

Series: The Gospel of Mark
"Who Can Forgive Sins?" # 9
Mark 2:1-12
2-19-17 Sun PM

Mark has taken us through a glimpse of the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus. We come to a passage that deals with a healing but more importantly a spiritual healing, the forgiveness of sins.

The point of the passage is **not** four men bringing a man with palsy to Jesus (vs. 3-4), and we should also, but the passage is about the forgiveness of sins (vs. 5-12). To make the main point that we should bring people to Jesus, while true, misses the main point of who can forgive sins!

How can God be just and forgive sins? His justice was satisfied by His righteous Son who died as a substitute for sinners so sinful man could be reconciled to God (I John 2:1-2)

Forgiveness then, comes only by the death of Jesus on the cross and our faith in Him and his work. For Christ's sake we are forgiven.

TT- The passage before us tells of the Son's authority to forgive sins and that is the heart of the miracle in this passage.

The passage centers around three different characters: The crippled sinner [vs. 3-4], the caring Savior [v. 5], and the critical Scribes [vs. 6-11].

I. The Crippled Sinner (vs. 3-4).

Matthew, Mark and John all speak of this man. This mans story is noteworthy not only because of the determination by him and his friends in getting him to Jesus, but more importantly because of what Jesus did for him beyond healing him physically.

"The press or crowd" I have even heard this in sermons speaking of people or situations that keep us from getting people to Jesus. Again this misses the point of the passage and is bad exegesis and allegory.

I. The Crippled Sinner (vs. 3-4).

II. The Caring Savior (v. 5).

Everyone in the room saw the man's need of physical healing, but only Jesus saw the man's deeper need, Spiritual healing. To do that his sins had to be forgiven.

Jesus makes a shocking statement, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."
Forgiveness of sins is the only way we can be forgiven and reconciled to God.

2 Cor. 5:18-19, And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Divine forgiveness, by grace alone apart from human work or merit, distinguishes the true message of the gospel from every false system of self-righteousness and merit-based false religion.

The passage seems to indicate they a faith not only in Jesus to heal physically, but spiritually as well.

The crippled man saw himself as a guilty sinner in need of forgiveness. He understood that salvation is received by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus showed compassion and forgave the man his sins.

At that moment, Jesus forgave him of sin [pardon, send away] by divine grace. He was immediately delivered from a future in eternal hell to an eternal home in heaven!

I. The Crippled Sinner (vs. 3-4).

II. The Caring Savior (v. 5).

III. The Critical Scribes (vs. 6-11).

vs. 6-7- The Scribes were outraged because Jesus claimed a level of authority that belongs only to God, thus they called him a blasphemer.

First Century Jews believed in three levels of blasphemy:

1. Speaking evil of the law of God.
2. Speaking evil of God.
3. Claiming authority and equality of God.

vs. 8-9- Jesus demonstrated His deity in three ways:

1. He read their minds (v. 8).
2. He affirmed the truth that only God can forgive sins (vs. 9-10).
3. He backed up His claim by divine power (vs. 10-11). Both were beyond human ability. It was easier to say than do. The physical healing could be tested.

Jesus healed the man and proved his power over the effects of sin, thus his power to forgive sins.

Blasphemers can't read minds and can't forgive sins and validate it by healing a man.

Con: Note the crowd's surprise in v. 12.

According to Luke 5:25 the former cripple went home glorifying God at both healings.

1 Cor. 15:3-4, For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; (4) And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

Jesus can forgive sins for salvation and after salvation.