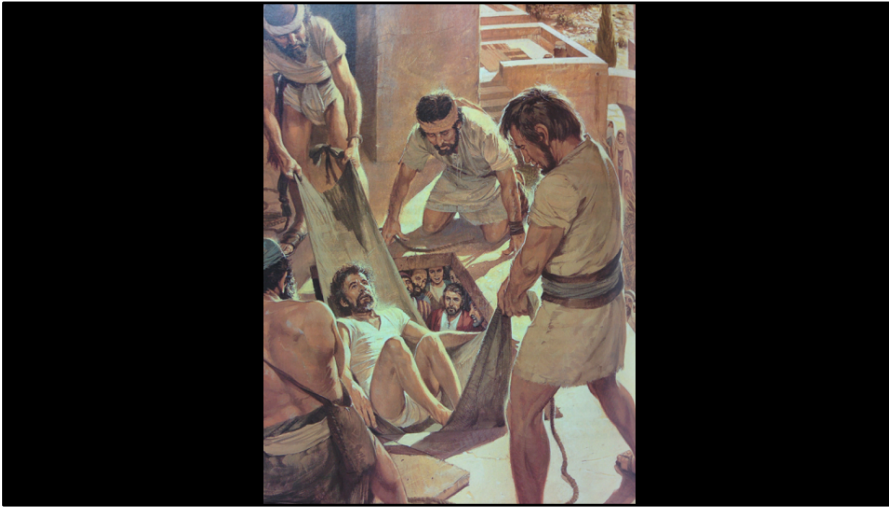


Today, let's begin by reading an account of when Jesus stirred up questions in the hearts of those who thought they had it all figured out.

-- Help to use the sermon notes page

-- Turn in our Bibles

TR: And picture what's happening . . .



. . . in this dramatic scene.

TR: Begin with Luke 5:17 . . .

Luke 5:17-18

3

On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal. ¹⁸And 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,

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: Verse 19

Luke 5:19-21

4

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. ²⁰And when he saw their faith, he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." ²¹And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: Verse 22 . . .

Luke 5:22-24

5

When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, "Why do you question in your hearts? ²³Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? ²⁴But 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."

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: Verse 25 . . .

Luke 5:25-26

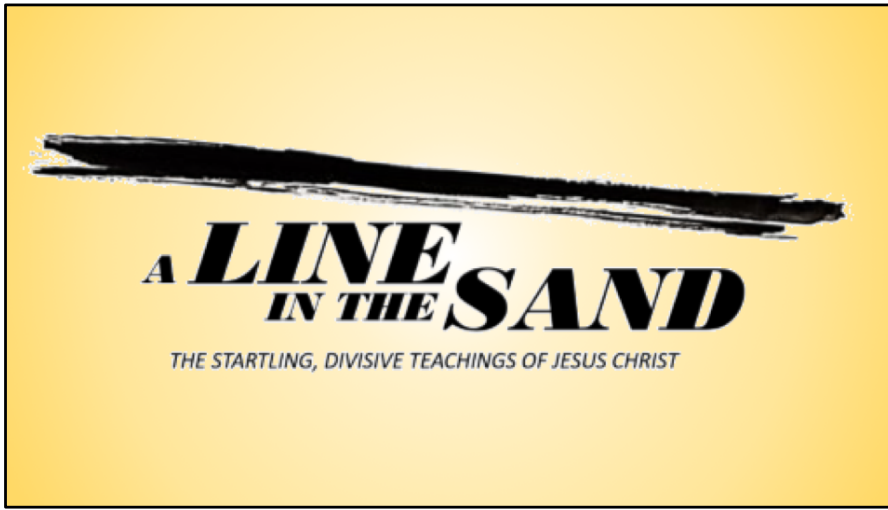
6

And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God. ²⁶And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: How is it that this passage again shows us that Jesus draws . . .



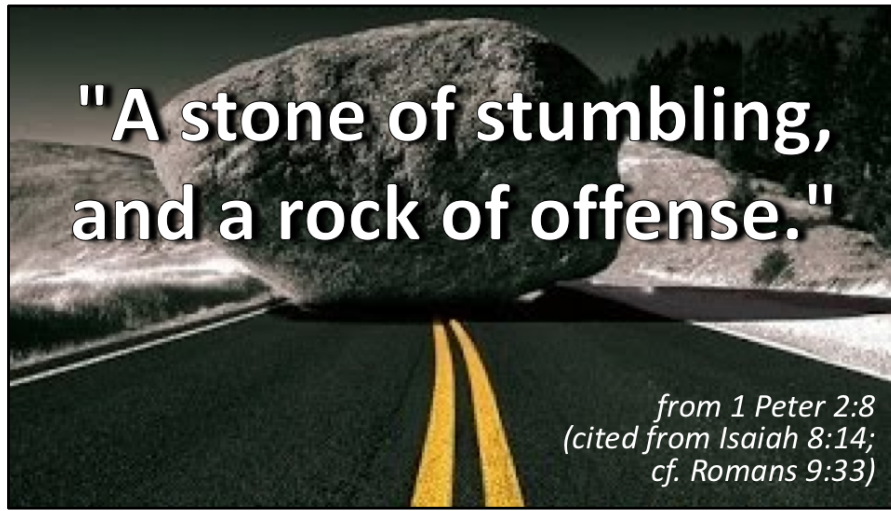
... a line in the sand?

-- Last week we pictured Jesus drawing that line with the tip of a sword . .

TR: This week, I imagine . . .



, , , one of the poles of the stretcher being dragged along.
-- READ SLIDE
TR: The true, biblical Jesus is . . .



. . . READ SLIDE

-- Though many sanitize Him or in some way try to remove the offense of Jesus, we really can't and be faithful to the evidence.

TR: But, did the passage we just read offend you? Would it offend most people?

WOULD WE BE OFFENDED TODAY?

10

**It's one thing to say Jesus draws a line in the sand, but to tell someone they are forgiven . . .
-- . . . what's the big deal?**

TR: Perhaps many wouldn't be offended today because . . .

WOULD WE BE OFFENDED TODAY?

11

- Maybe not, with our **weak** notion of forgiveness.

. . . of our weak notion of forgiveness.

-- We imagine that someone should forgive for their own benefit . . . not drink poison and watch another die.

-- We think forgiveness is letting go of malicious intent and a desire for revenge.

-- We almost consider forgiveness a “zen thing” where we are not above the pain and emotion of it all.

-- So, if these unbiblical notions are the colors that we use to paint what forgiveness is, then Jesus’ words are maybe confusing but not offensive.

TR: But, then I wonder if we would be offended if . . .

WOULD WE BE OFFENDED TODAY?

- Maybe not, with our weak notion of forgiveness.
- Maybe so, if heinous sins against us were unjustly forgiven by **another**.

. . . a heinous sin against us was casually “forgiven” by another person who wasn’t even part of the situation.
-- Picture being in court and seeing the man who raped you on the stand. Suddenly, one of the jurors blurts out, “I forgive you for raping this woman.” What would be our response then?
TR: Remember, the original context of Jesus’ words was in the midst of mostly biblically literate folks, especially the Pharisees and Scribes.

WHY WERE THEY SO OFFENDED

BACK THEN?

- They assumed a connection between sickness and sin.

That makes it easier to understand why they were so offended back then.

- For one thing, they assumed a connection between sickness and sin. All sickness was seen as caused by sin.
 - Jesus, elsewhere, makes clear that it is not always a direct connection. But, He never denies the indirect one.
 - Many of them would have assumed that this man was guilty of some sin that directly resulted in his being paralyzed.
- TR: They also believed . . .**

**WHY WERE THEY SO OFFENDED
BACK THEN?**

- They assumed a connection between sickness and sin.
- They believed that **only** God could forgive.

. . . that ONLY God could forgive, in the ultimate sense of the word.

-- We might be able to extend a measure of forgiveness to someone who has sinned directly against us, but ONLY God has the ultimate authority to forgive.

TR: Back in verse 23 . . .

Luke 5:22-24

When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, "Why do you question in your hearts? ²³Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? ²⁴But 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."

ESV

... we see Jesus asking ... READ SLIDE (Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'?)
-- I always thought Jesus was suggesting, which is easier to SAY, and that may be the point.

-- But, one scholar that I respect, talking about the parallel passage in Matthew's gospel, suggests that the "easier" to DO is to heal someone, rather than forgive them.

TR: Either way, Jesus offends them because they understood

...

**WHY WERE THEY SO OFFENDED
BACK THEN?**

- They assumed a connection between sickness and sin.
- They believed that only God could forgive.
- They understood all sin is ultimately **against** God

. . . that all sin is ultimately against God.

TR: As the famous Psalm that speaks of King David's repentance and confession for his sin with Bathsheba says . . .

For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

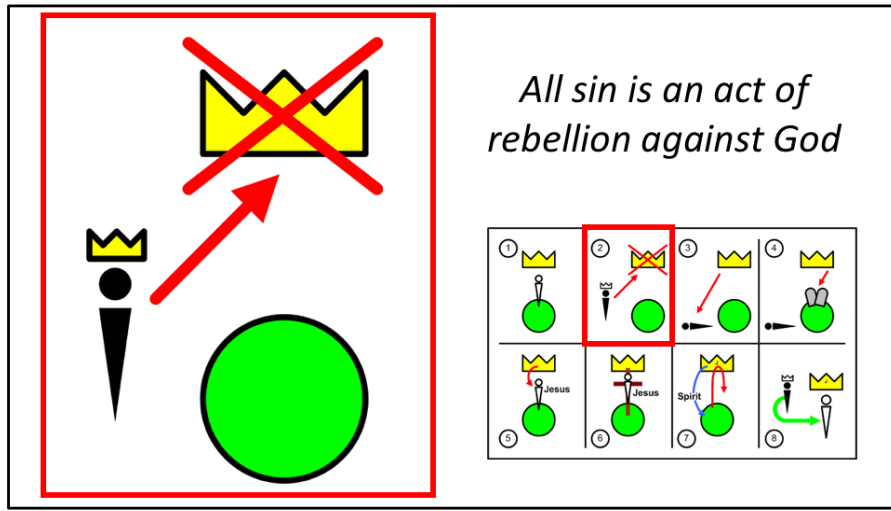
⁴ **Against you, you only, have I sinned**
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.

ESV

READ SLIDE

-- All sin is sin because it violates God's law.

TR: Last week, we reviewed the 8 Simple Drawings . . .



And, drawing 2 made it clear that all sin is an act of rebellion against God.

TR: So, why were they so offended back then?

**WHY WERE THEY SO OFFENDED
BACK THEN?**

- They assumed a connection between sickness and sin.
- They believed that only God could forgive.
- They understood all sin is ultimately against God
- Because Jesus was making a claim to be **God**.

**Because they figured out that Jesus was claiming to be God.
TR: Look back at verse 21 . . .**

Luke 5:19-21

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. ²⁰And when he saw their faith, he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." ²¹And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "**Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?**"

ESV

READ SLIDE ("Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?")

TR: Let's zoom in a bit in our notes . . .

**WHY WERE THEY SO OFFENDED
BACK THEN?**

- Because Jesus was making a claim to be God.
 - * Son of Man (see Daniel 7:13)

Jesus was claiming to be God by saying that this man's sins were forgiven him.

TR: He also pointed to His divinity by calling Himself the "Son of Man."

Daniel 7:13b-14a

. . . and behold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like a **son of man**,
and he came to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him.

¹⁴ And to him was given dominion
and glory and a kingdom,
that all peoples, nations, and languages
should serve him . . .

ESV

This is a title they would have known was from Daniel 7. It is one of Jesus' favorite titles for Himself.

-- While it could just refer to any human, Jesus' use makes clear He wants us to think of this OT prophecy.

-- READ SLIDE

-- (rest of verse 14) = "his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed."

TR: Jesus underlines His claim by working a great miracle.

WHY WERE THEY SO OFFENDED BACK THEN?

- Because Jesus was making a claim to be God.
 - * Son of Man (see Daniel 7:13)
 - * The **miracles** of Jesus were evidence of His claims (see John 10:38)

The miracles of Jesus are not just displays of power but rather signs that are confirming His claims.

-- Some want to think that there were no miracles, just the growth of legend and myth about a good teacher named Jesus.

-- But, that is not what the line in the sand of the historical evidence says.

TR: As John records . . .

John 10:36-38

. . . do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? ³⁷If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; ³⁸but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, **believe the works**, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father."

ESV

**. . . an even clearer claim of Jesus to be God . . . READ SLIDE
-- They were offended . . . but not all of them.
TR: Look again at the last verse of our text . . .**

Luke 5:25-26

And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God. ²⁶And **amazement** seized them all, and they **glorified God** and were **filled with awe**, saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."

ESV

READ SLIDE (verse 26 only)

-- One of the parallel passages says that "fear" gripped them. They were "astonished."

-- They were not dealing with some ordinary traveling Rabbi .

..

-- Jesus was and is much more.

-- Jesus is God and He has the authority to forgive our sins.

Being made right with God is what we need most as we face the reality of death in this fragile life.

TR: This passage brought another question to my mind . . .

**HOW WAS & IS JESUS'
FORGIVENESS RECEIVED?**

. . . HOW WAS & IS JESUS' FORGIVENESS RECEIVED?

-- For those of us who understand that Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins, how is it that Jesus could forgive this man BEFORE the payment was made?

TR: How could Jesus be . . .

**HOW WAS & IS JESUS'
FORGIVENESS RECEIVED?**

- Is Jesus both **just** AND the justifier? (see
Romans 3:26)

. . . both JUST and THE JUSTIFIER?

TR: I'm thinking of the Apostle Paul's teaching in Romans 3 . . .

Romans 3:24-26

. . . for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶It was to show his righteousness at the present time, **so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.**

ESV

READ SLIDE

-- Jesus' blood was the propitiation, the payment that turned away the righteous wrath of God.

-- So, God was **JUST** because the sins were paid for; **AND** He was the **JUSTIFIER** because through grace He declared us right with Him.

-- Before that price was paid, as it says in verse 25, God in His divine forbearance passed over former sins.

-- In a sense, they were put on a credit account.

TR: The text here tells us how people received that forgiveness . . .

Romans 3:24-26

. . . for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, **to be received by faith**. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

ESV

. . . they received it BY FAITH.

-- Even as Jesus saw the faith of the men carrying the paralytic . . . and probably the faith of the paralytic himself.

TR: So, how were . . .

HOW WAS & IS JESUS' FORGIVENESS RECEIVED?

- Is Jesus both just AND the justifier? (see Romans 3:26)
- How were people forgiven and justified before Jesus died on the cross and rose again? (see Hebrews 9:24—10:4)

. . . (How were) people forgiven and justified before Jesus died on the cross and rose again?

-- By faith, looking forward to God's promised provision.

TR: Too many of us still think like I thought when I was a young believer . . .

Hebrews 10:1-2

For since the law **has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities**, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.
²Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins?

ESV

**. . . that before Christ people were saved by either keeping the Law or at least through the offerings of animals.
-- But, Hebrews 10 reminds us that, “the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities,”
-- If the offerings cleansed people, they would no longer have a consciousness of sins.
TR: Verse 3 continues . . .**

But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. ⁴For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

ESV

READ SLIDE

-- How said that so many of us drift back into having a consciousness of sins because we take our eyes off Jesus . . . true God come in human flesh to show God's righteousness and His redemption . . . through the just and justifying forgiveness He offered.

TR; It would be wrong for us to see the line in the sand drawn by the pole of the stretcher as it is dragged away by the healed and forgiven man . . .

HOW CAN I RECEIVE JESUS'
FORGIVENESS?

33

. . . and not ask another follow-up question, “HOW CAN I RECEIVE JESUS’ FORGIVENESS?”

TR: Jesus is the rock, we either stand on Him or are crushed by Him.

HOW CAN I RECEIVE JESUS' FORGIVENESS?

- We must **believe**, receiving His forgiveness by trusting what Jesus said. (see Rom. 10:9-13)

READ SLIDE – (We must believe, receiving His forgiveness by trusting what Jesus said.)

TR: Romans 10 makes it so clear . . .

. . . because, 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. ¹⁰For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: Verse 11 . . .

For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." ¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. ¹³For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

ESV

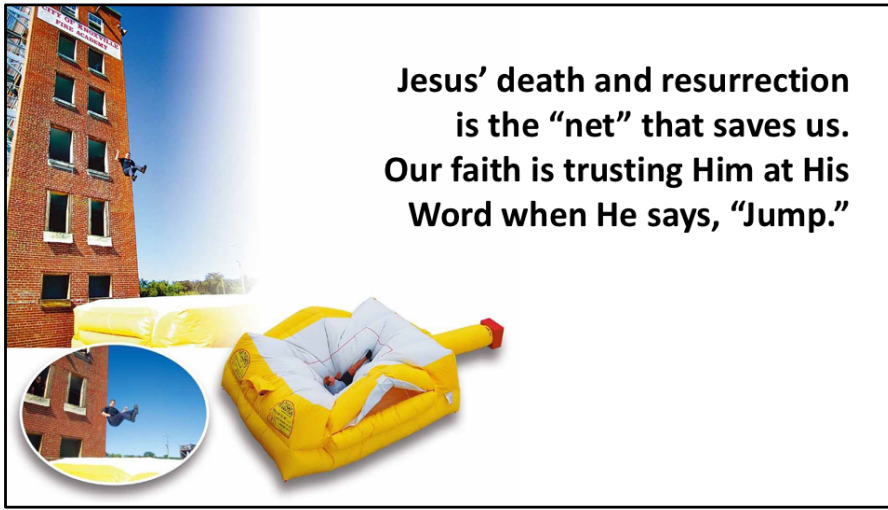
READ SLIDE

-- Have you confessed with your mouth? And then publicly proclaimed that confession through baptism?

-- Have you believed in your heart . . . trusting Jesus' words and believing on those because of His miraculous works, raising up a paralyzed man and being raised up from the dead never to die again?

-- Have you believed in Him and called on the name of Jesus, Who is Lord?

TR: It is not that our faith is what saves us . . .



. . . any more than just jumping from a burning building saves us. If there is no "net" then there is only the horror of 9/11, with people jumping from the Twin Towers.

-- In a sense, we are saved THROUGH faith, not BY faith. Faith is not the net that catches us. Faith is our willingness to trust God when He says trust me and jump.

TR: Many of us have taken Jesus at His word. Beyond reminding us of Who Jesus is and how we received His forgiveness by faith . . .

HOW CAN I RECEIVE JESUS' FORGIVENESS?

- We must believe, receiving His forgiveness by trusting what Jesus said. (see Rom. 10:9-13)
- We must **hear** about Jesus (see Rom. 10:14-15)

**. . . I want to remind us that we needed to HEAR about Jesus . .
. and others need to hear what Jesus' said.
TR: The next verses in Romans 10 say . . .**

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never **heard**? And how are they to **hear** without someone preaching? ¹⁵And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"

ESV

READ SLIDE

- There are so many who really do not understand Who Jesus really is.
 - May we have beautiful feet and tell them the story . . . even the story from Luke 5 . . . and ask them why people seemed to be so offended back then.
 - THEN follow the leading of the Spirit to talk about Who Jesus claimed to be.
- TR: And, with gentleness and respect, yet with decisive clarity . . .



. . . draw a line in the sand?



END SLIDE (Blank)