

PARALYTIC

Date: March 16, 2020

Scripture: Luke 5:18-25; Matthew 9:2-7

Good morning! My name is Matt Allen and I'm the student minister at the Baymeadows campus. This Lent season we are working through some of the miracles of Jesus, shared with us across the gospel accounts. We are looking at how each of these miracles point us to the greatest of all miracles, which is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The miracle we are focused on today is found in Luke 5:18-25 and Matthew 9:2-7

We'll look first at Luke chapter 5.

¹⁸ And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus, ¹⁹ but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus. ²⁰ And when he saw their faith, he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." ²¹ And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" ²² When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, "Why do you question in your hearts? ²³ Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? ²⁴ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the man who was paralyzed—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home." ²⁵ And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God.

Luke 5:18-25

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² And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." ³ And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." 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,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? ⁶ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said to the paralytic—"Rise, pick up your bed and go home." ⁷ And he rose and went home.

Matthew 9:2-7

In these passages we are picking it up during Jesus's ministry in Galilee, where Jesus spent most of His life and ministry. Specifically, here Jesus is in Capernaum.

This miracle starts with a physical need. A group of men bring to Jesus a paralytic. And as they walk up there are a ton of people! Imagine big crowds, a bunch of people, so they weren't able to get to Jesus. These men were desperate to get to Jesus, so much so that they began to climb up on the roof. Now houses in ancient Palestine typically had external stairs that lead to a flat roof. So they climbed up on the roof and let the paralytic down into the house where Jesus was.

Jesus saw their faith and said, "Man your sins are forgiven." This response that Jesus gave is surprising. The men who brought the paralytic are probably expecting Jesus to respond with a physical miracle, the physical healing of their friend. They've already heard and maybe they've already seen this miracles Jesus had been doing. Earlier in Matthew 8, Jesus had just healed a leper, He has just healed a servant who was paralyzed, He had just healed a woman who had a fever and He casted out

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demons. So that is probably what they are expecting, but instead of Jesus physically healing the paralytic, Jesus says, "Your sins are forgiven."

Part of what Jesus is saying here is that there is nothing more important than your soul and there is nothing more destructive than sin. Jesus looks at the paralytic and undoubtedly acknowledges his physical need, but responds first to his spiritual need. The truth is that the wages of sin is death. Jesus shows here that He is more concerned with this man's spiritual need over this man's physical need.

Now after hearing this, the religious leaders question Jesus and accuse Jesus of blasphemy. They ask, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" What they are saying is, only God can forgive sins and we believe that you are not God! These religious leaders often questioned and challenged Jesus. They knew the law better than anyone else and they taught the law. So when they hear this they think, "Woah this isn't right! God is the only one who can forgive sin."

But they are missing the point. Jesus isn't denying that only God can forgive sin, but what Jesus is declaring with this statement is that, "He is God." Jesus reveals His divine authority and declares He is God. Jesus, who is Himself God in human flesh, responds to them with, "I have the authority to forgive sins". And then Jesus looks at the paralytic tells him to stand up, pick up his bed and go home.

Not only does Jesus declare He has the power to forgive sin, He then displays this power by physically healing this paralytic. He looks at the paralyzed man and He says, "Rise". For maybe this man's entire life the word "rise" probably represented hopelessness, mockery and maybe even a feeling of abandonment from God. Now, because of Jesus, the word "rise" represents hope, it represents faith and it represents

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the power of God displayed right before their eyes. In that moment the paralytic is physically healed. Jesus, He first healed this man spiritually and then heals this man physically. Jesus displays His divine power to heal and forgive!

We all have needs. In fact some of us might be desperate for someone to meet this need just like the paralytic friends were desperate to get their paralyzed friend to Jesus. Maybe it's a physical need, like cancer or some other disease. Maybe it's a financial need, losing a job or maybe it's a debt that's hanging over us, or maybe it's relational need, it's a divorce or a broken friendship or a prodigal child. But just like the paralytic, our greatest need is that we are sinners and we need a Savior. We don't need Jesus to simply manage our circumstances; we need Him to save our souls.

Sin is our greatest problem and we are all desperate for someone to save us from it. In this miracle Jesus declares and displays His divine power. He declares with His mouth that He is the Savior of the world. He declares that He is God and He displays His power by healing the paralytic. He tells this man to stand up and the paralytic stands and walks.

As we look toward the resurrection, we celebrate that Jesus has the power to forgive sin. In fact, Jesus's death and resurrection proves His power over sin. Because sin itself demands a payment and the Bible is clear that the only payment that could satisfy sin is death. Jesus lived the life we could not live and He died the death that we should've died. Because of this, Jesus is the perfect payment of sin. Jesus is the propitiation of sin; He is the payment that satisfies forever and ever. Romans 10:9 says, "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

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Let's pray.

Father, thank You for the hope we have in You. Thank You for sending your Son, Jesus. We do not deserve Him. As we look toward the resurrection, we look back and we glorify You for Your power displayed in these accounts of the paralytic man. We read and we declare that You have the power to heal and the power to forgive sin and we declare that You are the One true God! I pray that You would forgive us of our sins and You would cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Thank You for being faithful. Our hope is in You. We love You and it's in Jesus name we pray. Amen.