

After the Parade passes by

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[0 : 00] Amen. Everybody's yawning this morning.

! And it was noise that he was in the house.

And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door. And he preached the word unto them. And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was born of four.

And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was. And when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies?

[1 : 19] Who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived their spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, that he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

Whether it be easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Arise, take up thy bed and walk. But that thou may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, he said to the sick of the palsy, I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, go thy way into thy house.

And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all, insomuch that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

We talked last week about the beginning of this, that one of the principles we learned was dying to self is the key to living for Christ.

Dying to self is the key to living for Christ. And we use John chapter 12, verse 24, it says, Verily, verily, I send you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.

[2 : 35] But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. And we talked about the fact that we have to die to ourselves in order to be fruitful for God, allow him to work through us.

And here in Mark chapter 2, there's this account, we all know well, about the four men who came and they gave of themselves to help their friend get to Jesus.

We talked about locusts and things and how they work as a group and everything. And then we said these men, first of all, they had an unselfish compassion, an unselfish compassion.

Peter talks about that in 1 Peter chapter 4, verse 8. He says, Above all things, have fervent charity, love among yourselves, for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

He says, have charity to those, have love, show love to those around you. Matter of fact, you want to be Christ-like? Show love. In 2 Corinthians chapter 5, verses 14 and 15.

[3 : 37] For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then we're all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.

Our job is to live for Christ. Our job is to follow Christ in everything he's doing. Our job is to show the love of Christ to all those that we come in contact with.

How do we do that? Well, first thing we said was, selfishness has to be denied. Selfishness denied. We talked about the fact that we live in a selfish time.

You know, people are always concerned about themselves and what's going on with themselves, and we don't care too much about other people as long as we're okay. And Jesus, Paul, Jesus through Paul, said the exact same thing.

In 2 Timothy 3, verses 1 and 2, he says this, This know also, that in the last days, perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves. And then he goes on and lists other things.

[4 : 47] But he says, Look, first of all, men are going to be lovers of their own selves. Does that describe the day that we live in? Yes, it does. We looked at Philippians 1.21 and Philippians 2.21 last week.

And we showed the difference between the attitudes that Christians can have. Philippians 1.21 says, For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. For me to live is Christ.

Everything about what I'm doing, everything about what I view as my priorities, everything comes from Christ. I keep my focus on him. Or, it can be Philippians 2.21, where it says, For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ.

We have a lot of people who do that. What they are concerned about has nothing to do with what Jesus wants. They're concerned about their own selves. So he said, We can either be a living for Christ Christian or a seeking our own Christian.

We can be either one of those, but you can't be both at the same time. We have to die to self. Romans chapter 12, I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God, which is a reasonable service.

[6 : 03] We said the only problem with being a living sacrifice is that sometimes we tend to get up off the altar and go wandering around. He says, No, get yourself a living sacrifice.

And Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15.31, I die daily. He got up every morning. Lord, this day is for you.

Lord, this day is not about what I want, not about what is important to me, but what do you want? He says, I die daily to follow Christ. Galatians, we've been in Galatians here for a long time now.

And he says, in Galatians 2.20, I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

So we deny self. If we're going to live for Christ the way we ought to, we have to deny self. Then, when we do that, we can deliver the service that we need to.

[7 : 02] A service delivered was the second thing of that. 1 Corinthians 10.24, let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.

And that doesn't mean go out and steal things from people, because they got it and I don't. That means, I'm not seeking for myself, I'm not looking to take care of myself, I'm looking to help other people, to advance other people, to move them forward.

That's why we take the gospel to people, because we want to move them forward. We want them to understand who God is, and who Jesus is, and what he has done for them. Which brings us to, today.

Number two, a unified cooperation. So these four men, they're bringing this friend of theirs, who's paralyzed, to Jesus, but they can't get near the house.

The house is jam-packed full of people, the doorway is jam-packed full, even around the house itself a little bit, by the windows and stuff. There's people. There's no way they're getting this man, through that crowd.

[8 : 07] So they have to come up with another plan. And what they do, is they learn to work together. Learning to work together. See, a person, by themselves, could not have gotten that man in there.

You know, he could throw him over his shoulders, and picked him up, and carried him, but he wasn't making it through that crowd. There just wasn't going to be room to get in there. And I can tell you, from experience, picking up a person, who cannot help you at all, is tough to do.

You know, if you remember Bonnie's mom, she barely weighed 100 pounds. When she fainted, one time, I caught her, and then just gently laid her down on the ground, because I wasn't bringing her back up right then.

Because she wasn't helping me at all, and it was all dead weight. Then when she had her stroke, same thing. It's like, I can't, I can catch her, and I can ease her, but I'm not picking her up, and bringing her over.

That's, when a person can't help you at all, it's heavy. They become very heavy. And so here's this man, and one man by himself, isn't going to be able to do it.

[9 : 24] But here's four men, who are going to work together, to accomplish something. What do we learn from all of this? This idea of unified cooperation. First of all, by ourselves, we're inadequate.

Individual inadequacy. Doing things by ourselves, usually isn't going to get it done. We need help from other people. You know, word had gotten out, Jesus was in Capernaum, he was at this house, and the people were just packed in there.

Even these guys working by themselves, just for themselves, were going to have a hard time getting into that house. You know, they might have liked to have been in there, they might have liked to have been closer to Jesus, they might have maybe had some issues of their own, they would like to have him healed and stuff, but they weren't getting through that crowd.

So they had to come up with another idea. And their idea was, look at verse two, there in Mark two again, and straightway many were gathered together, in so much that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door, and he preached the word unto them.

It was that full. They weren't going to make it through. You know, to bring this man, especially who's a man who's paralyzed, not going to happen. When we start to do the work that God has for us, a lot of times, he gives us a work that is bigger than ourselves.

[10 : 54] And we need the help of others. Think of one of the things that God told us to do. Take the gospel to every nation. Try to do that by yourself.

That is not happening. That's why we have missionaries. That's why we have others. Because we need to work together to take the gospel to every nation.

You know, 2 Corinthians 3.5. 2 Corinthians 3.5 says this, Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.

We can accomplish a lot by ourselves as long as we remember our sufficiency as of God. Dr. Bob Jones Sr. used to say, You and God make a majority.

You and God make a majority. But, things like taking the gospel to the whole world, taking the gospel to, let's say we forget the whole world, we're just going to do it to Hancock.

[12 : 02] Just a Hancock. Can we do that all by ourselves? No. We need all of us. Because what's going to happen?

People relate to people in different ways, don't they? I know you'll find out how to believe, but there are some people who don't like me. That's okay. There are some people who don't like you.

That's okay. But, they watch. And one of the things that's neat about sharing the gospel and taking the gospel, they meet Steve at work.

and Steve lives the Christian life in front of them, shares the gospel with them. They hear it. They go, Oh, that's interesting. He's kind of strange, but okay. We'll listen to him.

And then something happens to their car. And they go to Fred. And Fred's working on their car. And he's sharing the gospel with them. And he's showing Christ to them. And then they decide there's some work they need to have done on their house, so they go see Chuck.

[13 : 05] And Chuck, can you do this work for me? Can you fix this door? Can you take care of this? And Chuck shares the gospel with them. And Chuck shows Christ to them. Now, this person's going, Wait a minute. This guy, and this guy, and this guy, they all say the same thing.

They all show me something different about their lives. See, we're all working together with one message. Jesus Christ is everything.

So, we need to work together. You know, sometimes, again, we don't see it. We think we can handle everything. We can do everything. But no, God has us together.

Why do we have churches? So that we can share our gifts, share the things and talents that we have, so that we can work together to take the gospel to those around us.

You know, one of the best illustrations of you can't do it by yourself, Exodus chapter 18, verses 13 through 18, is the story of Moses and his father-in-law.

[14 : 11] Can you learn anything from your father-in-law? What's the right answer to that? Okay, he understands. You can learn things from your father-in-law. Moses learned something from his father-in-law.

Here's what he says in Exodus 18, beginning at verse 13. He says, And it came to pass on the morrow that Moses sat to judge the people. And the people stood by Moses from morning until the evening.

And when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? Why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning until evening?

And Moses said unto his father-in-law, Because the people come to me to inquire of God. When they have a matter, they come unto me.

I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God and his laws. And Moses' father-in-law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.

[15 : 14] Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou and this people that is with thee. For this thing is too heavy for thee. Thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

Moses, you got two million people you're leading here. You're taking them to the promised land. You got two million people, and you're by yourself trying to adjudicate every problem that they have.

Moses, you're going to wear yourself out. And you're not going to be able to get to everybody. And then there's going to be people who are not going to be pleased because you didn't get to them and because they got this problem. And they're going to try to solve this problem on their own.

And you remember, Jethro, who is Moses' father-in-law, says, Here's what you need to do. And he talks to them about setting up a person over 50s, and a person over hundreds, and a person over thousands.

So that they, you ever stop and think, where did we get our judicial system from? That we have these courts, you can appeal to these courts, then you can appeal to this court, right here.

[16 : 25] Moses, you need to have people who will judge for you, who know you teach them the law, you teach this group the law, and they can help you with the judgments. And then if there's questions, they can go to these guys.

And if there's more questions, they can come to this group. And if there's more questions, then they can come to you. Moses, you've got to take it easy. You've got to wear yourself out. And we can do the same.

We can wear ourselves out trying to do what God has for us. What happens if we do it this way, where we have people working together, trying to accomplish things?

Better be. Increased industry. We get increased industry. We get more accomplished by working together than by doing things by ourselves.

Let me illustrate. Actually, there's a word. Anybody know the word synergy? What does it mean? Working together. Working together. Projects that work together.

[17 : 24] Okay. Things that work together. Why is that so important? Because you can get more done when things working together. Let me illustrate it for you this way.

You all know Mark has the Shire horses there at the farm. They're big, big work horses and stuff. Okay. Suppose one of those horses that he has weighs 2,000 pounds.

And he puts it in a harness and it's going to haul some logs or rocks or whatever. It's going to do some work for him. Okay. That 2,000 pound horse can probably pull 7,000 to 8,000 pounds.

Those things are strong. Okay. So here's this horse. 2,000 pounds. He's going to pull 7,000 to 8,000 pounds. He has two of them. Here's his other horse over here. And it can pull 7,000 to 8,000 pounds.

Okay. Good. So put the two horses together. What are you going to haul? 14,000 to 16,000 pounds. Right? No. No. More likely 20,000 or more.

[18 : 33] By them working together, they actually pull more. What happens when God has a church where people are working together? When we all have focus on the same thing.

When we're all heading in the same direction. When we're all looking for the same help coming from God. See, that's why all throughout the Bible you'll find places where God talks about laboring together.

He talks about striving together. He wants us to learn to accomplish the work and increase what we can accomplish by doing it together.

Ecclesiastes 4, 9. Two are better than one because they have good reward for their labor. Two are better than one. Put those two horses together.

You can accomplish a whole lot more than you can have by one horse doing it and by one horse doing it. You put them together and you've got so much more being accomplished. You put people in a church working together.

[19 : 32] So much more can be accomplished. Philippians 1, 27. Philippians 1, 27 says this. Did you catch that?

He says, I want to hear you working together with one spirit, one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel.

He says, oh, so much more can be accomplished if we do that. I can, oh, go ahead, Bonnie. I did an illustration of that. To my shame, this week, I saw Jessica Curtis' post and she was sharing how in this newer village they're going to, the children actually came to her and wanted to sit around her.

As opposed to running away screaming because they had never seen a white person before. And she commented on her loneliness there. And if we are truly striving together with the missionaries we support, then we need to remember that they suffer with loneliness.

They get rejected. and especially considering they're there to serve these people and how hard that must be when the initial contact can be above.

[21 : 12] But I'm here to help you. We need to be in cooperation with them on their field. And we have a number of missionaries. And I felt really ashamed because I thought how many days have I gone without praying for her?

Even something as simple as God comforts her. You know, give her a friend. Give her something. So that's really important because these missionaries tell us they need our prayers almost more than they need our financial support.

us working together with the missionaries in that way I was going to say we can email we can write we can pray we can it's a lot of things.

I'm going to talk about prayer a little bit this morning in the morning service. And the importance of that is praying for one another. Praying for those missionaries. Watching what God does.

I'll never forget there was one story I heard there was a missionary was talking about they had been witnessing to somebody and the person got saved.

[22 : 20] I don't remember where they were even but the person got saved. And the person that got saved the native person was telling them about a night when he was part of a group that had come that was going to kill those missionaries.

And the missionary is like oh yeah? And he's like yeah we were going to come and we were going to why didn't you? He said because when we got here you had an army surrounding you. I said huh?

And he's like what? Yeah you had guys with machine guns and things were standing around and we didn't dare come anywhere near there. And the missionary is like what?

You know he doesn't there's no army there's nothing. Then he finds out a little while later he gets a letter from a guy who says God urged me and he gave the time to be praying for you.

It was the middle of the night here in the United States. God gave me the you know he told me to pray specifically for you for this situation. You know that God wanted had something that he needed you to be protected from.

[23 : 30] And he was praying at that time. And he was praying God put an army of angels around there protect him. Don't let anything happen to them. So us praying for things. We're working together.

We're striving together for see the gospel taken out. Speaking of which be praying for a guy by the name of Josh Sullivan.

Josh Sullivan. If you haven't seen he's a missionary to South Africa. We've got missionaries in South Africa.

And I haven't heard from our missionaries anything yet but I've heard various places about this guy Josh Sullivan. He was kidnapped out of his church by some armed gunmen who were holding him for ransom.

And they want money for him to be returned. He has a wife and three kids. And right now they don't know where he is. They found the vehicle that was used in the kidnapping but they don't know where he or the kidnappers are.

[24 : 36] So be praying for Josh Sullivan that he gets returned home safely. So synergy is this idea of working together because working together we can accomplish more.

God can use us more. One of the great keys to this church in Jerusalem when it first started out was the idea of unity. Working together to accomplish what God had for them.

in Acts chapter 2 verses 24 through 46 I believe it is. Hang on just a second. No 47. It says this.

Acts 2 44 through 47. And all that believed were together and had all things common. They were together and had all things common.

They were working together. And they sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men as every man had need. They were working together.

[25 : 41] Then it says in verse 46 And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house did eat their meal with gladness and singleness of heart.

They were working together. Singleness of heart. Verse 47 Praising God and having favor with all people and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

You know one of the keys to all this I think? They continued daily in one accord. They were working together. They were concerned about one another. There was unity about one another.

And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. That unity had an impact on the people around them. That unity had an impact on the people that were there who saw what was going on in that church and wanted to be a part of it and wanted to be a part of what God is doing.

We need to make sure we are working together to accomplish what God has for us. And I'm going to stop there instead of starting the next one. Five minutes early. But instead of starting the next one I'll wait until the week after.

[26 : 56] Next week remember there is no Sunday school. 930 we'll be having breakfast together. We'll be together. Unified. One cause.

So hopefully you'll have people with you coming with you for that breakfast. So let's say a word prayer. Let's