

# **Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion**

**Date** : 16 March 2025  
**Sermon Title** : Jesus: The Stories - The Paralytic  
**Speaker** : Rev Kenneth Huang  
**Text** : Mark 2:1-12

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In the previous sermons in this series, “Jesus – The Stories”, we have established that Jesus is the Son of God and Messiah because of God’s approval of Jesus:

- (1) at His water baptism (*Matt 3:17*),
- (2) at His turning of water into wine (*John 2:11*),
- (3) at His being able to give living water to those who believe in Him, such as the Samaritan woman (*John 4:13-14, John 4:42*), and
- (4) at His feeding of the 5000 (*John 6:14*)

Now, in Mark’s Gospel, with the backdrop of Jesus showing His power over demons (1:21-28) and sickness (1:29-45), from Mark 2:1-12 we read of Jesus’ power to forgive sin. The forgiveness of sins is a primary goal of Jesus’ ministry as the Son of Man, as He preached to, and healed, those who would both believe in Him and do as He instructed.

## **2 issues before us in Mark 2:1-12**

- (1) Did Jesus have the authority to forgive sins as He claimed? And if so,**
- (2) How could He prove it?**

In answer to issue (1), the Bible says a definite “Yes!” – that is, Jesus does have the authority to forgive sins as He claimed. There is no doubt about this.

Then, in answer to issue (2), Jesus indeed proved that He did have the authority to forgive sins, after He had told the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven”, when He healed the paralytic and made him rise up, roll up his mat and walk out of the house in full view of everyone (v.12). And the “everyone” stated in v.12 included especially some of the “teachers of the law” (that is, the Pharisees) who were clearly the sceptics present, and, the paralytic’s 4 faithful friends who had worked so hard to bring him before Jesus because they had faith that Jesus could heal their friend!

**BUT we may be asking, ‘How did the healing of a very extreme and severe physical medical condition – paralysis – (that had no known permanent cure then) show or prove that Jesus could indeed forgive and heal a very extreme and severe spiritual fundamental condition – sin – (that also had no known permanent cure then)’?**

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It did so because we all know that just claiming that one can forgive sins is easy to do because forgiveness of sins is something that takes place on the inside of a person. Whether it does or does not take place cannot be easily seen or verified immediately. But if it does take place, it can only really be “proven” to have taken place after some time has passed, that is, that person shows substantive and real changes in his or her values, lifestyle, treatment of others, in that they start living for God’s values and not their own selfish ones, they start treating people well rather than just taking advantage of them, for example.

Claiming that one is able to effect healing of a very extreme and severe physical medical condition – in this case, paralysis, as mentioned had no known permanent cure then, if the one making the claim were to fail in effecting the healing – resulting in the ill person being devastated and sadly continuing to not be cured, and in this case, the paralytic remaining bed bound, after his hopes were ironically “raised” only to be “let down” – it would result in the person who made the claim to be able to heal to be shown up to be either a liar or a lunatic. And in both cases, it would surely result in that person’s reputation and integrity being totally discredited.

BUT if the person’s claim to be able to effect physical healing was real and proven true, it would then be indisputable proof that that person indeed had the authority to forgive sins as claimed – exactly as Jesus did and had! And it would then definitely prove not only that Jesus had the authority to effect healing as well as to forgive sins, and that He was not a liar or a lunatic. It would in addition also prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus was able to both heal and forgive sin only because He was in fact the Lord, indeed God, as the Pharisees themselves said, “Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

And that is why, in answer to the sceptical Pharisees, when they were grumbling out loud, “Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (v.7), Jesus asked them in reply in v.9, “Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’?” The answer was obviously, “Your sins are forgiven”, for the very reasons I earlier mentioned, and so, by effecting the healing of the paralytic, Jesus proved, beyond a doubt, that He was “the Son of Man” with the “authority on earth to forgive sins.” (v.10). And as result, the accusation by the Pharisees that He was guilty of blasphemy was totally untrue.

The term “Son of Man” – is clearly a reference back to Daniel 7:13-14 where the coming King of Glory, coming to judge the world, has the title Son of Man. Jesus claimed that He was the Son of Man, the Son of God, who had the authority to forgive sin.

**\*\* Only God could forgive sins, and Jesus proved that He is God and able to forgive sins as He healed the paralytic!**

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Matthew Henry put it best, “As God, Jesus proves His power to forgive sin, by demonstrating His power to cure the man sick of the paralysis!”

## 2 additional issues from Mark 2:1-12

- **Why did Jesus focus on forgiving the paralytic of his sin first rather than trying to heal him of his obvious physical ailment?**

It was because as someone rightly said, “Jesus knew what the paralytic’s real need was and what his greatest need was. What good was it if the man had two whole legs and walked right into hell with them. Whenever there is a problem, almost always, sin is the real problem. Jesus got right to the problem.”

Biblical Commentator Lane affirms this when he said, “*Jesus’ pronouncement of pardon (to sin) is the recognition that man can be genuinely whole only when the breach occasioned by sin has been healed through God’s forgiveness of sins*”, for the only healing that truly matters is spiritual, for it is the healing that lasts forever!

Jesus did not mean that the paralytic was especially sinful or that his paralysis was directly caused by sin, as seems to be what people may have commonly thought then. Even the disciples asked Jesus in John 9:2 regarding the blind man, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Again, what Jesus was doing was addressing the paralytic’s greatest need and the common root of all pain and suffering – man’s sinful condition. And so, Jesus focused first on forgiving the paralytic of his sins. Warren Wiersbe, the Biblical Scholar, said, “*Forgiveness is the greatest miracle that Jesus ever performed. It meets the greatest need; it costs the greatest price; and it brings the greatest blessing and the most lasting results.*”

- **How does one have access to the forgiveness that Jesus can and does offer?**

The first 5 words of v.5 says, “*When Jesus saw their faith...*”

It was the fact that both the paralytic and his 4 faithful friends had such deep faith in Jesus that He could heal the paralytic that they, as stated in vv.3-4, not only brought the paralytic all the way to the home where Jesus was preaching in Capernaum, they were also not deterred by the crowd that blocked their access to Jesus when they reached the home. They, in fact, created their own access to Jesus as they “*made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on.*”

Making an opening in the roof was in fact extremely difficult. According to Hughes: “*The typical Syrian roof was constructed of timbers laid parallel to each other about two or three feet apart. Then crosswise over the timbers, sticks were laid close to each other, thus forming the basic roof. Upon this was laid reeds, branches of trees, and thistles. The whole thing was overlaid with about a foot of earth, which was then packed down to resist water. All told, the roof was about two feet thick.*”

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## **Faith in Action**

The four friends exercised real faith in action:

- (1) They believed in Jesus;
- (2) They brought the person in need to Jesus; and
- (3) They broke down barriers barring them from Jesus

All three steps evidenced REAL FAITH being ACTED OUT!

Cole was right when he said, *“Faith, unless it shows its reality by action, is unreal and self-deceptive; and therefore cannot be expected to achieve results.” This thinking reflects what James 2:26 states – that “faith without deeds is dead.”*

## **The faith shown and exercised by the paralytic**

Jesus saw his faith that he agreed with the plan of his 4 friends in bringing him all the way to see Jesus and as a result, Jesus forgave his sins. It also took faith for him to believe and do exactly what Jesus told him to take up his mat and go home. (v.11)

## **Wholeness and Wholesomeness**

Through the forgiveness of sins and the healing of the paralytic, Jesus effected God’s Shalom that is WHOLENESS and WHOLESOMENESS to the paralytic.

- Wholeness as the paralytic could now walk on his own, when just an instance before, he could not.
- Wholesomeness as the paralytic was now a forgiven child of God, when just an instance before, he needed forgiveness of his sins.

These are the 2 things we want to experience in our lives, to be made whole as a person and live a life of wholesomeness before God and others. We can have them in Jesus Christ as long as we have faith or trust in Him to forgive our sins and are willing to do as Jesus tells us to.

## **Questions we may be asking:**

- (1) **Why do ailments/sicknesses take place in our lives?**

If ailments and sicknesses are not a result of our sinful living due to our stupidity, evil desires, irresponsible behaviour, etc, then we remember what John 9:3 states, *“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.”* This means that every time we fall sick and we recover and are healed, be it due to medication, proper lifestyle, direct intervention by God, let us remember to always attribute our recovery, our healing, to God and give Him praise. For all good things come from Him.

- (2) **What if healing does not happen?**

Let us remember that Jesus was not healed from the wounds He suffered on the way to the cross and while He was on the cross. *He was only “healed” upon His resurrection, after He conquered sin and death.* For many of us, this too will take

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place in our lives in that we too may not be healed while on earth, but we will be in Heaven! So, in the meantime, remember 2 Cor 12:8-9, where Paul shared, *“Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”*

## **CONCLUSION**

Jesus, the Son of Man, the Son of God, has the authority to forgive sins. The question facing us, especially those who have yet to acknowledge Jesus as Lord is whether we will show our faith in Him for Him to forgive us of our sins, the way the paralytic and the four friends did. Let us also come to Jesus to be healed by him because only in Jesus can we have wholeness and wholesomeness in our lives. And let us also bring the Gospel to those who still need their sins forgiven, to help them know Jesus and be healed by Him. Let us remember that only in Jesus can we be made WHOLESOME and receive WHOLESOMENESS in our lives!

### **A. Review Sermon Application**

***Purpose: Reflect on how you have been embodying God's truth.***

- 1a. How successful have you been in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do for the last FaithWalk!?
- 1b. What were some challenges you faced and what would you like to celebrate?
  
2. Appoint someone to read Mark 2:1-12 slowly.
  - a. Why did the Pharisees react the way they did in Mark 2:7?
  - b. Are you convinced that Jesus is the Messiah from His response to the Pharisees and in the healing of the paralytic?
    - (i) If yes, what then should your response be to Jesus?
    - (ii) If not, what can you do to know Jesus better?

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## **B. Relate Sermon Content**

***Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.***

3. The paralytic and his four friends had exemplified faith in action.
  - a. (i) When was the last time you exercised real faith (in Jesus) in action?
    - (ii) What was the outcome?
  - b. Have there been occasions in the past where, in retrospect, or even now, that you should have shown/show more faith in Jesus?
  
4. Jesus had the authority to forgive sins and the power to heal but He focussed on forgiving the paralytic of his sin first rather than trying to heal him of his obvious physical ailment.
  - a. Which do we usually ask from God; to be forgiven of our sin or to be healed from our disease?
  - b. What does this tell you about man?
  - c. What does Jesus' focus tell you about God?
  - d. How can your group members encourage or help one another to be aligned to Jesus' focus for your lives?

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## **C. Testimonies, Prayers and Action**

***Purpose: Give glory to God, seek Him and embody His Word.***

5. Share your personal testimony on a situation when you had experienced God's miraculous physical healing of forgiveness in your life. How has that impacted your relationship with God?

OR

Give thanks to God for His power and authority over sins and illnesses, that you may have your sins forgiven and be reconciled to God, and your illnesses be used to display His works whether you are healed or not, because His grace is sufficient for you.

6. Pray to truly believe in Jesus and have the courage to take action in faith, breaking down barriers that bar you from Jesus. Quieten your heart to hear from God if there are areas you need to seek His forgiveness. Confess, repent and ask for a discerning heart so you can hear God's calling and instructions, to carry out what God wants you to do as His forgiven child.

Optional items:

Suggested worship songs:

1. That's the Power – Hillsong  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYjppzHLt2s&ab\\_channel=HillsongWorshipResources](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pYjppzHLt2s&ab_channel=HillsongWorshipResources)
2. You are God Alone - Phillips, Craig & Dean  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOargNFidD4&ab\\_channel=IntegrityMusic](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOargNFidD4&ab_channel=IntegrityMusic)
3. Way Maker – Leeland  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29lxnsqOkmQ&ab\\_channel=IntegrityMusic](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29lxnsqOkmQ&ab_channel=IntegrityMusic)

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