

March 25, 2017 – Elmont Baptist Church

Message Series: The Gospel of Mark

Week 10: “...Jesus Saw Their Faith...”

Text: Mark 2:1-12

We have launched into unpacking and understanding the Book of Mark. By the time we are done, we will have read every verse and unpacked every passage. Here’s a little background – the author is Mark, or John Mark. Mark served as Peter’s interpreter, and is giving us Peter’s account of the life and ministry of Jesus. This book was written about AD 53-57, making it the first of the four Gospels to be written and the fifth earliest book in the New Testament to be written.

Mark’s audience is Romans believers, and as theologian Danny Akin says, “he is telling them that Jesus is the Messiah King and suffering servant who actively ministers on our behalf and gives his life as a ransom for many.”

Mark records more miracles and actions of Jesus than direct teachings and parables, but whenever Jesus is doing anything, He is teaching us something. So we will look at another one of the healing miracles of Jesus today, and see what He is teaching us.

Let These Things Sink In

✓ **Jesus is Preaching the Word – v. 2**

- **Not performing miracles**
- **But preaching Good News**

What Jesus is doing here is important. The “word” that Jesus is preaching to them is most likely what is in 1:15 – “the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” Again, Jesus didn’t come primarily to relieve earthly discomforts, but to remove eternal death. He didn’t preach a message of miracles and healing leading to prosperity here, but one of repentance and faith leading to life everlasting. If we are not careful, we can want Jesus to do the “miraculous” for our “moment” and miss the message that will save our souls forever.

✓ **Jesus Can See Their Faith – v. 5**

- **Not just knowing or feeling**
- **But action fueled by conviction**

In this passage, like in Hebrews 11, faith is visible. Faith always has an object – who or what you believe in, and produces actions that are seen. Faith is not void of knowing and feeling, but it doesn’t stop there. These friends believe Jesus (they know), they love their friend (they feel), and that conviction fuels their action – going to great length, trouble, and

vandalism to bring this man to Jesus. Their faith was visible by them doing very ordinary things – carrying, digging, lowering. What about our faith? Conviction enough to act with such boldness, or even to do the very ordinary. Visible enough that God would change someone’s eternity? Some reading and a conversation with someone smarter than me, helped me to better see the link between Jesus’ preaching and the visible faith of these friends. Jesus preaches repentance and faith, they believe and care enough to act, and then...

✓ **Jesus Forgives Sin – v. 5**

- **Not earned or worked for**
- **But freely and fully given**

If you’ve heard or read this story before – conclusion: they wanted a miracle of healing for their friend. Could be. More likely connection – they heard Jesus preaching entrance into Kingdom of God by repentance and faith, and wanted their paralyzed friend to hear this eternity changing message. They, nor the paralyzed man, are shocked when Jesus says, “your sins are forgiven”. Why? Because that is likely what they brought him to Jesus for in the first place.

He does nothing to earn forgiveness. Can’t even walk. Beautiful picture of us. By Jesus saying this, He claimed equality with God – blasphemous to the scribes. Confirmed deity by knowing their thoughts and by display of divine power.

The crushing of sin is better than mere improvement of circumstances. Jesus values the eternal over the temporal. What He is doing in areas you cannot see is always bigger than the things you can see. If we saw someone paralyzed walk, we would forever be amazed, but someone being eternally forgiven is infinitely more miraculous.

Bottom line: We have a God who can do the miraculous for your moment, but may choose not to, but He will do the miraculous for your eternity as He promised to for those who trust Jesus. Do we believe that and care enough about others to bring them to Jesus?

Thinking it Through...

- ✓ **Do I believe in the Gospel for me and for others?**
- ✓ **Can anyone see my faith? How far will I go to bring someone nearer to Jesus?**
- ✓ **Am I so concerned with my “right now” that I’m often oblivious to eternity for me and for others?**

Storying Mark 2:1-12

The parallels in this passage about how Jesus heals and how Jesus saves are wonderful for us.

- **Questions**

- **Observation:** (emphasize that these are rather obvious answers)
 - In what town is Jesus?
 - What is Jesus doing?
 - Add any other observation questions you would like to
- **Interpretation:**
 - What is Jesus most likely preaching?
 - Why did these friends bring this man to Jesus? (2 options)
 - What is the object of these friend's faith?
 - Why are the scribes so frustrated with Jesus and what He said?
 - How does Jesus prove He has the power to forgive sin?
- **Application:** Use the "Thinking it Through" questions as needed
 - How was Jesus' teaching more profitable than His healing ministry?*
 - How does our forgiving people differ from Jesus forgiving people?
 - Is there a tension in having faith in God's ability through us and us being persistent to get something done?*
 - How can our faith lead to God working in someone else?

*Paraphrased from *Christ-Centered Exposition* by Daniel Akin