

Remarkable Jesus

Lessons from the healing of a paralyzed man

The accounts of the miracle in Matthew, Mark, and Luke:

Matthew 9:1-8	Mark 2:1-12	Luke 5:17-26
<p>¹ So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.</p>	<p>¹ And again He entered Capernaum after <i>some</i> days, and it was heard that He was in the house.</p> <p>² Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive <i>them</i>, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.</p>	<p>¹⁷ Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was <i>present</i> to heal them.</p>
<p>² Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed.</p>	<p>³ Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four <i>men</i>.</p> <p>⁴ And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.</p>	<p>¹⁸ Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him. ¹⁹ And when they could not find how they might bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with <i>his</i> bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus.</p>
<p>When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.”</p>	<p>⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven you.”</p>	<p>²⁰ When He saw their faith, He said to him, “Man, your sins are forgiven you.”</p>

³ And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, “This Man blasphemes!”

⁴ But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts?”

⁵ For which is easier, to say, ‘*Your sins are forgiven you,*’ or to say, ‘Arise and walk’? ⁶ But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—then He said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” ⁷ And he arose and departed to his house.

⁸ Now when the multitudes saw *it*, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

⁶ And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, ⁷ “Why does this *Man* speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

⁸ But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, “Why do you reason about these things in your hearts?”

⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘*Your sins are forgiven you,*’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk’? ¹⁰ But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the paralytic, ¹¹ “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”

¹² Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all,

so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw *anything* like this!”

²¹ And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

²² But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, “Why are you reasoning in your hearts?”

²³ Which is easier, to say, ‘*Your sins are forgiven you,*’ or to say, ‘Rise up and walk’? ²⁴ But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the man who was paralyzed, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”

²⁵ Immediately he rose up before them, took up what he had been lying on, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

²⁶ And they were all amazed, and they glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, “We have seen strange things today!”

Intro: On several levels, the significance of Jesus healing the paralyzed man in Mt 9, Mk 2, and Mk 5 cannot be overstated. We learn things about faith, miracles, and the nature of Jesus. Perhaps it is supposed to mold our thinking about all miracles as well.

I. Faith

- A. Famously, those who brought the paralytic to Jesus couldn't get into the house due to the crowds
 - 1. They "uncovered the roof" by breaking through (Mk 2:4) the tiling (Lk 5:19)
 - 2. They lowered the paralyzed man to Jesus through the opening.
 - 3. This is when we are told that Jesus "saw their faith" (Mt 9:2; Mk 2:5; Lk 5:20)
- B. Interesting observations:
 - 1. Matthew's account doesn't bother to mention the opening of the roof and lowering the paralyzed man down – it simply mentions them bringing the man to Jesus and He sees their faith
 - a. Maybe his audience already knew about the incident or maybe it is not as critical to the story as we make it
 - b. He saw their faith and that's enough, however it was exhibited! Matthew captures that.
 - 2. True faith shows – it motivates action
 - a. Why would anyone remove or destroy someone's roof? Would need to be a REALLY good reason
 - b. Faith shows – it takes risks and does radical things. What are you willing to do? How does Jesus / others see your faith?
 - c. We need to be people of faith AND have friends of faith like this!
- C. Warning: If you have (or claim to have) faith, Jesus is going to challenge that faith, stretching it, not only to test it to see if it is genuine, but to deepen and strengthen it

II. Who is this?

- A. Pharisees and teachers of the law from all over the region were present (Lk 5:17)
 - 1. They will ask themselves, "Who is this...?" (Lk 5:21)
 - a. What will raise this question?
 - b. It's probably not what you think because it isn't what anyone expected – not the Pharisees and teachers, not those who brought the paralyzed man, not the paralyzed man, and not even us!
- B. Jesus says to the paralyzed man: "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." (Mt 9:2; Mk 2:5; Lk 5:20)
 - 1. Note: this was in response to seeing the faith of those who brought the paralyzed man
 - a. Not expected! Not desired or valued as much as physical healing? Do you think there was immediate disappointment?
 - b. Compare: 2 Co 12:7-10 (do we value grace?)
 - 2. Charge of blasphemy (Mt 9:3; Mk 2:6-7; Lk 5:21)
 - a. Blasphemy is to "speak contemptuously of God or of sacred things" (Vines)
 - b. They say it is blasphemy because: "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Mk 2:7) and "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Lk 5:21) – Jesus was claiming to do what only God can rightfully do.
 - c. Note: If Jesus is not God in the flesh, then His accusers ARE right, He DID blaspheme. But this is precisely about Who Jesus is!
- C. Forgiveness and the forgiver

1. Only the person offended can provide forgiveness
2. All sin is an offence against God
3. Only God can forgive sin because it is against Him
4. When Jesus forgave the paralyzed man's sin, Jesus was claiming divinity
5. Remember: Jesus saw their faith. He took that opportunity to challenge and stretch their faith. Would they accept the truth about Who He really is?

III. Seeing more than what you see – The purpose of miracles

- A. Miracles are about Who Jesus truly is – Jn 20:30-31
 1. They aren't simply about healing or feeding or giving physical life
 2. Note: Miracles still require faith – they require reaching the right conclusion about what you saw or experienced
 - a. Some say today that they want to see a miracle because they think that it would resolve all faith issues, but miracles often created more faith issues than they resolved
 - b. People, as in this case, marveled, said they saw something remarkable, and feared – they even glorified God, but many (most?) didn't draw the right conclusion that Jesus Christ is the Son of God
- B. Miracles challenged people to accept as true what they cannot see
 1. You cannot "see" that Jesus is the Son of God (He looked like a common man).
 2. Faith takes evidence and concludes / believes / trusts that what cannot be seen exists or is true
 3. Many people failed to reach the right conclusions about miracles (even when they appreciated or were awed by the physical miracle or benefits)
- C. "But that you may know..." (Mt 9:6; Mk 2:10; Lk 5:24)
 1. How can anyone know that sins were actually forgiven when Jesus forgave them? You can't see them forgiven / gone. How can you see the unseen?
 2. Note: Jesus connects saying sins are forgiven and speaking to the man and he being healed by saying one is as easy to say as the other (not just the words, but the power is the same, comes from the same source for both. If you can speak one and it is done, you can just as easily speak the other and it is done – right?)
 3. Jesus heals the man:
 - a. "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins' – then He said to the paralytic, 'Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.' And he arose and departed to his house" (Mt 9:6-7)
 - b. "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins' – He said to the paralytic, 'I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.' Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all..." (Mk 2:10-12; cf Lk 5:24-25)
 - c. Healing the man (seen) confirms what cannot be seen (forgiveness)
 - d. Note: Also healing the man (see) confirms what cannot be seen (Jesus is the Son of God)

Conc: This miracle is remarkable (that's how the people responded) – however even more remarkable is Who Jesus truly is (which the miracle establishes).