

The Paralytic

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[0:00] That you can trust God. That you absolutely can give yourself to Him in confidence without Him ever dropping the ball.

! Without Him ever turning His back on you.! Without Him ever being malicious.! God is worthy of our trust and our praise.

Let's read. Gospel of Mark, chapter 2, beginning. In verse 1. And when He returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that He was at home.

If you remember, as we concluded chapter 1, Jesus had healed this leper and He'd gone out and told everybody. And so He couldn't go anywhere because people were chasing Him. And He left Capernaum and went around healing and preaching and teaching.

And after some days, it doesn't say how many, He came back home. And people found out about it. And many were gathered together so that there was no more room, not even at the door.

[1:10] And He was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing Him, bringing Him, a paralytic carried by four men. 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. And when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, Son, your sins are forgiven.

Now, some of the scribes were sitting there questioning in their hearts, Why does this man speak like that? He's blaspheming. Who can forgive sins but God alone?

Oh, by the way, were they right? Absolutely correct. This is just one of those little sidelines that points to the deity of Christ.

But let's continue. Who can forgive sins but God alone? 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?

[2:23] Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, Your sins are forgiven, or to say, Rise, take up your bed and walk? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, He said to the paralytic, I say to you, Pick up your bed and go home.

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.

Is this a familiar passage to you? Anybody never heard this before? Perfect. Because as I was studying it this week, I was really challenged that, about one thing in this story that I saw from a light different than I'd ever seen before.

I've got the perfect pastoral outline for today's message, because they all, it says God, and then a word that starts with S three times.

You don't know how hard it was for me to find that, and how proud I am. Three points that start with the same, you know, God sees, God seeks, God saves.

[3:45] I mean, I'm pretty impressed with that. But we're going to start with God sees. And the first question, and the thing that as I was prepping for today, that I saw in a different light than I'd ever seen before.

Why do you think the four carried the paralytic to Jesus? What's the easy answer?

Because he couldn't walk. I know why, but what was their purpose in carrying the paralytic to Jesus? That's what I always thought.

I don't think that was the intent of the paralytic at all. Now, we don't know if he was, if he was just two, I guess paralytic just means two limbs, doesn't it?

We don't know how much of him was, was disabled, but we do know that he wasn't getting there on his own. And his friends brought him there. We don't know how he became a paralytic.

[5:02] Remember the blind man that Jesus healed. And the disciples said, who sinned this man or his parents? And Jesus said, none. This has been this way for birth, for the glory of God.

We don't know why he was a paralytic. He might've been an EMS worker who was out deep in the boonies, rescuing somebody when something terrible happened. Or he could have been a thief that slipped on his way out the window and cracked his back.

Or anything between. We don't know how he became the paralytic. All we know is that he was a paralytic. And if you've ever been laid up for a time because of an injury or an illness, it gives you time to think.

The simple thought is, I want to be well. Can I get an amen? By the way, I'm finally not hacking my lungs out every time I turn around. I'm starting to get over that cold.

And it held on firmly. I appreciate getting more health. But this paralytic, nothing was going to make him better. And he had time to think.

[6:12] I don't think his friends were carrying him there to be healed at all. Look at this. Verse 2.

Many were gathered together, so there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. And they came bringing him a paralytic carried by four men. 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 him down on the bed on which the paralytic lay. So far, we have an injured individual being helped by his friends, being delivered to Christ.

And your normal thought is, I need to get healed. I'll go see Jesus. But look what we read here in verse 5. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, Son, what?

Now, if I came to Jesus to get healed, and he said, you're forgiven, how would my heart respond to that?

[7:27] But if I came to Jesus because I realized the sinful state that I was in, and my need, and look what it says. What did it say about Jesus?

Jesus, when he saw their faith, Jesus saw their faith. We're going to walk through some scriptures today, so I hope you brought your Bible, and you're pretty ready.

Let's go. 1 Samuel. Chapter 16, verse 7. Oh, I just had it.

There it is. 16, verse 7. That's 17. There we go. This is not...

Let's try 2 Samuel. We're off to a great start today. What? Oh, 7. I was reading verse 17. Oh. But God said to Samuel, Do not look on his appearance, or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him.

[8:38] For the Lord sees not as a man sees. Man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on his heart. God's not sitting in the sky with a great big MRI machine or a big old x-ray box taking pictures of us.

When he says he looks at the heart, he's not talking about the physical little pump that we have, but he's talking about the seat of who we are.

When God says he looks at the heart, that's biblical language for he looks at what makes you you. What gets you up in the morning? What gets you excited?

What are you afraid of? What do you love? What do you hate? The heart. Man looks on the outward, but God, God sees the heart.

In fact, if we turn to Acts 15, verse 8, we read, and God, who knows the heart.

[9:52] When it says here that Jesus saw their faith, this is something that God does. God knows us. He created us.

He knows what makes us tick. He knows what our intents are. I spent a lot of time cutting out verses from today's sermon because I had like 30 of them of God looking at us and knowing who we are because he's God and he is our creator and he knows and understands.

And he sees before and behind. I had all that and I just kept... God knows us. And he knows our heart. God knows us.

God knows us. God knows us. God knows us. And if you're a believer, if you have turned to God, then I want you to find great, incredible comfort in that.

I personally need this message at times. There are days where I need to hear this, that God sees my heart.

[11:03] And in fact, it's not just me. I guarantee it's you and every other believer out there because we live in a fallen world. In fact, the Apostle Paul needed this.

Turn to Romans chapter 7. This is a really famous passage. It's a confusing passage. It's whatever. But turn to Romans chapter 7 because the idea of God looking on the heart and knowing what's going on in there and how that is an encouragement to us, I think Paul lays out the case for it best in Romans chapter 7.

This is the passage where Paul's talking about that which he wants to do, but he doesn't do, that which he does do, but he doesn't want to do. Pick it up in verse 20.

Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lays close at hand.

I delight in the law of the Lord in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

[12:17] Wretched man that I am. Okay, okay. I know that you may have this same struggle in your life and I'm telling you I have this same struggle in my life.

I know right from wrong. I know what God asked me to do and that's what I want to do, but there's times where I don't wear my seatbelt. I don't obey the laws of the land.

There's times where I blatantly act wrong. I don't want to. I want to honor God with my words. I want to honor God with my life.

I want to be the man that God has called me to be. But I find within myself that there is a battle. I don't. I am not the smartest person in this room.

But if you're a Christian, you fight that same battle. And I know it. You know who else knows it? God above.

[13:23] We fight. We struggle. We're being torn back and forth. But God sees clearly. When Paul wrote, the wretched man that I am, oh man, all you got to do is look in the mirror and you know exactly what I'm talking about.

There are days where it's just like, ugh! But look how he finishes it. Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death?

Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Do you get it? God sees the battle.

He knows our struggle. He knows the very intent of our heart. And He is our deliverer. He's not confused. He's not disappointed.

God is not up in heaven going, did you see what Todd did again? Hey Jesus, come here. Look at this. He's not surprised. He knows us.

[14:31] He knows our heart. And He knows that battle. And He's never confused. My friends, you can trust the Lord. His love for us, it doesn't waver, it doesn't shift.

Like sometimes we do, God is true and faithful. You can rest in Him. And I want you to hear that and I want that to be, as you walk out of here, God sees my heart.

He knows my struggle. And you can talk to Him about it. You can confess your sin. You can repent. You can turn to Him. And He is never going to be offended or turn His back on you because He clearly sees us.

But you know, He does more than that. God saves. Verse 5, Mark chapter 2.

You know, we've got, when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, Son, your sins are forgiven. I have the impression that as that paralytic had lived day after day after day with his broken body, he came to that point in time where he understood that he was sinful.

[15:54] And he wanted to get right with God. That is so foreign to most people's way of thinking.

That is so alien to the world. They want this to be great. They want to be strong.

They want to be healthy. They want to be good looking. They want to be rich. The paralytic wanted to be forgiven because this, this is fading away.

every man, woman, and child in this room will lay this body down someday. Now hopefully it will be down the road a ways and not halfway through the sermon.

But we're all going to lay down. This body is decaying. It is breaking down. But there is a soul that is eternal. And if we get that squared away, we're good.

[17:02] And I believe that's what the paralytic wanted. He wanted to get squared away with God. And he came and Jesus forgave his sins. And my friends, that's the point of this.

That is the point of God reaching out to us is that we could get right with Him. Genesis chapter 3, you're familiar with the fact that's where sin entered the world when Adam chose sin and God judged them and cursed them.

But in Genesis chapter 3.15, we have the first revelation of God that there would be a Savior. You know?

And then in Genesis chapter 12, we have God telling Abraham that through Him all nations in the world would be blessed. And that's the idea that the Messiah would come through the line of Abraham.

But let's take a look in Luke. Matthew, Mark, Luke. I didn't do as good a job of cutting some verses down here, so bear with me. Luke 19, verse 10.

[18:16] The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.

That is the intent of Christ. He came to reach the lost and to rescue them from the penalty of their sins. Turn over to Luke 24, verses 45 through 47.

Jesus has already suffered on the cross. He's already paid the penalty for sins. He's already been buried and He's been risen again and He's walking down the road and He meets these guys and He's talking to them.

And He says, He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures and said to them, Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations beginning in Jerusalem.

You are witnesses to these things. Jesus Christ, the Creator who spoke and made all things.

[19:34] Jesus Christ, part of the triune God. Jesus Christ, who from before there was time existed in glory, humbled Himself, stepped down from glory, took on humanity, lived a perfectly sinless life, which that's incomprehensible to me, so that He could lay His life down for us.

That is, that He could be mercilessly murdered on a cross to pay the penalty of sin. And quite frankly, being hung on a cross was nothing compared to God pouring out His wrath upon Jesus. God the Father poured out His wrath for sin on Christ and Christ willingly took it because He came to seek and to save the lost.

And without the shedding of blood, Hebrews 9, chapter 22, there can be no forgiveness of sin. He paid the price for us.

It's incredible. Why did He do that? Because the wages of sin is death. And this is not, I'm not talking about physical death. Yes, that's part of it, but that's a blessing.

[21:09] Man, the day we lay this body down and we step into glory forever is a glorious day. Not for those that are left, but for us that go through that door.

But spiritual death, spiritual death. Luke, chapter 21, or chapter 20, verses 37 and 38.

What does that say? 20, 37 and 38. Oh yeah. Yeah, yeah. Jesus is arguing with the Sadducees and He says, but that the dead are raised, even Moses showed in the passage about the bush where He calls the Lord, the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.

Now He is not the God of the dead, but the living. Now obviously, those men were dead physically, but spiritually, they weren't dead.

Spiritually, they were alive. We all have to experience death physically, but we do not have to experience spiritual death.

[22:23] We are born dead in our trespasses and sin, but God who is great in grace and rich in mercy has offered us salvation so that that which is dead can be, as He said to Nicodemus, born again.

New life. That new life is really important. Revelations 21, verse 8, talks about the second death. That is, those that are confirmed in spiritual death and who are cast into the lake of fire, which is eternal punishment.

because the wages of sin is death. But God who is rich in mercy offers salvation.

He doesn't just offer salvation, He paid the price for it so that He could freely give it to all who ask. It's glorious. Alright. Most of us, hopefully all of us, we've come to that point in time where we have seen ourselves as sinners and we have repented and turned and accepted Christ.

[23:39] But I want to spend a little bit of time on this last point here. God seeks. Because this is incredible. Go back to Mark chapter 2. I want to show something to you.

Because this is kind of cool. Mark, not Luke. I'm doing great finding Bible passages today. Here we are in Mark chapter 2.

Now, we read it. We know that Jesus had returned to Capernaum and He's home and people have showed up and these four guys carry this paralytic and they can't get to Him so they rip the roof off, which by the way, better not be raining.

And they lower Him down, right? And Jesus, what did He say to them? Son, your sins are forgiven. And then look what happened. Pick it up in verse 6. Now, some of the scribes were sitting there questioning in their hearts, why does this man speak like that?

He is blaspheming. Who can forgive sins but God alone? So, I want you to just imagine with me. You're in the crowd and you've seen and watched Jesus as He's teaching and He's healed this person, He's healed that person and then these guys rip the roof off and they lower this guy down and Jesus doesn't say a word about being healed.

[25:04] Jesus says, you're forgiven. Your sins are taken care of. You're good. He's still a cripple. He's still laying on the mat.

Now, I think that He was at peace with that. I think He came for forgiveness. I think if the four guys had to carry Him home, He'd have been like, that is the greatest thing that has ever happened and He would have lived the rest of His life in joy.

Jesus said, I'm forgiven. And Jesus moves on. He's the scribes who had a hissy fit. It's the scribes who had a problem.

And then Jesus heals him. Verse 8, And immediately Jesus, perceiving in His Spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said, why do you question these things in your heart?

Again, God sees. Which is easier to say to the paralytic, your sins are forgiven, or to say, rise, take up your bed, and walk?

[26:32] Okay, let's answer the question, right? They're both equally easy to say. I can say, your sins are forgiven. I can say, take up your bed and walk.

It's not the speaking that's the deal. What's He talking about? Actually forgiving sins, or actually healing the man? Okay?

Which is easier? Well, it's a lot easier to say your sins are forgiven because who can doubt? I mean, who can prove you didn't forgive his sins, right?

I mean, I can say it, but there's no evidence, there's no proof, there's no... But if I say, take up your bed and be healed, and the guy's like, I can't, I'm a cripple, there's a lot of evidence there, right?

So He says, why do you question? Which is easier to say to the paralytic, your sins are forgiven, or rise, take up your bed and walk? But, that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.

[27:42] He said to the paralytic, I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, go home. Do you understand? He didn't heal the paralytic for the paralytic.

The paralytic was good. He'd been forgiven. He was praising the Lord. He was filled with joy. But the scribes, mm-mm-mm.

I've been really struggling all week not to say this wrong, so... They were really mad. They were really offended. They were upset.

How'd I do, Kelly? Did I get that right? We talked about this week. Honey, I need to make certain I say this right. They were very, very upset.

You see, Christ knew that. And He used the healing of the paralytic to reach out to them. Do you know why?

[28:51] Gospel of John, chapter 3, verse 17. A lot of people know John 3, 16. For God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son that whosoever believed in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Right? We know that verse. It's a great verse. It's a fundamental. There's a reason why we know it. But look at verse 17.

God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through Him. Right back where we started.

God has reached out to us. He has taught us. He has given us His Word that we might be saved. He doesn't need to condemn us.

We're already condemned. He came to save us. God doesn't want anyone to end up in that second death.

[30:05] But God is holy and He must judge sin. He is the one who will judge both the living and the dead.

And by living we're not talking about people who are physically alive. We're talking about people who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Those people who have been born again. Those people who have new spiritual life.

And the dead. we're not talking about people planted in the ground. We're talking about those people who have yet to turn to Christ. And God who is holy and just will judge.

In fact He's already judged the living. When we turn to Christ in salvation He judges us and He declares us righteous. Forgiven. Holy and blameless.

and that judgment is entered into the books and can never be altered. The dead though the people who haven't turned to God when they get before Him it says the books of life will be opened and everything will be judged.

[31 : 19] God is holy. He must judge sin. Today He offers forgiveness to enter a judgment upon us of righteousness.

To me I can think of nothing better than to be forgiven. Than to I mean if I was the paralytic and Christ had forgiven me I hope I hope and I know that at this point I would have just been thank you but I've walked with the Lord a while.

I know the depth of my sin. I know the magnitude of how fallen I am. My need is great for the Lord right? But what could convince me if I didn't know those things?

I have and I've got one passage I want to share with you briefly. Just one I didn't write it down on your handout you're going to have to write it down your own self but it's Romans chapter 5 verse 1 therefore since we've been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. My friends that's what it's all about. Peace with God. I mean we talked in Romans chapter 7 of the struggle that we have and the fact that we're not perfect and we still live in a sin filled world and we've got this battle going on before us but God sees us.

[33 : 13] God has forgiven us and we can stand in peace before God. Absolute peace.

Even though sometimes to be honest we're less than perfect. That doesn't matter. God has judged us.

God has forgiven us and God sees us and knows us and he cares about us and when we turn to him and ask for forgiveness when we actually come to him and say forgive me.

He forgives us. He welcomes us into the family and we have peace with God.

I'll be honest with you. As a Christian, Satan tries to steal that peace all the time and he comes up to you and says, why would God be at peace with a jerk like you? Why would God be at peace with someone who still struggles with this?

[34 : 16] Don't listen to Satan, listen to the word of God. God says that we are judged, that we are forgiven, and that we are at peace. God is worthy of our praise.

Christian, believer, let today be a day of worship. Bask in the love of God.

Revel in the peace that we have with God. Set aside your shortcomings, God knows and sees, and He has judged and forgiven you. And today, worship the Lord.

If you are not a Christian, if you haven't accepted Christ, today could be the day where you go from fear and judgment to being at peace.

Let's pray. merciful God of all, thank you so much. Thank you for the fact that you provided hope.

[35 : 35] Thank you for sending Jesus to pay the penalty for sin. Thank you for offering forgiveness. God, I pray for everyone that is here.

For those of us that have turned to you, may today be a day of great rejoicing as we rest in the completed work of Christ. May we today just be bathed in your love and may our hearts rejoice. And Lord, if there is anyone here who has not trusted Jesus yet, if there is anyone here who is still on the edge, Lord, I pray that you would speak to their heart, that they would understand the love that you have for them, that they would see those of us that are less than perfect, but are yet forgiven.

And may they turn to you. I pray this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen.