” the burden of their friend and loved one. That doesn't make the friend or family less of a person or less loving to say that, carrying a burden for another is difficult. Oh I'm sure they wanted to see their friend healed and mobile but it doesn't make them any less of a friend to say that that his healing would liberate them as well. Anyone who has cared for another knows that the friend or loved ones disability becomes yours as well to a degree.

I have no doubt that these five had faith as Jesus tells us in verse 5 and that Jesus is the object of that faith. What I want us to look at is *three unorthodox traits of faith* as some times we don't think we have faith or enough of it. I suggest to you that you may have more faith than you realize and just haven't recognized it as it was manifesting it's self in a different way:

1. *Dares the difficult*: The first thing I notice about these men is the degree of difficulty they were willing to go through for just the opportunity for their friend to meet Jesus. We are not told how far they have travelled carrying their friend but if it was any length greater than a few 100 feet the degree of difficulty would increase with each passing ¼ mile. It is safe to think that this man weighed 150 pounds or better and carrying him on a homemade stretcher even with four men would have been quite a

difficult challenge. Yet their faith is visible in the fact that they were willing to undergo such a journey without any real guarantee. I can only imagine what they must have gone through their minds as they drew nearer to Capernaum and witnessed an increased amount of people, perhaps they didn't even know where Jesus was at and asked directions only to find out that everybody they asked was going there as well for the same kind of reasons. They struggle through the crowds to see a glimpse of the house and in front of it as chapter 1 verse 33 said the "whole city gathered at the door". Through all those difficulties they didn't quit but continued to press forward where others would have said, "*There are way too many people here, we are never going to be able to even get a glimpse of Jesus let alone get in front of Him*"! Then whose idea was it to climb up to the 2nd story of the house and start tearing off the roof? The point I'm making is that when we in spite of the challenges and difficulty continue pressing forward to get to the place and possibility of change we are demonstrating that we have faith!

2. ***Does what is demanded:*** The 2nd on orthodox sign of their faith is that they did what was demanded for the situation. They didn't limit their actions by what was normal or customary, like waiting and go through the front door! The construction of the ancient roofs reveals quite an amount of work to accomplish the task. The Greek word for uncover is a word that means to dig out and in Luke's account of this same story he informs us that they let the paralytic down through the removed tiles. Typically these were flat roofs made up of a composition of mortar, tar, ashes and sand spread out on the roof with stone tiles placed on top. They instead did what was necessary to accomplish the task of getting in front of Jesus in spite of what I can only imagine would have been disapproval by Peter as it was his house that was losing a roof. Amazingly we see that Jesus never rebuked them, He doesn't even seem to be disturbed at the interruption. Clearly these men did what was unorthodox, risked criticism and weren't afraid to do so. ***Faith is evident when we are doing what is demanded, risking rejection and overcoming obstacles to get to Jesus!***
3. ***Carless about the cost:*** The final unorthodox sign of faith is that they must have realized that tearing apart a large whole in a roof and lowering their friend in front of Jesus was going to cost them something. There was no "home owner's policy" for paralytic roof damage. Neither do I believe that this was going to be a larger scale of the children's game of "doorbell ditch" where they tar a whole in the roof lower their friend in front of Jesus and everybody then run like mad. These 5 were carless in the face of the cost and that is another example that you have faith, they had excepted that and realized that even if unsuccessful they were still going to have to pay for the damage.

Saint's I think the church could all use more people that exhibit this kind of unorthodox faith where they will"

- **Dare to do what is difficult**
- **Willing to overcome obstacles**
- **Castaway counting the cost**

Vs. 5 That brings us to Jesus' response to their three examples of unorthodox faith as Jesus said, "*Son, your sins are forgiven you*". There are those that suggest that Jesus' pronouncement was based upon His knowledge that this man's paralysis was based upon some moral failure. Other's go so far as to say that this man's paralysis was psychosomatic, or all in his head, and that Jesus removed the moral failing which lifted the paralysis. Though indirectly all disease and the things that cause for human suffering are "sin related" the context of the passage is in verse 2 where we are told that Jesus was "*preaching the word to them*" and in fact these 5 interrupted that message. "**Forgiveness is the greatest miracle that Jesus ever performs. It meets the greatest need; it costs the greatest price; and it brings the greatest blessing and the most lasting results.**" What good was it if the man had two whole legs, and walked right into hell with them? One wonders if the four friends were not initially disappointed in Jesus' words and thought, "*He's not here for forgiveness! He's here for healing, that's why we tore apart the roof and he is on a bed!*"

III. Vs. 6-12 Right logic, wrong answer

Vs. 6-7 The scribes logic was correct the flaw in it was the fact that Jesus held claim to the logic as He was God the Son and could alone forgive sins. The scribes observed a rabbi teaching but what they were unable to see was the Son of God standing before them, they were blind as to His identity and Jesus was going to reveal that to them twice:

- a. Vs. 8 The first revelation Jesus offers as to His identity is that "*Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves*". They were correct in their internal reasoning "**Only God can forgive sins**" and His knowing of this though they said nothing should have revealed to them that God the Son was in front of

them. God spoke to the prophet Jeremiah in chapter 17:9-10 saying, *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind...”* In psalm 139:4 we read that *“There is not a word on my tongue but behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.”*

- b. Vs.9-11 In the 2nd revelation Jesus offers a more practical reasoning as He proposes a question that He then demonstrates the answer to so that they could not come to the wrong conclusion by evidence, only by hardness of heart. Notice how carefully Jesus words the question: *“Which is easier,”* **“TO SAY to the paralytic, your sins are forgiven you”** **“OR TO SAY, Arise, take up your bed and walk?”** Jesus did not phrase the question in terms of action, *“which is easier TO DO?”* They had already concluded that though both would be difficult but **ONLY GOD** can **DO** the act by forgiving sins. Any charlatan could **SAY** *“your sins are forgiven you”*. The only true proof of forgiveness of sins lies with God as there is no immediate outward sign or indication that it has happened. Jesus is saying to the scribes, *“You question my identity to forgive sin? Let me demonstrate to you My identity and as such My power to forgive sins as it comes from the same source to heal.”* It is then the Paralytic became part of the sermon as Jesus turned to him said, **“I SAY to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”**

Vs. 12 The outcome of this was that all except the scribes were amazed and rejoiced praising God saying, *“We never saw anything like this!”* They stood amazed at the authority of the Word even though they didn’t fully comprehend His identity which was the lesson.