

Five Friends' Faith (sorry, only the last 10 minutes are available)

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[0 : 00] to need blank. That's what the four friends did. That's what the paralytic was doing. He said, my greatest need is paralysis. But now, look and see and tell me what your real need is.

Your real need. Is it for guilt? Shame? Fear? Addiction?

Our own sin? Pattern and propensity? Isn't that what we really want to be healed of? See, there's superficial things.

And Jesus is saying, then there's the heart. And he knows the heart's need. He also knows who else is in the room. Mark 2, he knows that on the hearts of some, they're questioning.

And it's not that they're struggling with doubt. Is Jesus who he says he is? It's not that. Their questioning is, what are the implications? If this man continues to do this, what are the implications for us?

[1 : 14] They demonstrate these are scribes of the law. And in Mark 2 are the first of, if you keep reading, five stories that the shadow of the cross begins to come in over Jesus.

He is in a room where there are people that want him, and there are people that want him dead. And by him saying what he's getting ready to say, he knows he's signing his death certificate.

These men, when they hear what Jesus has to say, they will take those words, and they will nail him to the cross with those words.

Son of man, son of God, forgiver of sins. That is what he knows is in their heart. And so he challenges that.

He challenges their lack of faith. And he does so in an interesting way. Mark is a very short gospel, and it's filled with adjectives, and it's filled with verbs.

[2 : 24] And it's filled with adverbs as well. It's filled with action. His audience was Rome. Roman citizens, Roman soldiers, Roman politicians, Gentiles.

Mark was an amanuensis, or a secretary, a personal assistant, to Simon Peter. It is no small thing when he says, in verse 6, some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their heart.

Notice here, there's no movement. There's no movement of discovery or exploration. There's no movement toward Jesus. They're just sitting there.

And they're sitting there, and they're wanting to pick him apart and question, because they don't want intimacy. They don't want Jesus. Oh, they want religion, but they don't want Jesus.

I've got to leave this point, but I think it a bit frightening that Mark takes me to a place where I actually see evil and diabolical men who will begin to plot the Jesus, and it's in church.

- [3 : 45] It's in a religious circle. Mark wants us to see that faith moves toward Jesus.
- And no matter how you dress it up, non-faith will either just sit there and not move toward him, or it will move away.
- Faith will embrace him. Faith will love him. Faith will ever hold him as their object. Non-faith will seek to remove him, put him down, even kill him.
- Jesus knows that. What are you moving toward? You might say, well, you know what? I'm not really moving. I'm not moving away. I'm not moving toward.
- What are your questions as you sit there? Move closer toward Jesus. That is a step of faith.
- [4 : 50] And as you move closer to him, what's going to happen? Like these four friends with their paralytic friend, these five friends, he's going to meet every step of your faith.
- He's your object. As you step toward him, he's going to come toward you. But as he comes toward you, he's going to start with your heart. He's going to address your sin.
- He's going to do the greatest thing that you can have him do for you. Not meet your presented need, but your real need, which is the forgiveness of sins. Or for those of us who are already followers of Jesus Christ, a renewed sense of the forgiveness of our sin.
- Jesus forgives. Jesus forgives. We see this in verse 5, and then you see it also down in verse 10, but that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.
- So in verse 5, he looks at this man and he says, Son, your sins are forgiven. Then we get down to verse 10, and he says, it's the Son of Man that is doing it.
- [6 : 03] Notice the bridge. Notice the gospel. Do you see the gospel in this passage? It's a great exercise. Whenever you hear a sermon or a message, look for the gospel.
- It's there. But have you found the gospel here yet? I said earlier, the first words of Jesus were, Son, your sins are forgiven. Really, his first words to the paralytic was one word, Son.
- That was his first word. That's the gospel. It seems rather odd. It would seem rather odd, I think, to them, but it doesn't seem odd to us.
- For Jesus is not simply a rabbi teacher, but he's the Lord God. He is the one that by his life and by his death and by his resurrection, we can be adopted, not simply as servants, not simply as friends, but as children.
- Galatians chapter 4, Galatians, excuse me, Galatians chapter 4, verses 4 and 5.
- [7 : 25] But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who are under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.
- And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his sons into our heart, crying, Abba, Father. So, you are no longer a slave, but a son.
- And if a son, then an heir through God. Jesus comes to a helpless paralytic that is laid before him, who is moved by his faith ever closer to Jesus as the object of his faith.
- And Jesus doesn't address his presenting need first, but he addresses his real need first, his greater need, the deadly, lethal disease of sin.
- He addresses the greatest need first, and it begins when he says, Son. Now, the cross is ahead, but Jesus is willing to face his opponents that would shut him down.
- [8 : 42] He's willing to pay the price of his death in order to secure our adoption. It will happen.
- He is now saying, You are my son. And how do we know? Well, he manifests certainly a physical healing, but it's a fulfillment of what the Son of Man prophesied has come to do.

That he has authority to build the family of God. He has the authority to build a new kingdom, a nation under God.

He has the authority not only to heal, but to forgive. He, it is his kingdom and his dominion. That day, Peter could stand and he could look up and he could probably say, You know, if it rains, it's going to get wet.

I've got a hole in my roof. I've got a hole in my roof. Jesus could look up and he could look all the way to heaven and say, There is now a hole from earth to entry into heaven.

[10 : 02] Thanks be to God that we can come weak and halting, struggling, even full of doubts at point, but we can take steps to move closer and closer to Jesus, perceiving that he knows my true need and in him forgiveness and healing truly lie and that he will receive that faith with the forgiveness of our sins, even the healing of our diseases if that suits his purposes for our growing faith but all to his glory.

Let's pray. Thank you.