

## Your sins are forgiven you: Mark 2.1-12

Thanks to Kate for today's TFTD.



The healing of the paralytic follows the normal pattern of New Testament healing stories: a crowd gathers, a healing problem presents itself, Jesus heals, the result is described, and the crowd expresses amazement.

In this narrative as in most other synoptic healing stories, the context reflects the ministry of the early church. Jesus was in the (his?) house speaking the word. Four friends brought to the house a fifth friend who was paralysed.

Notice, this was a dramatic event, this paralysed man has nothing else in this world but he still had friends and when they couldn't get out into the house where Jesus was teaching, they climbed up into the roof, made a hole and lower their friend with robes into the ground before the Lord.

Jesus was impressed by the faith of these men, but what happened next surprised everyone. Until now Jesus had been doing miracles but hadn't yet forgiven sins, but now Jesus was going to teach them the next lesson about what the kingdom of God

was all about. Everyone probably thought that Jesus would say “Son, get up and walk” but Jesus knew what was most important and what came first, so instead he said to him “Son, your sins are forgiven”. The wonderful thing is that, this man’s friends weren’t about to let any barrier stand between their friend and Jesus, so if these men couldn’t get through the door, they were prepared to take the risk in opening the roof. It is evident that it was their faith that attracts the attention of Jesus. Note, nothing is said about the paralytic himself. We do not know if he asked the other four to take him to Jesus; we do not know if he believed Jesus could heal him. However, we do know the four friends believed Jesus could heal their paralytic friend and would stop at nothing to arrange an encounter with Jesus.

There are a number of things in this passage that Jesus knew that no one else knew: For example, Jesus *knew that the four friends of the paralytic man believed that he has the power to heal.*

*Secondly, he knew that the paralysed man, carried a far greater burden than his physical condition.* The four friends expect that Jesus will heal the man physically, just as he had already healed many. They expected, they sought, nothing else. They do not see, as Jesus the divine Son sees, that this man has a far more pressing need than physical restoration. Jesus sees past the wretched body to the wretchedness of the man's soul. He sees that this man is far more concerned with the guilt that eats him out inside, robbing him of peace, separating him from God, than he is about his physical disability.

It is to this deep spiritual need that Jesus addresses himself. Without a moment's hesitation he says to the man “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

*He also knew what the teachers of the law were thinking in their hearts.* They do not even speak. But Jesus knows. He knows that they think his words are meaningless and powerless. He knows that they are thinking he is just a man making a useless statement, just a man assuming he has the power and the authority to do something that only God can do. He knows that it does not enter their heads that he actually does have that power and that authority, and that this man was indeed, at that very moment, forgiven.

In summary it is important to note that Jesus not only had the power to forgive sinners. He became the perfect sacrifice on which divine forgiveness is based. And his words to the paralysed man are the same words he still speaks to all who come to him in genuine faith “Your sins are forgiven.”

This is the greatest gift Christianity offers to the world - the forgiveness of sins.

Which is made possible through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. He offers the forgiveness to all who are willing to repent of their sins and believe in his name.  
Amen. *Romans 10:9-10.*

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