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Matthew 9:1-8
Jesus' Authority To Forgive Sin!

Intro: The narrative of Jesus' ministry and miracles continue. Prior to chapter 9, Jesus performed several miracles: Jesus healed a man of leprosy (Matthew 8:1-4), Jesus healed a centurion's servant (8:5-13), Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law (8:14-17), Jesus calmed the stormy sea (8:23-27), and Jesus healed two demon possessed men in Gadara (8:28-34).

At the close of chapter 8, Jesus casted demons out of the two men. The demons left the men and went into a herd of swine. The swine ran violently down a steep mountain and were drowned in the sea. Afterwards, the town people bid Jesus to leave their coast. Jesus granted their request. He and His disciples entered into a boat and sailed to Capernaum. Capernaum was Jesus' home for ministry operation.

According to Mark 2:1 Jesus and His disciples went into a house in Capernaum and it was reported that He was in the house.

Matthew 9:2 says, ***“And, behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy lying on a bed.”*** The word “they” refers to the four men mentioned in Mark 2:3, that says four men carried the man. They brought the sick sinful man to Jesus. Bringing the man to Jesus is an indication of their faith in Jesus. They brought the man to Jesus simply because they believed in the power of Jesus to heal. Brothers and sisters, you can't recommend faith in Christ if you are faithless. You can't help sinful people unless you yourself have learned to hate sin, to overcome it by the power of faith, to live in the holy presence of Christ by faith, breathing the atmosphere of His love by faith: They brought! Let us work this in our spirits—what the four men were to the paralyzed man, is what we should be or become for many people. In other words, we must bring many people to Christ—they won't seek, they must be sought. The four men understood the blessedness of ministering to the man's needs.

Notice the man's condition. The man was paralyzed. Therefore, he could not get to Jesus on his own. He was physically powerless. Powerlessness in his legs kept him from walking to Jesus. Powerlessness in his arms kept him from dragging himself to Jesus. Powerlessness of speech kept him from crying out to Jesus. He had to be carried to Jesus. Four men brought him as he laid helpless on his bed. His condition was a pitiable condition. From reading the pericope this man's condition was sin related. His condition was the consequence of sin. Sin carries a punishment! Happy is the man who's suffering brings him to Christ.

Verse 2 says, “Jesus seeing their faith.” He saw the faith of the paralyzed man and the four men who brought him. I like to think of this as partnering in faith. Faith partnership is powerful when and where there is physical powerlessness. This is not the first time Jesus healed a man through partnership faith. Matthew 8:5-13 Jesus healed the centurion's servant through partnership faith. The centurion sought Jesus for his servant and Jesus admired his faith and healed his servant. I need faith partners, you need faith partners. We need faith partnership; people believing in the power of Jesus to bring cheer, forgiveness, and healing where there is hurt, sickness, sin. Jesus saw their faith and healed the man.

There are several things I want to make a note of regarding Jesus' authority:

I. Authority To Forgive Sin: Verse 2 *Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.* Forgiveness of sin is a much bigger deal than physical healing. Forgiveness of sin is a great work. Only God can forgive sins!
Jesus was proving that He is not merely some special healer, He has the authority of God because He is God. Jesus can forgive sins because He is God!
Every evil, every sickness, every disease, every sorrow, depression, anger, heartache and headache is the result of sin in the world and in our hearts.
We need Jesus to heal us of the root cause: sin. Sin is the problem! Sin has been the cause of sickness and death from the fall. Man needs forgiveness and to be set free from the curse of sin.

II. Authority To Search Hearts: Verse 4 *And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?* Having our sins forgiven is the greatest of all miracles. When Jesus said this to the man it the religious teachers hit the roof. The religious teachers knew that only God could forgive sin. Therefore, when Jesus said your sins be forgiven they thought to themselves that Jesus was guilty of blasphemy. Blasphemy is profane talk; a great disrespect shown to God. To forgive sin is to call Himself God. Jesus knowing what they were thinking is revealing Himself as God, because only God knows the heart. Knowing the thoughts of men belongs only to God.

1 Chronicles 28:9 *And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*

Psalms 7:9 *Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.*

Revelation 2:23 *And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.*

Jesus said to the scribes why were they conjuring evilness in their hearts? Is it easier to say your sins are forgiven or to say arise and walk? Both are equally impossible for men, but both are equally possible for God.

III. Authority To Heal: Verses 6-7

To say that the man was healed from paralysis, and yet he was still lying on the bed would have indicated that Jesus failed. But, look at what happened. Verse 6 Jesus said get up, take up, and go home. In verse 7 the man got up, took up, and went home.

The healing was done that they may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins. The primary purpose of the healing was not the restoration of the man's physical health. The purpose of the miracle was to reveal to the man and the people

who witnessed the miracle that Jesus has power to save. Jesus used physical to prove His authority to forgive sins.

The crowd was fascinated. Therefore, they glorify God for giving such power unto men (9:7-8). The people recognized the power and authority that only comes from God. Even when the religious teacher could not recognize Jesus as God, the people recognized that Jesus was given power from God because He is God!