

DIVE DEEPER

READ Mark 2:1-12 (NIV)

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. 2 They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. 4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

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

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? 9 Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk?' 10 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the man, 11 "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." 12 He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

THE FUN WORDS:

› (v. 1) **He had come home** - (ἐν οἴκῳ [en oikōi]). More exactly, at home, in the home of Peter, which is now presumed to be also the home of Jesus.

› (v. 2) **No room left, not even outside the door** - (ὥστε μηκετι χωρειν μηδε τα προς την θυραν [hōste mēketi chōrein mēde ta pros tēn thuran]). Another graphic detail seen through Peter's eyes. This house door apparently opened into the street, not into a court as in the larger houses. The house was packed inside and there was a jam outside.

› (v. 4) **They made an opening in the roof** - (ἀπεστεγάσαν την στεγην [apestegasan tēn stegēn]). Literally, "they unroofed the roof." A modern roof would be untiled or unshingled; but an oriental roof would have to be dug to make such an opening as was required. A composition of mortar, tar, ashes, and sand is spread upon the roofs, and rolled hard, and grass grows in the crevices.... In some cases, as in this, stone slabs are laid across the joists.

› **Four men cause a massive amount of damage to the roof of Peter's house (and Jesus' home), yet he doesn't scold them, nor scold the crowd for not making a way for the sick to get to him for healing. Instead, he addresses the paralytic with kindness. What does that tell you about God?**

› (v. 5) **Son, your sins are forgiven** - "Son" is teknon (τεκνον), means "child," and is used as a term of kindly address, even to adults. **Forgiven** - (ἀφίημι [aphiēmi]) Literally: "let the pot drop,

YES • NO • MAYBE

1. Most of the people sitting near me stop when they are confronted with a major challenge.
2. Life's obstacles don't slow me down. I enjoy demolishing them!
3. Our sins cause diseases.
4. God has an authority problem in our churches.
5. God needs us all to be healed of our paralysis today.



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DIVE DEEPER (CONTINUED...)

leave, let go.” Found in the Rosetta stone: “total remission” of certain taxes.

¿ Why do you think Jesus starts the healing of the man by forgiving him? What do you think Jesus is trying to show about his character here?

› (v. 6) **Sitting there, thinking to themselves** - (ἐκεῖ καθημενοι και διαλογιζομενοι ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν [ekei kathēmenoi kai dialogizomenoi en tais kardiais autōn]). These scribes (and Pharisees, Luke 5:21) were there to cause trouble, to pick flaws in the teaching and conduct of Jesus. His popularity and power had aroused their jealousy. There is no evidence that they spoke aloud the murmur in their hearts.

¿ Jesus let his greatest critics sit close to him and take the seats of those who believed in him, but couldn't get in because of the crowd. What does that tell you about God?

› (v. 7) **This fellow** - In Jewish culture, if you were really mad at someone, you would refuse to say his name. **He's blaspheming!** (βλασφημεῖ [blasphēmei]). Literally means injurious speech or slander. Apart from the act of absolution on the Day of Atonement, not even the chief priest could forgive sins, or give promise of such, whether individually or corporately.

¿ What does it tell you about God that Jesus was willing to injure and slander the hard and fast image that the church had formed of God?

› (v. 9) **Which is easier to say?** - (Τί ἐστὶν εὐκοπώτερον [Ti estin eukopoteron]). This is a riddle. Only God could do either. Thus neither one is easy to say. Jesus shows that neither saying is difficult for Him since He speaks with the authority of His Father. Everyone present shares the assumption that healing is easier to do; in their view, many can heal, but only God can forgive. They do not consider it blasphemy for someone to make a healing pronouncement, because healing is not usurping a divine prerogative. To pronounce a man forgiven is another matter.

¿ What does this show about God's concern for your total healing?

› (v. 10) **Authority** - (ἐξουσία [exousia]), delegated authority. Jesus can heal a man of physical paralysis; the larger question is whether he can heal the scribes of spiritual paralysis. The scribes are no less dependent on Jesus than is the paralytic for the work of God, but their learning and status make them less aware of their need for it. Jesus wants them to know, that is to experience firsthand, the authority by which he forgives sins.

¿ How do we need to acknowledge more God's authority?

NOTES

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MY PRAYER

1. How am I letting obstacles come between me and God?
2. Am I open to letting God forgive and heal me completely. What might be the things still paralyzing me?
3. What do I understand more clearly about God's character now?