

TTMk.2

Last week we left Jesus sitting out alone in an uninhabited area. At the beginning of the story, the leper was out there. Then Jesus made him clean, and told him not to tell anyone. But he disobeyed, and created a problem for Jesus, and so he had to be out here (took the leper's place).

The crowds of thrill-seekers made ministry impossible. They would follow Him into His house, etc. So he has to lay low for a few days.

Mk.2:1 **A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home.** lit – into the house. Jesus came home and went to His house (where His mother lived, etc – see Lesnki). Probably wants rest.

It wasn't enough time – crowds mob his house (not lawn). There was no rest for Jesus. His was not a fun life. It was relentless. The problems that He came into this world to solve dogged his steps everywhere.

2 So many gathered that there was no room left, not

even outside the door, and he preached the word to them.
Lk.5:17 **Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there.**

3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them.
Lk.5:18 **and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus.**

3:21
This man couldn't walk. paraplegic or quad. Didn't have the apparatus like today. No wheel chair – had to be carried to the bathroom, get a drink, etc. 24 hour care – fortunately he had some great friends.

This man wanted to see Jesus. As we will see in a minute, he was afraid of Jesus, but he wanted to see him anyway. So he asked his friends (must be good friends!) They are full of hope on the way there. But when they get close, their spirits fall. "Oh no. – Look at the crowd"

4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd,

Ever arrived somewhere, and the line was so long you just said, "Forget it."? So they left.
5:07

In the mean time Jesus was in there preaching away. The people are riveted. Stories, parables, etc. Suddenly... dust...daylight – it's those guys! They left to get ropes and came back. They dug through a foot of dirt (with grass), then another foot of sticks, branches and thistles.

This is creative, persistent, inventive, insistent faith.

7
When it seemed impossible to get to Jesus, they didn't say, "Well, I guess the Lord closed that door – this must not be His will."

You may have heard: "Let go and let God." – the idea that if you really have faith, it will result in less human effort. That's the opposite of what we see in Sc. Usually, the greater a person's faith, the more diligent, zealous effort he expends.

Human effort alone accomplishes nothing (except the destruction of a perfectly good roof). But human effort that is driven by a confidence in the power of God is rewarded by God.

When people are reluctant to get involved in anything, it isn't because they have great faith. Often it's because they have

little faith. They assess a ministry opportunity, project into the future taking only their human strength into consideration, and they conclude it isn't worth it.

But faith calculates God's unlimited power into the mix, and becomes excited, and jumps in with both feet.

Is your faith like that? Does your faith quit whenever there is an obstacle, or does it drive you to creativity?

8:53

4 they made an opening in the roof above Jesus (lit: unroofed the roof where he was) and, after digging through it, lowered (are lowering) the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. 19 lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

This is a very dramatic moment (Mk presents it in a dramatic way – Pr. Tense). Let's take a freeze-frame. This man was laying flat on his back in front of the crowd. Ever made a noise in a meeting and had everyone look at you? Just think if you were lowered in front of the famous speaker. Ever had to lay down on the floor in front of people? What if you had

the pitiful, atrophied body of this man?

Imagine the dead silence.

Everybody's minds are going – thinking about what these guys did – pro or con.

Look at Mary – concerned about his house – rain, homeowner's (or safety – you boys be careful, you could fall and get hurt).

Look over there at the Scribes and Phar. – staring down at this pitiful man with disdain and disgust. “He must be a whale of a sinner to deserve this...”

Look at the kids. Too shy to giggle, but elbowing each other and pointing to the man.

Look at the paralytic. Beat red. Shaking in fear.

Look at Jesus. What will He do?

11:50

That's the scene – S & PH sitting with arms crossed. The crowd watching. The man looking up. Four up-side-down heads poking through the ceiling looking down. Jesus about to act.

What do you think happens next? Healing? no. Jesus does something very unexpected.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son...

Mt. take heart don't be afraid. he was afraid. Mt.9:2 the very first thing Jesus says is “**Take heart**” (lit: don't be afraid). He

was afraid because he knew he was a sinner coming before the Judge.

The passage also says that he had faith – saving faith. He believed the things Jesus was teaching. What was Jesus teaching?

SOM – he heard the SOM and believed it. What happens to average sinners?

Luke 13:1-3

Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. 2 Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? 3 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.

This man believed that.

Luke 12:46-49 **The servant who does not get ready... He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers. 47 "That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows... 49 "I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!**

This man believed that. And he is afraid.

Like all of us, he had spent his life **doing** things he knew to be wrong, **thinking** about things he shouldn't, **saying** things that were sinful, **doing** things with bad motives, **failing** to do the good he knew he should do, **violating** his conscience, etc. Thousands and thousands of times this man **knowingly, purposely, willfully** decided to do the opposite of what God had commanded. He had besetting sins – time after time vowing to never do it again, and time after time returning to it like a dog going back and eating its own vomit. He was a sinner, he was guilty, he deserved punishment, and he knew it.

ETERNAL – because it's an infinite offense.

This man was one of those rare people who came to the end of his excuses, and realized he was so guilty, that his only hope was to face his judge and seek forgiveness.

16:34

He heard Jesus' strong teaching re sin, and believed it. He heard Jesus teach that all judgement had been given to Him, and He believed it.

He is guilty of sin and is facing the Judge. The one who talked about chopping sinners to pieces, scourging them, beating them and sending them to hell. He is afraid.

Yet he came to J – Even though this is the Judge, He is also the only hope of forgiveness.

Can you imagine the relief when the Judge looked down at him and said, don't be afraid. And then – **son** (!) (Te,knon)

and then – the most wonderful words this man ever heard – **your sins are forgiven.**

Talk about assurance!

Some have said you can't share the G until you meet physical needs. Jesus didn't agree. The man is still as paralyzed as ever.

When we see that guy, we see the paralysis and imagine that that is his biggest need. Jesus sees the real need. We see his and think, "Wow, that poor guy can't walk." Jesus sees him and thinks, "Wow, that poor guy is guilty of sin and condemned to hell."

Apparently this is what the man came for. He is like the leper who wanted to be clean more than well.

The story is not over.

Jesus' statement about forgiveness was an outrageous statement – Jesus intended it to be. Only God can forgive sin – obviously (no priests, no pope, not the church).

Those Scribes were probably there hoping He would make some little technical mistake that they could exploit. They are hoping He will say something wrong – and He knows it, and so He says the most outrageous statement they had ever heard.

Mk.2:6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking (arguing) to themselves, 7 "Why does this fellow talk like that (thus)? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

How would they have looked at it? Remember, their whole concept of religion was external. In their system, how does a person get forgiven? Ceremonies. Rituals. Sacrifices. This man had done none of that. He hadn't done anything religious – he hadn't even *said* anything.

Some people today think that way. Say you can't be saved unless you *do* something that I can see. Have to get baptized.

Have to change your life around. Have to pray a prayer.

This guy didn't get baptized, didn't go to church, it doesn't even indicate that he prayed a prayer. There is no record that he even asked for forgiveness!

He just laid there and believed.

arguing they don't have the courage at this point to oppose Jesus. They keep their thoughts to themselves. Ever do that? Argue with yourself. It's much easier to win. They don't want to argue with Jesus – too much chance of losing.

Mk.2:8 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things (thus)?"

All through this account Jesus reads hearts. Mk. says **immediately**. The second this thought crossed their minds, Jesus responded to it. Imagine what that was like for Jesus' opponents. Jesus even borrows the terminology from their thoughts!

Remember – no one but Jesus has spoken. But they get to thinking. And right at the

moment they are thinking "Why does He speak this way.." they hear Jesus say, "Why do you think this way?"

They can't even win an argument in their own minds.

9 Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'?

No answer. These men are shellshocked. Jesus blindsided them. Later on they would try to come up with clever ways to try to trick Jesus with their brilliant arguments. But here they can't even make a sound. They are reduced to absolute silence in the face of Jesus overwhelming authority.

It is easier to say your sins are forgiven (can't be disproved) Jesus had dismissed this man's sins, but that was invisible. No one there could see what Jesus could see. Not even the man. No one could see the massive mound of hundreds of thousands of sins piled on his heart – every one of which was toxic poison, and every one was an infinite, capital offence

But no one could see that guilt. Nor could they see ALL of it instantaneously evaporate the moment Jesus forgave Him.

10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" He said to the paralytic, 11 "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home."

12 He got up, took his mat and walked out

Describe the miracle. Muscles appeared, muscle memory, brain cells altered, etc.

Jesus movie: Jesus covers the legs with a blanket, inflicts pain, takes a while, and the man can barely stand.

Why? Why the blanket? Because that's what magicians do. Why? To hide the trick.

This guy isn't wobbly – that mat that had always carried him, now *he's* carrying *it*.

Jesus never calls for blind faith. He said, "I realize it is easy for me to stand here and pronounce authoritative forgiveness, but you can't see it. So I'll tell you what – I'll give a display of my divine authority that you can see.

12 in full view of them all. They saw.

This gives insight into the purpose of the healing miracles – to show what Jesus can do

spiritually.

12 This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!" (finally someone speaks)

Luke adds that the paralytic also went home praising God. Everybody is praising God except the S and PH.

Matt. tells us of another reaction.

Matt 9:8 When the crowd saw this, they were filled with fear;

This is always the reaction when men realize they are in the presence of someone greater than themselves.

Ps 130:3-4 If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared.

Why? Because they knew that forgiveness is not automatic.

CONCLUSION:

This is the great message of Xianity. We have the tremendous privilege of proclaiming the forgiveness of sins! It is a thrilling message but is not received with thrill by people today. Instead it is received with yawns. The reason for this is the failure of the church to properly preach

about sin.

Hellfire brimstone preachers are caricatured.

Jonathan Edwards preached on sin and guilt and hell with such power that the people were gripping the pews. He told the people that they were sinners in the hand of a God who was furious with them. He explain that they were dangling over hell by a thread – one heartbeat away from suffering the full blast of God’s wrath forever in hell, and the only thing that heart beating from second to second giving them another chance to repent was a God who hates sin and who is angry.

Those people listened and wept and wailed and cried for him to stop. But he kept on. The people became desperate. They were overcome with their guilt and wanted forgiveness more than anything.

Then Edwards and others had the great privilege of preaching forgiveness of sins and the tremendous kindness and tenderness of a loving, forgiving God.

People came to Jesus seeking forgiveness of sins. Why don’t more people come to the church seeking that? Because we have become afraid of talking about sin. We are intimidated by our

culture.

And we can take a lesson from this paralytic. He came to Christ. There is a difference between wanting to be free from guilt feelings, and wanting to be forgiven. Selfishness and Pride says, “O how I wish I were off the hook – I wish I felt better” but love says, “O how I wish I had not offended the God I love!”

Jesus canceled this man’s sins. He separated them as far as the east is from the west. He buried them in the sea. Total, complete, permanent, absolute forgiveness.

And when Jesus uttered the words, “**You sins are forgiven.**” He must have felt a stab of pain in His great heart, because He knew that that forgiveness could never be given without the cross. By doing this, Jesus was necessitating the cross. When Jesus prayed in the Garden, “**If it is possible, let this cup pass from me**” it was not possible. Jesus made it impossible when He forgave.

I despise the frivolous attitude people have about forgiveness. People in the world live in sin and say, “God will forgive – nobody’s perfect.” Do you have any idea what it *costs* Him to

forgive you?

That's why I'm not wild about the term "pardon" or "absolution" to describe our forgiveness. It is true that we are pardoned in a legal, forensic sense, but that term implies nothing about what it costs. Forgiveness is better, because that is a term that refers to the cancellation of a debt. If the President or a Governor pardons someone, it costs him nothing, but when you forgive a debt, you absorb the loss.

Forgiveness means the cancellation of a debt – you absorb the loss.

Some of you may be holding a grudge – how can you do that?

We stand before God like the man in Mt.18.

- Cards
- Newsletters
- Baptism next week
- Be here next weeks about leadership/structure of CEFC
- Tonight
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BENEDICTION:

Eph.1:3-7 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has

blesed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. 4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. 7

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins