

Read Mark 2:1-12

- 1 When Jesus returned to Capernaum several days later, the news spread quickly that he was back home.
- 2 Soon the house where he was staying was so packed with visitors that there was no more room, even outside the door. While he was preaching God's word to them,
- 3 four men arrived carrying a paralyzed man on a mat.
- 4 They couldn't bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, so they dug a hole through the roof above his head. Then they lowered the man on his mat, right down in front of Jesus.
- 5 Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "My child, your sins are forgiven."
- 6 But some of the teachers of religious law who were sitting there thought to themselves,
- 7 "What is he saying? This is blasphemy! Only God can forgive sins!"
- 8 Jesus knew immediately what they were thinking, so he asked them, "Why do you question this in your hearts?"
- 9 Is it easier to say to the paralyzed man 'Your sins are forgiven,' or 'Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk'?
- 10 So I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins." Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said,
- 11 "Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!"
- 12 And the man jumped up, grabbed his mat, and walked out through the stunned onlookers. They were all amazed and praised God, exclaiming, "We've never seen anything like this before!"

How would you describe the friends carrying the paralyzed man on the mat (vv. 2-5)? True friends.... committed friends. They were desperate to get their friend healed. And they had great faith in Jesus.

What did Jesus tell the paralyzed man (v. 5)? His sins were forgiven.

What do you think his friends must have thought? They wanted him to walk, not to be forgiven! But Jesus knew what every man's real and greatest need was. We all need God's forgiveness most of all.

Jesus saw their faith. It was evident/visible (v. 5). **Can the same be said of us, that others can see our faith? What are some ways that others might see our faith?**

What was the concern of the teachers of the law (vv. 6-7)? Only God had the authority to forgive sins. By forgiving the man's sins, Jesus was claiming to be God which angered these leaders.

What was the point Jesus was making with His illustration (vv. 8-11)? It was "easier" to just say the words that the man's sins were forgiven than to heal the man, because forgiveness is invisible - no one could know for sure if the man was forgiven or not. However, it would be a lot harder to heal the man so he could walk. The people could see that with their own eyes. And they would know for sure if the man had been healed. Jesus did the "harder" miracle to prove that He was able to do the "easier" miracle.

How did the people respond to the miracle (v. 12)? They praised God which is exactly what is supposed to happen. Miracles are designed ultimately to glorify God. However, even though they were amazed at the miracle they didn't worship Jesus as God.