

# Jesus Forgives The Paralytic

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Preacher: Jared Blankenship

[ 0 : 00 ] A.W. Tozer is famous for writing that what comes to our minds when we think of God is the most important thing about us.

Now that's immediately offensive to most people today. In fact, the world around us, the day and age in which we live, the assertion is that the most important thing that should come to your mind is you, yourself.

Self-care is what's most important. Self-assurance is what's most important. Self-confidence, putting your self first. The mantra of young people today from what I understand is, treat yourself is what they say.

A.W. Tozer was right. The most important thing about you is what comes to your mind when you think of God. And of course, we can change that statement just a little bit, and it would be just as true when we say what is the most important thing about us is what comes to our mind when we think of Christ.

That's the whole point of the Gospel of Mark. All the Gospels, actually. The writing of proclamation. This is who Jesus is.

[ 1 : 22 ] This is what he did. And this is why it matters. And when we get to the story of the first 12 verses of Mark chapter 2, that purpose becomes abundantly clear. It's the entire theme of the story.

There's so many different characters that we see, so many different storylines that we can trace, and we did that in our last study through the first four verses. But the overarching theme of this story is not the men that brought the paralytic.

It's not the tension between Jesus and the scribes. The overwhelming theme is the fact that Jesus is God, and that since he is God, he has authority and power to forgive sins.

So we pick up in verse 5 today, really, is where we focus our attention. Two weeks ago, we looked at the first four verses, and we focused our time primarily on these four friends that brought the paralytic man to Jesus.

The determination that they had, the focused attention that they had, the sacrifice that they were willing to make in order to get this man to Jesus, whom they believed was his only hope for any kind of healing.

[ 2 : 33 ] And of course, the question that we pondered and examined was, if these men were so determined to get their friend to Jesus for physical healing, how much more concerned should we be to get our friends to Jesus for spiritual healing?

Which was the point Jesus was making in the reaction that he had with the man. Today, we come to the heart of the text, the point of the whole story and why it's here, and why it's here not only in Mark's gospel, but in Matthew and Luke's as well.

What took place when this paralyzed man was lowered into the house is monumentally important. What was anticipated by these observers, this massive crowd that's now packed into what we believe was Peter's house, packed into the house, packed outside of the house, what mattered here, what they expected to matter there, was Jesus would look at this poor paralytic man and that he would provide this spectacular miracle.

But what actually happened was not what they expected. What came instead was a provocative statement from Jesus, a claim of divinity, which is exactly what that statement in verse 5 is.

When Jesus says, your sins are forgiven, Jesus was boldly saying, I am capable of forgiving your sins, which was Jesus' way of saying, I am God. That was provocative.

[ 4 : 05 ] The opposition there quickly responded, at least in their hearts, and his claim was immediately opposed. And then as we read through the story, ultimately, the claim was ignored.

This really monumental moment ultimately is distorted by everybody that's gathered there. And that same distortion has perpetuated itself through history, even in the church, where we would come to a story like this and we would see the awesomeness of all the different storylines and the things that's happening and the miracle of this man being able to walk again.

And then we completely missed the point. The point that Jesus made a bold claim, but that he was also able to back up that claim. Last time we looked at the four friends and we're really just working through this exposition by observing the various people that are involved in the story.

Today, we'll look at the poor paralytic, the scowling scribes, the divine savior, and then finally, the curious crowd. Let's look first at this poor paralytic.

I refer to him as poor, not because of his financial circumstance, though he probably was poor, but because he had no hope. The circumstances surrounding how this man and when this man became paralyzed is irrelevant to the story.

[ 5 : 31 ] And some people have tried to guess as to what that may have been and whether or not this particular disability was specifically related to sin in his life. And of course, the scripture doesn't tell us that.

So it's irrelevant. What's relevant to this man is the fact that he was crippled, he had a devastating disability, and he was totally dependent on others just to survive.

His situation wasn't quite as severe as the leprous man that we studied in chapter one, but he still had an incurable disability of which he hoped and believed that Jesus could free him.

Fortunately, he had four friends willing to go above and beyond to get him to the help that he needed. But all of this excitement, all of this effort, all this destruction was really for the sole purpose of him getting his legs back.

Think about this. Everything that they're going through, they've hurried. As soon as they found out that Jesus was back in Capernaum, they've hurried themselves to Peter's house where it would have been believed for him to have been, and they get there too late.

[ 6 : 44 ] The masses have already arrived. They can't even get to the door. No one's letting him through. No one cares that this man is paralyzed. No one cares to get this man to Jesus for healing.

They all cared about themselves and what they maybe could get from Jesus. They can't even get to the door, so they get creative, and they make their way up to the roof. Someone makes a calculated and sacrificial decision to pay Peter back for digging a hole in the roof, and that's exactly what they did.

They create the distraction. They create the destruction. All of this effort to get this man to Jesus, and why were they doing that? Not because they wanted his sins forgiven.

They were getting this man to Jesus because they wanted his legs healed, and they knew that Jesus could do that. They had heard. They'd probably witnessed. Maybe some of these four friends had been healed the last time Jesus was in Capernaum, and now they're bringing this man for the same thing.

So he must have been incredibly surprised, maybe even confused, when he heard what Jesus said. Look with me at verse five. They lowered the man down, and when Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Arise, take up your bed, and walk.

[ 7 : 58 ] No, that's not what he said. That's what he wanted to hear, but it's not what he heard. Son, your sins are forgiven. He heard something much more magnificent than Arise, take up your bed, and walk.

He heard something of such greater import than any kind of physical healing that he might have hoped for that day, and notice the endearment that Jesus has in this phrase.

Son, your sins are forgiven. When you already know the rest of the story, as all of us do, this statement, my Jesus, tends to lose a bit of its impact.

We know that he's going to be healed. We just read it just a second ago. When he came to have his legs healed, Jesus' first action was to forgive his sins.

How confusing. Maybe frustrating, even, for his friends that had just gone to such great lengths, and Jesus wasn't doing anything that they expected him to do.

[ 9 : 10 ] What was Jesus doing here? What was the whole point of Jesus' statement? Jesus was putting his finger on what was the man's greatest need.

When he came to Jesus that day, when his friends brought him that day, they thought that his greatest need was for his paralysis to be healed. They thought that the thing that he needed most in

this world was the ability to walk, but Jesus teaches a powerful lesson here. His greatest need was not the ability to walk. His greatest need was the forgiveness of his sins. It's not that Jesus was unconcerned about his condition. Of course he was. He ultimately healed his physical condition too, as he did many people that didn't believe. Many people Jesus healed that he didn't forgive. It's not that he didn't care about his physical condition, but he put a greater priority on the man's spiritual condition. More than the ability to walk was his need to have his sins forgiven and his relationship with God restored. Jesus was committed to putting first things first.

[ 10 : 27 ] People run to religion for all kinds of different reasons, don't they? But there's always some type of need attached to people's decisions when they would make these religious choices in their life. Some people may commit to a church because they have a deep need for friendship and community, and so that's exactly why they try to find a church to belong to.

It's not so much about hearing truth. It's not so much about being exposed to the word of God. It's about, I would like to have friends, and I need companionship in life, and I want community in life. I need people around me that will uplift me. It's a need in my life, and so that's why they pursue Christianity or church or any religion for that matter. It's camaraderie. It's the same reason some people would join the military, or some people would join a fraternity or a sorority in college. It's to meet a need of companionship and a friendship and community. Others will find religion capable of filling a need of affirmation for them or helping scratch a intellectual itch that perhaps that they have.

Others come to Jesus hoping that they may have a life that is improved in some way, that he will provide for them some type of success in life or some type of health in life or benefit in life, but how many people actually come to Jesus or to church or religion or anything for that matter with their greatest need actually as the focus of their life?

[ 11 : 56 ] I don't know what brought you to Jesus. I don't know why you are coming to Jesus even today, or what you hope that the Christian religion might do for you or what need it might meet for you.

But Jesus was clear that your greatest need is to have your sins forgiven and your heart restored to God. Greater than that promotion or job, greater than that healing of whatever disability or illness, greater than that companionship and community, greater than any other need you may have, your greatest need is to have your sins forgiven, your life restored, and your fellowship with God restored.

We can find clubs to meet our need for community. It won't ever match the community that is offered in the church, but we can meet that need in a different way. We can find doctors that will meet our need for healing in most cases.

We can find other things in life to help give us affirmation. We can find mentors that will meet our needs for success.

But your greatest need, the forgiveness of your sin, can only be met by Christ. Fortunately, Jesus' greatest desire is to meet that need, which is the other thing that we see over and over and over in the scripture.

[ 13 : 21 ] As we study through the gospel of Mark and any gospel for that matter, what do we constantly see? This heart of compassion, not just a heart of compassion to allow the man to walk again. That could easily be taken right back away.

But what is something Jesus could give this man that could never be taken away? Forgiveness, restoration, that's the heart of Christ. That's why he came. We studied at Christmas, Matthew chapter one, call his name Jesus for he will save his people from their sins.

That's why he came. As we studied that 24 hour period in chapter one of the gospel of Mark and what was Jesus doing? He healed tons of people. But when all the people were trying to find him, he told his disciples, it's time to go somewhere else.

I got to preach the gospel. That's why I came. His greatest desire is not to allow you to walk. His greatest desire is to forgive your sin. And the good news of the gospel really begins to take shape when our greatest need is then met by God's greatest desire in the person of Christ Jesus. And such joy and awesomeness comes from that. So few people want to recognize what their true need is. Believers make this same mistake.

[ 14 : 33 ] It's evidenced in our prayers. Many of us pray through a prayer list. I'm guilty of this every day. We sit down and we write out our prayer list and we have this massive list of things to pray for,

don't we?

And I pray for our family members that God would bless them and provide for them and provide security and success. We pray for ourselves in all kinds of different ways. And we pray for all the things that we had on this list.

And how much of that list is balanced out by confession? How much of our prayer actually involves confession to the Lord of our sin? Or even just a desire for God to continually reveal the sin that is in our hearts so that we may continually forsake it in our lives and follow after Christ.

We fall into this all the time. Constantly looking for Christ to do for us and missing what is actually our greatest need. The forgiveness of our sins.

For some of us, the statement that Jesus makes here raises some questions. What did this man do to deserve forgiveness of sin? And the answer is clearly nothing.

[15:49] Nothing at all. He didn't deserve to be forgiven of his sin. Neither do you. Neither do me. Just like there was nothing he could do to heal his own paralysis, there was nothing he could do to find forgiveness for his sin.

He had to rely in both cases on the grace and power of Jesus. He wasn't rewarded for something that he did, but Jesus did respond to something that was clearly in his heart.

It's interesting actually. Look at it. Son, that's important. Thy sins be forgiven thee. What was Jesus responding to? The first part of the verse.

When he saw their faith. The scripture is clear that salvation comes by God's grace through faith alone.

Ephesians chapter 2. For by grace are you saved through faith and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God. Not a result of works lest any man should boast.

[17:04] John 3.16, the most famous verse in all the Bible reemphasizes this. For God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.

The Philippian jailer after hearing Paul and Silas sing and pray to the Lord in the most difficult part of their life immediately runs and says, what must I do to be saved and what was their response? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. How does salvation come? By grace through faith. That's it. This man did nothing to deserve forgiveness and neither one of us can do anything to deserve forgiveness either.

How does it come? By God's grace. Received through our faith. When the men arrived to the house Jesus had been preaching.

If you'll look back at verse 2. Straightway when they were gathered together in so much that there was no room to receive them not so much as about the door Jesus preached the word unto them.

[18:05] We talked about two weeks ago what he was preaching. The summary is given in chapter 1 in verse 15. He was preaching the gospel of the kingdom. The kingdom of heaven is at hand. It is near. Speaking of himself he was the representative of God's coming kingdom.

The kingdom of heaven is near. Repent and believe the gospel. Faith and repentance. And surely as Jesus is preaching this maybe the four friends are waiting outside behind this massive crowd trying to determine what they're going to do and maybe as they're trying to figure out what they're going to do the man's ears perk up and he begins to listen to what Jesus is actually saying.

And he's preaching this gospel message. He's preaching this message of faith and repentance.

Believe me the kingdom of heaven is at hand and as they usher him up onto the roof and they begin to dig their hole maybe here's just a little bit more.

And God begins to do a work on the man's heart so that by the time he is lowered into the house his faith that day his belief though not articulated by himself but not even capable of being articulated maybe at that point by himself.

His faith is about much more than just receiving healing for his legs. His heart was drawn to Jesus in a different way a way that he didn't expect and Jesus knew the faith of his heart.

[19:26] You say but he didn't say a prayer. He didn't have to say a prayer. You say he didn't even ask for forgiveness. He didn't have to ask for forgiveness.

Why was it that Jesus could respond to this man in this way? Because Jesus knew the faith in his heart. It's the only explanation. Jesus didn't shortcut salvation for this man.

He didn't decide that repentance was unnecessary for this man's sins to be forgiven. He didn't determine that faith was unnecessary for this man that he was just going to make a point. Clearly

Jesus saw the faith in his heart.

The faith partnered with repentance and Jesus responded to such faith. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus came to meet our greatest need. That greatest need is forgiveness of sins. He sees it, the reality of it, in our hearts. We see the poor paralytic. Next, we move on to the scowling scribes. The scowling scribes. It's here that Mark introduces a new layer to his proclamation of the identity and purpose of Jesus.

[ 20 : 33 ] This time, it's the layer of conflict. We know that Jesus has already had conflict with Satan and his temptation. He's had conflict with demonic powers and casting out demons everywhere that he went.

But this is the first time that Mark tells us about the conflict between Jesus and the religious establishment. Luke's account tells us that there were scribes and Pharisees.

Mark just mentioned scribes. Luke says it was scribes and Pharisees and that they had traveled from all parts of Galilee to be there. Maybe they were trying to search for Jesus. Perhaps they had heard him teach before or witnessed some things before.

They clearly knew who he was. That's why they were there. They knew exactly what he had been doing, at least the rumors of it, if they hadn't seen it themselves and heard it themselves and they had found their place at Capernaum when Jesus had returned.

The religious establishment in the Gospels in the New Testament almost exclusively is recorded as enemies of Jesus, which is surprising. Right?

[ 21 : 35 ] These people knew the Bible. We would expect, and all of Judaism expected, that if the Messiah was going to come, these would be the people to know at first. But the Messiah had come, and they had rejected who he was.

This event closes into a little bit of that conflict, and this theme of conflict continues on in Mark's Gospel all the way through chapter 3. We'll see it over and over again. But look with me at what the scribes do.

Verse 6, there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and they were reasoning in their hearts. No one made a public dispute with Jesus here. They didn't actually say anything.

No one else sitting there maybe were aware of their opposition, but they were reasoning in their hearts, and this is what they were reasoning. Verse 7, why does this man speak blasphemy? who can forgive sin but God only? Jesus' shocking statement was immediately met by this silent opposition.

[ 22 : 39 ] But Jesus, being God incarnate, knew exactly what was in the heart of both the paralytic and the scribe. It's amazing, isn't it?

When Jesus looked at the paralytic man that had just been lowered down into this room, what he saw was repentance and faith, and he responded to that, son, your sins are forgiven.

And then the scribes didn't even have to say anything, but he immediately knew what they were thinking. He knew what was in their heart, and what was in their heart was not faith and repentance. What was in their heart was self-righteousness and doubt.

He perceived that he knew it. These weren't ignorant men. When it came to knowing the scriptures, no one knew it better than them. The scribes were considered the scholars of the day.

They were the lawyers of the day, so to speak, when it applied to the Old Testament scriptures, and then, of course, from there, the oral law that had been passed down by tradition.

[ 23 : 40 ] They knew it better than anybody else. And their theology in this case was exactly right, because no one can forgive sin except God only.

The problem wasn't their theology. The problem was their deduction of what was actually happening and what Jesus is actually saying. When they heard Jesus make the statement of forgiveness of sins, they immediately accused him of blasphemy, at least in their hearts.

They accused him of blasphemy. Blasphemy was worthy of death. They couldn't believe what they were hearing. This man's saying that he can forgive sins, but they missed the point.

They refused to acknowledge the alternative. The alternative was that the man standing before them, the man teaching with such authority, the man healing with miraculous powers, this man, they refused to believe, was God incarnate, and that he therefore possessed the authority to forgive sin.

Their intellectual grasp of the Bible, as great as it was, did not equate to salvation. It never does.

Just because you know the Bible doesn't mean you're a Christian.

[ 24 : 59 ] Just because you acknowledge it as truth doesn't make you a believer. These men knew their Bible. What made the difference for them is how they interpreted Jesus.

Jesus. It's C.S. Lewis who is famous for saying when you come to the gospel, when you come to study Jesus, there's really three options for you to take.

Either he's a liar, which is clear here. If Jesus wasn't God, he was a liar. Because when this man was lowered in, he immediately said, your sins are forgiven.

If Jesus isn't God, he's a liar. Lewis said he's either a liar, he's a lunatic, he's crazy. Crazy to believe that if he was just a man, that he actually had the power to forgive sins.

It's crazy, that's a lunatic. The third option is that he's actually Lord. That he is indeed who he said he was. That's the point of this passage.

[ 26 : 06 ] That's the point of this story. It's a decision that you're all going to have to come to terms with, every one of us. What are we going to do with Jesus? We can't take an indifferent approach.

It's not even possible. Indifference is just rejection. Either he's Lord, or he's a liar, or he's a crazy man.

But the scripture is clear. He's Lord. The issue wasn't what they knew about the Bible. The issue was the deduction that they made about who Jesus was, which is why Jesus responded in the way that he did.

Salvation comes neither by religious performance or vigorous study. It's a heart-level work of God's grace that's received through repentance and faith, and we see that over and over and over.

These men trusted their religious conformity, their self-righteousness for salvation. That's not enough. Their knowledge of the scripture should have led them to open the way for Jesus.

[ 27 : 11 ] They should have been directing the traffic to get people there. But that's not what they did. Over and over, we see this question come up through the gospel of Mark. Who is Jesus?

Who is this man? That's the question he's answering. When the scribes responded to Jesus in their hearts, it was more of, who does he think he is, was the spirit of what they were saying.

Thirdly, we see the divine Savior. How is it that Jesus will respond to this silent opposition? He perceived in his heart what they were believing, what they were thinking.

But up until this point, all Jesus has done is preach the gospel and tell a man that his sins are forgiven. It's at this point in the story that we see the reality of his divinity clearly displayed.

Three ways he displays it. Number one, he read their minds. He read their minds. It's as simple as that. Look at verse 8. And immediately, Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves.

[ 28 : 20 ] And he said unto them, why reason you these things in your hearts? Why question this in your heart? The first display of his divinity is the fact that he literally read their minds.

Jesus was not assuming what they thought. He wasn't sitting there and thinking, I bet they're thinking this over here. I can just read it on their face. And he just launched into this statement as a response to that.

No, he knew exactly what they were thinking. He knew what was on their heart. Imagine being those men. You ever have that feeling that somebody can read your mind? Our wives are good at that. You ever, imagine you're sitting there you're full of doubt.

You believe that this man is blasphemous and therefore worthy of death. Who can forgive sins but God only? His back is to you. He's looking at the paralytic and then all of a sudden he turns around and he looks you in the eye and he says, why are you thinking that?

What? That's exactly what Jesus does. What is that? It's a display of his divinity. He knew exactly what was in the paralytic's heart. He knew exactly what was in the scribe's heart as well.

[ 29 : 26 ] And just like we can be encouraged that Jesus knows the faith of our hearts even though we continually fail him, that's an encouragement, we can also be just as certain that Jesus knows the true condition of our hearts when it's filled with doubt, when it's filled with wickedness, when it's filled with sin, when it's filled with hypocrisy and we're only pretending to be a believer.

forever. We're only pretending to be what we have put this mask on about. We're only pretending to follow Christ. We're only pretending to know Christ just as we can take assurance that Jesus knows the reality of our hearts when we fail, we can be absolutely certain that he knows the reality of the heart when you're just a pretender.

That was true here. He read their minds. He knew exactly what they thought. Secondly, he engaged with their minds. This is our favorite part, isn't it? Anytime we see this conflict between Jesus and

the scribes and the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the Herodians and all these people, they were constantly trying to trap him, weren't they?

They were constantly questioning him, trying to find a reason that they could accuse him in some way. And Jesus was just so fantastic at responding to these people. And so he turns to these men and he begins to engage with their minds and he asks them a question, an interesting question. Look at verse nine. Jesus says, is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say arise and take up thy bed and walk?

[ 31 : 00 ] Now I want you to think about that question. What is easier? Is it easier to say your sins are forgiven or to say arise and take up your bed and walk?

That's the question he's asking. He's engaging their minds. And of course, for us, the answer is clear. Both are impossible. I can't do either one of those things.

I might forgive something that you have done to me, but I can't ultimately forgive your sin because sin is ultimately an offense against God. That's what actually makes it sin. I can't forgive that.

I certainly can't look at you if you're a paralytic and paralyzed and say, get up and walk. That's the question he's dealing with. Now Jesus is setting the men up. He's setting them up to think through, to think through this question when he actually performs the miracle.

But it's still an interesting question. The emphasis here is on the word say. Jesus asked, what's easier to say? Your sins are forgiven or to say, arise, take up your bed and walk?

[ 32 : 06 ] Now that's a different question. And of course, it's easier to say your sins are forgiven. Why? Because I don't have to prove it. You can come to me today and say, I really need my sins to be forgiven.

And I could say, you're forgiven. And depending on if I'm good enough at selling it, you might believe it. And others might too. I don't have to provide any kind of proof for that.

But if you're paralyzed and you come to me and say, Jared, I'd really like for you to heal me. And I say, okay, arise and take up your bed and walk. Nothing about that statement matters unless you actually get up off your bed or heal of your paralysis and go home from it.

The point here is that Jesus' word is action. That's the point he's getting across to these men. It's another reflection of the display of his divinity, his deity.

And so Jesus says, whatever I say is true. All of his words, his words were never empty. They were never misleading. They were never lies. His promises were always fulfilled.

[ 33 : 13 ] His word is always backed up by truth and action. So when we get to chapter one and there's the demon possessed man and Jesus says that he's going to cast him out, he immediately backs it up with action and the demon is cast out.

When we get to the end of chapter one and we see the leper that comes to Jesus and Jesus says he wants him to be cleansed, immediately Jesus backs that up with action and the man was cleansed. And then when the paralytic comes and he's seeking to be healed of his paralysis, Jesus says arise and take up your bed and walk.

And then immediately it's backed up with action and Jesus actually does the healing. So when Jesus says your sins are forgiven, he fully intends to back that up with action. Because his words are never empty.

They're never fruitless. Now think about this. While sin is forgiven by God, no sin, no sin, ever goes unpunished by God.

All sin is punished. When Jesus told the man that his sins were forgiven, he did so knowing fully what he would have to do in order for that to be true.

[ 34 : 28 ] His word is action. God doesn't ignore our sins to forgive them. You realize that, right? If your sins are forgiven, it's not because you came to the Lord and you just said, Lord, I'm so sorry, I shouldn't have done this.

And he just pretends to ignore it, passes over you as far as punishment is concerned and just moves on. The past is behind us, water under the bridge. That's not the way this forgiveness works. God in his grace will forgive sin, but God in his justice must punish sin. What happens in salvation is not that God turns a blind eye to your sin and just decides to forget about it.

He takes your sin and he puts it on his son. That's what's happening with forgiveness. How does that happen?

The cross. Paul writing the Colossians said it this way, that God has taken the handwriting of ordinances that was against us. In other words, there's this, there's this writing against us, this legal

justification for us to be condemned.

[ 35 : 41 ] We've broken the law. And he wipes it clean. How does he do that? Paul says by nailing it to the cross of Christ. It's not that God ignores your sin.

It's that he puts your sin on Christ. He's our substitute. Why did Jesus come? Not to heal the man of his paralysis. He came to die the punishment that that man deserved to die.

There's plenty of scripture for this. It's a substitution. He took our place. Second Corinthians chapter five, Paul said, for our sake, God made him to be sin.

Who knew no sin? Why? That we might be made the righteousness of Christ. He made him to be sin. What sin? Our sin. Why?

So we could be declared righteous. First Corinthians 15, Christ Jesus died for our sins. Not that he ignored our sins in order to forgive them.

[ 36 : 45 ] No, he actually took the punishment for them so that we could be declared righteousness. First John chapter two. He's the propitiation for our sins.

He has assuaged God's wrath, satisfied it for all of eternity. Not for our sins only, John writes. The sins of the whole world.

So great is the love of God that he suffered at the hands of men to pay the price for the sins of men in order that men could then be declared righteous.

That's the whole point of this passage. Jesus is God. That he has the authority to forgive sins. And that sins can be forgiven because he paid the price for them.

Not only did he read their minds and engage with their minds, but then he blew their minds. Look at verse 10. Immediately, or excuse me, but Jesus says, but that you may know the son of man have power on earth to forgive sins.

[ 37 : 57 ] And he said to the sick of the palsy, I say unto thee, arise and take up thy bed and go thy way into thy house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed and went forth before them all.

This is ultimately the purpose of Jesus's healings. Jesus didn't use this man as a pawn. That's not what it was.

There was real compassion in his heart for his condition. It's just there was a priority of purpose here. Priority was his sin. The man had faith and repentance.

Jesus dealt with that first. And then he came to the healing. And it worked perfectly in the point that he was trying to make to the scribes and to the others that were gathered that day. He's speaking to these scribes who haven't said a word according to the passage.

He reads their minds, engages, makes them think for a moment. And then he says, the reason I'm doing this is so that you may know, know for certain that I have power and authority to forgive sin.

[ 39 : 04 ] That's the point of his miracles, folks. To point to who he is, to what he can do. It's not about the miracle itself. And then as he says that, he turns back to the paralytic.

And there's this compassionate heart again. And he looks at the man and he says, arise, take up your bed and walk. And immediately, just like always happens, when Jesus cast out the demon, it happened immediately.

When Jesus healed the leper, it happened immediately. When Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law, it happened immediately. And again here, he says, arise, take up your bed and walk. And immediately, the man's legs are healed.

He immediately stands up. Maybe he'd never even done that before. We have no idea how long he was paralyzed. And he picks up his bed. And before everybody there, he walks out of the house and he goes home. What's that about?

It's not so that we know that Jesus has the power to heal his legs. It's so that we know that Jesus actually has power to forgive his sins. Because the only person that could heal his legs is the person that could also forgive his sins.

[ 40 : 08 ] Because Jesus read their minds, he engaged with their minds, then he blew their minds. And then finally, we'll wrap it up with the curious crowd. The curious crowd. Look back with me at verse 12. After the man is healed and he walks away.

It says, insomuch that they were all amazed and glorified God. Saying, we never saw it on this fashion. We never saw it happen like this.

Never seen anything like this before. They were incredibly amazed. They got what they had come for. That's why most of them had gathered. They did exactly what we might expect to do if this happened in our church today.

They rejoiced. Why wouldn't they? They even praised God for it. And they rejoiced at what they had seen. They were amazed. They were awestruck. But like so many people today, they missed the point.

And we know that because of what Matthew said in Matthew chapter 9 when he wrote about this. Here's what Matthew wrote. When the crowd saw this, they were amazed. And they glorified God who had given such authority to men.

[ 41 : 24 ] They were amazed by what Jesus had done. But they had refused to accept who Jesus was. That was the problem. The entire exchange between Jesus and the scribes was meant to demonstrate that Jesus is God.

That's exactly what he said. I am doing this so that you will know that I am God and I can forgive sins. And he turns around and he does it. And everybody completely forgets about it. They're so amazed by the miracle.

They even praised God for the miracle. But they did not believe Jesus. It's as if they completely ignored the fact that Jesus had forgiven the man's sin. It's as if they completely missed the fact that his greatest need was forgiveness.

The truth is they didn't care anything about forgiveness of sins. That's not why they came there that day. They couldn't have cared less that Jesus forgave that man's sins.

Even if they thought he had power to do it. They didn't care. That's not why they were there. They were there to see something spectacular. They wanted to be amazed by Jesus' powerful works.

[ 42 : 27 ] They were curious about Jesus, but they did not believe Jesus. That's the difference between people that are enamored with the Christian religion, but don't actually make it to heaven.

They're curious about Jesus. They're curious about his teaching. They're curious about what he might or might not have done as far as these miraculous works are concerned, but they never actually believe him.

They missed the point. A lot of people today, it's the same thing. They just missed the point. I mentioned earlier that when you know the entire story, Jesus' statement about forgiveness of sin loses a bit of its impact.

For some of us, it loses its impact because we ultimately don't really care about forgiveness. We don't really see a need for it, for one. And even if we recognize that we've done some bad things, it's not really that bad.

And so it's not at the forefront of our mind. We don't really care about that. We want to see the spectacular. We want to experience the power. But a lot of us, we don't actually care about the forgiveness.

[ 43 : 39 ] We're amazed by Jesus. But we don't actually believe him. What about you? Are you just amazed by Jesus? Are you enamored by him for one reason or another?

What's the need that you're hoping that he needs? Is it physical? Is it just supernatural in some way? Or have you come to realize that Jesus is not just a man? There's more to him than this. This is God incarnate. And this whole thing is not just to record for us the awesome things that he did. This is to tell us how he came to redeem us from our sin.

And the difference between a person that claims to be a Christian and goes to hell and a person that claims to be a Christian and actually is restored to God for eternity is what they end up doing with Jesus.

Do you believe him? Or are you just curious about it?