

## Things Jesus Can Do That We Can't (Jesus Heals Paralytic Man)

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### Read Mark 2:1-12

Jesus can do four things that we cannot do.

#### 1. Jesus can see our faith. (Mark 2:5)

Mark 2:5 says, "When Jesus *saw* their faith." Jesus can *see* faith. It makes us wonder what He sees when He looks at us? Does He see unbelief? Doubt? Presumption?

These four men were expecting Jesus to heal their friend. You can imagine their disappointment when they arrived at the house and ran into their first obstacle. As they approached the house, they couldn't even get near door. You'd think if God wanted to heal him there would have been a clear path to the door. These four men are a great example for us for several reasons.

They cared enough to bring their friend to Jesus.

They could have come by themselves to see Jesus. It would have been easier and a lot more convenient. But they cared enough about their friend to bring him along.

There's a popular saying that says, "Friends don't let friends drink and drive." I've got a better one. "Friends bring friends to Jesus." This paralytic man never would have come to Jesus if it weren't for his friends.

Do you have any friends that need to come to Jesus? Have you made any effort to bring them to Him?

They seized the opportunity of the moment.

The parallel passage in Luke 5:17 says, "and the power of the Lord was present for Him to perform healing." Sometimes the power of God is present to heal more than at other times. That's why when we feel the tug of God on our heart, we need to respond.

I believe they sensed in their spirits the power of God was present to heal, so they seized the opportunity of the moment. Learn to be sensitive to what the Holy Spirit is saying to you at the moment and don't delay in responding.

They were persistent in their faith.

They had an "I'm not giving up" attitude. They knew in their hearts if they could just get the paralyzed man in front of Jesus, then He would do a miracle. But then they ran into Obstacle #1—the crowd. Luke tells us there were people from every village in Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem. The house was filled with people listening to Jesus and there were so many people outside that couldn't even get near the door.

Now let's think about that. Was it God's will to heal this man? Yes it was because Jesus *did* heal him. They could have said, "Well, I guess it's not God's will to heal our



friend because the path should have been clear to get to the door. It must not be God's will. Let's turn around and go home."

We can learn something from this. Just because obstacles are in the road doesn't mean it's not God's will. *Faith finds a way through or around obstacles.* These guys probably said, "Okay, we can't get to the door, so let's find another way to get into the house."

So they climbed up on the roof and they found Obstacle #2—no opening in the roof. That didn't stop them. They dug through the roof to get inside.

Notice the words "break in" and "broken into" in these verses:

Matt. 6:19-20 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not **break in** or steal."

Matt 24:43 "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be **broken into.**"

The Greek root word is literally "dig" through. In those days that's how thieves broke into houses—they would dig through the roof. These four men dug through the roof, not to take something out of the house, but to put someone into the house. Not to hurt someone, but to help someone.

Can you see the people inside the house listening to Jesus teach? They hear a noise on the roof and when they look up, a hole appears in the ceiling. Then a pallet comes down through the hole and a paralyzed man is laying on it. Luke 5 tells us he was lowered right in front of Jesus. Now that's about as persistent as you can get.

Years ago, a 23-year old man read an ad in the newspaper about a job opening for a financial institution in Boston. The ad said, "Send resumes to P.O. Box 1720." He sent in his resume, but received no reply. He sent it in a second time. No reply. Then a third time. No reply. He called the post office and asked the name of the box holder for Box 1720. They wouldn't give it to him.

So he got on the train to Boston, went to the post office and stood near box 1720. After waiting quite a while, a man showed up, picked up the mail in box 1720, and took out the mail. The young man followed him back to his office, which was a stock brokerage firm. He walked in and asked for the manager. He walked in his office and told him he had written three times and received no reply.

The manager said, "How did you find my office?" He said, "I took the train here and waited at box 1720 until someone picked up the mail, then I followed him back here." The man said, "That's just the kind of persistence that I'm looking for. You're hired!"

When Jesus saw those men dig through the roof and lower the man, He was thinking, "That's just the kind of faith I'm looking for!"

**The power of God was present to heal, so they put the man in God's presence.** They interrupted Jesus' teaching. Do you remember another time when someone interrupted His teaching? Yes, it was Martha. Her sister Mary wasn't helping her prepare a meal because she was listening to Jesus teach. Martha interrupted Jesus as He taught,

ordering Him to tell Mary to come help her prepare the meal. Jesus mildly rebuked Martha, saying that Mary was doing the better thing by listening to Him teach.

So now Jesus is teaching and we have another interruption. But this time Jesus didn't rebuke them. Instead, He praised them for their faith. Healing this paralyzed man was important enough for Him to stop teaching.

Notice it says Jesus "seeing *their faith*." Not "seeing the destruction of the roof." He could have said, "You guys are going to be in a lot of trouble for tearing up the roof. Don't you know that destruction of property is against the law? I'm calling the police!"

Why didn't Jesus rebuke them? Because He saw a broken life in front of Him, which was more important than a broken roof above Him. The roof could easily be repaired.

## **2. Jesus can forgive our sins.** (Mark 2:5)

Here is the paralyzed man lying in front of Him, and Jesus says something that no one was expecting. "Your sins are forgiven." You'd think He would say, "Rise up and walk." After all, the four men didn't bring him to Jesus to get his sins forgiven but for him to be physically healed.

But Jesus can see things that we can't see. The first thing He saw was not a man who needed his body healed but a man who needed his sins forgiven. No person in the room could see the burden of sins piled up on this man's soul. But Jesus saw it. No person could see the guilt that paralyzed this man's spirit. But Jesus saw it.

This passage *does not* mean that if you're sick there is sin in your life. This verse *does* mean the spiritual is more important than the physical. Jesus said if your eye offends you pluck it out. He didn't mean to literally do that because the whole world would be blind. He's saying the spiritual is more important than the physical. So Jesus deals with this man's spiritual problem first.

"Your sins are forgiven" in Greek says, "Your sins are dismissed." Your sins are sent away. When you're forgiven, your sins are **taken away** from you. "He appeared to *take away* sins" (1 John 3:5). They are sent away. They're not attached to you anymore.

When Jesus forgave this man's sins, the paralyzed man felt a spiritual burden lifted off him. The dark cloud hovering over his soul that only Jesus could see—was now gone.

## **3. Jesus can hear thoughts in our hearts.** (Mark 2:6-9)

Jesus could hear what they were thinking in their hearts. He "perceived in His spirit" what they were thinking within themselves—"Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Mark 2:7). Luke 5 tells us the house was filled with Pharisees and teachers of the Law. These were the hypocrites. Outwardly they acted righteously but inwardly they were corrupt. They were pretending to be someone they weren't.

One young lady was getting ready for a date. She wanted to make a good impression, so she dyed her hair, covered all her blemishes with makeup, put on false eyelashes, put on fake fingernails and popped in her contact lenses. Then she looked in the mirror and said, "Tonight, he's going to see *the real me*!"

When you looked at a Pharisee, you didn't see "the real me." You saw a person pretending to be someone else. But Jesus knew what they were thinking in their hearts. He knew who the "real me" was inside of them.

Even though they hadn't said anything, He answered their question anyway. "Which is it easier, to say 'your sins are forgiven' (claim #1) or to say 'take up your pallet and walk' (claim #2)?" (Mark 2:9)

Of course it's *easy to say* your sins are forgiven because it couldn't be verified with physical evidence. So to prove that his sins actually were forgiven, He would heal the paralyzed man, which could be verified. Claim #2 (healing him) would prove that claim #1 (forgiving him) had also happened.

#### **4. Jesus can change our lives.** (Mark 2:10-12)

Jesus spoke to the Pharisees, "But in order that *you may know* that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." Jesus didn't heal the paralytic just for the paralyzed man's sake, but for the sake of everyone there. Not just so the man could be healed, but so that *everyone*, including the Pharisees, would know that He had the power to forgive sins.

Jesus said, "Arise, take up your pallet and go home" (v.11). The man immediately got up and picked up his pallet, and Luke tells us he went home glorifying God.

The **purpose of his pallet changed** after he was healed. He didn't need it anymore after he was healed, so why take it with him? He would now carry it around *as a testimony* of Jesus changing his life. "See this pallet? I used to be enslaved to it but Jesus set me free. And He can set you free from your pallet too."

Are you on a pallet? What are you enslaved to? Jesus will forgive you and set you free from it so you can use it as a testimony of God's grace

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