

(Luke) 18 - Chap5cont- Man With Palsy

by Ed Miller

The sermon emphasizes the importance of total reliance on God's word and the revelation of Jesus as the son of all mankind, highlighting the miracles as parables with spiritual counterparts and the importance of faith in bringing others to Jesus.

Duration: 44:58

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Luke 4:38-39, Luke 5:15, Luke 5:17-26, Luke 5:31-32

Topics: "Faith And Healing", "Christian Evangelism"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the ministry of Jesus in Capernaum and how it served as the base for his three and a half year ministry. The speaker emphasizes the importance of mission and evangelism, using the example of four men who bring their paralyzed friend to Jesus. The speaker highlights the faith and determination of these men and how Jesus acknowledges their faith. The sermon also references three miracles performed by Jesus, including the healing of Peter's mother-in-law and the miracle of the catch of fish, and draws spiritual lessons from each of them, such as the importance of Christian service and soul-winning.

Transcript

That place right next to Woolworth's town, where Woolworth's used to be, gave me good promises. I'll remind you, as you well know, but I like to remind myself, as we come to the study of God's word, there's a principle of Bible study that is indispensable, and that is total reliance. We thank the Lord for everything helpful, and I have many books, and they help, but they're not indispensable.

Only coming before the Lord as a little child and asking the Spirit to put the light on the Lord Jesus, that's indispensable, and that unlocks the Bible. So I invite you to join me, please. Our Father, we thank you so much for the privilege we have to gather on these Thursday mornings, to focus our hearts again and to meditate on your precious word.

We thank thee for the Holy Spirit that lives in our hearts, and whoever turns our hearts unto him. We thank you for every part of the Bible in a special way for Luke chapter 5 this morning. As we know, the Bible will be incomplete without Luke 5, so our lives would be incomplete without this chapter.

By your grace, by your Holy Spirit, minister unto our hearts. You know us, our needs, our hungers, our capacities. Meet us where we are, take us where you'd have us.

We ask in the all-prevailing name of Jesus. Okay, I'll ask you to turn, please, to Luke chapter 5. By way of review, again, we've come too far to review everything. Lillian has the tapes.

If you've missed any and would like them, just see her. And if she doesn't have them with her, she'll surely get them to you. This is now lesson 18, so you see why we can't review everything.

The message of Luke has to do with the revelation of the Lord Jesus as the son of all mankind. There are many presentations of the Lord, but Luke's special presentation is that Jesus is the son of all mankind. Not just the Jews, but he's the friend of everybody.

He's the savior of everybody. In our discussion, we've come to the big section, chapter 4, verse 14, all the way through chapter 19 and verse 28. That section we call the Galilean ministry of our Lord Jesus.

And Luke very wonderfully divides it into two parts. The first part we can call what he did, and the second part what he said. Now there's some overlapping, but in the main, chapter 4, verse 14 through chapter 9, verse 50, deals with the great miracles of Christ.

And so we call him in this section the friend of all mankind. And we've been studying his miracles. And then after that, we have the section with the parables.

And so we call him the teacher of all mankind. So his Galilean ministry is basically what he did and what he said. The friend of all mankind and the teacher of all mankind.

For the past couple of weeks, we've been looking at the ministry of our Lord Jesus in Capernaum. Where he set up his base of operation for his two and a half, actually three and a half year ministry, but the first year was in Perea. So we're not going to discuss that part.

The key to his miracles, let me review that much and then pick up where we left off. The key to his miracles is recorded in chapter 5, verse 31 and 32. Now this, by the way, is right in the middle of all the miracles.

Levi, Matthew gives his testimony. And the story of Matthew's banquet is right in the center of all the miracles. As if to say, the greatest miracle of all is the miracle that he cleansed me, he saved me.

So verse 31, And Jesus answered and said to them, And right in the middle of all the miracles, and most of them are miracles of healing, physical healing. Right in the middle of all the miracles, Jesus announced the fact that he was a soul doctor. That he was a doctor of the spirit and of the heart.

If the only purpose of the miracle was to reduce the sum of human misery. In other words, he healed just so that they would be well. If that was his only purpose, then you could look at it and sort of say that his miracles were a failure.

They were a failure because if you added all the physical healings he did together, it's not a very big pile when you think about all of the sickness on the earth and all of the trouble on the earth. But there was a deeper reason for his healing. He was a soul doctor.

And what he did physically was to illustrate what he wanted to do spiritually. In other words, all of the miracles are really parables. Because they tell a story.

They're redemptive. They have a spiritual counterpart. And behind every miracle then of healing is this great spiritual truth.

For example, he didn't only heal the blind that the blind might see. He healed the blind so that we might know what it means. That he opens blind eyes.

The eyes of our heart. He healed the deaf so that he who has an ear let him hear what the spirit said. In other words, there's a spiritual deafness as well.

And he did the physical. He cleansed the leper to show how he cleansed sin. That woman that was all humped over and he caused her to learn to walk straight before God and men.

There's an illustration. There's a principle there. How to walk before God and men.

And there's no end to the instruction in all of these wonderful miracles as we study Christ as the friend of all mankind. So far in our discussion we've looked at three miracles. And in each case it's my intention to press home to the heart of God and the spiritual meaning.

The first was in chapter 4, 38 and 39. The high fever that Peter's mother-in-law had. And after he healed that fever, you remember the Bible says that she immediately arose and began to minister unto him and unto others.

And when we have a spiritual fever. Usually we move from physical weakness to physical strength. And when we do that we move in fits and starts.

And we get all pumped up for the Lord and then we fizzle. And then we get pumped up again and then it all dies out. Because we move from natural weakness, fever, to natural strength, revival.

But that's not God's way. God's way is to move from natural weakness to supernatural strength. And when the Lord touched her with His power, now she was able to serve without fizzling.

And immediately without convalescence. And so that's the principle in that miracle. And then last time we looked at chapter 5, 1 to 11.

The miracle of the catch of fish. And according to verse 10, the spiritual message had to do with soul winning. Fear not, he said.

Don't be afraid to share the Lord. From now on you'll become fishers of men. So he tied it into mission.

He tied that miracle into soul winning. And the principle is simply this. Peter had to learn to fish.

The carpenter had to teach him how to fish for fish and how to fish for man. And what he had to learn was, if you obey me, I'll bring the fish into your net. I will supernaturally draw them into your net.

Take that over into soul winning. Sometimes we get all this, oh I need a burden for souls and I need to help people come to the Lord. Not really.

You don't need a burden for souls. You just need a burden to obey the Lord. And if you obey the Lord and walk in obedience with him, you'll be amazed how many fish God will draw into your net.

And you don't have to do anything. He's the one that does it all. And so he teaches us how to minister in that way.

When we left off, we were looking at chapter 5, 12 to 14. The cleansing of the man full of leprosy. Leprosy, as you know, is God's illustration of the defilement and corruption of sin.

Now this morning we're going to look at palsy. And that's an illustration of the paralysis of sin. Now there are different views of sin.

But leprosy shows the corruption and the defilement of sin. And the message, the spiritual message of the cleansing of the leper is in chapter 5, 13. I am willing be cleansed.

And the principle is that God has not promised to heal every disease. He has promised to forgive every sin. And so he is ever willing.

In fact, because it's God, you have to put the word infinite in there. He is infinitely willing and infinitely able to cleanse the leper. No matter how fully developed his leprosy might be.

He's always willing and able to forgive sin. That brings us this morning then to this fourth personal miracle that Jesus performed. I say personal miracle because in between the miracles are miracles.

In other words, the crowds gathered. For example, look at chapter 5, 15. It says the news about him was spreading even further.

And great multitudes were gathering to hear him. And to be healed of their sicknesses. The Lord not only healed individual sicknesses.

But he also did it in mass. Great crowds were healed as they came. But the Holy Spirit was pleased to isolate certain stories.

So that we might have the spiritual principle behind it. That brings us to chapter 5, verse 17 to 26. The healing of the man with palsy.

Follow along please from verse 17. And it came about one day that he was teaching. And there were some Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting there.

Who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea. And from Jerusalem. The power of the Lord was present for him to perform healing.

And behold some men were carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed. They were trying to bring him in and to set him down in front of him. Not finding any way to bring him in because of the crowd.

They went up to the roof and let him down through the tiles with his stretcher. Right in the center in front of Jesus. And seeing their faith he said, friend your sins are forgiven you.

And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason saying. Who is this man who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sin but God alone? Jesus aware of their reasoning answered and said to them. Why are you reasoning in your heart which is easier? To say your sins have been forgiven you or to say rise up and walk.

But in order that you may know that the son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins. He said to the paralytic. I say to you rise take off your stretcher and go home.

And at once he rose before them and went home glorifying God. They were all seized with astonishment. Began glorifying God.

They were filled with fear saying we have seen remarkable things today. Now before I show you the spiritual message of this miracle. Let me give a little background and sort of set it up before you.

It's one of the most graphic miracles in the gospel. You can almost picture in your mind's eye. This miracle is recorded three times.

It's recorded by Matthew in chapter 9. By Mark in chapter 2. And then here by Luke in chapter 5. If all you had was Matthew's account. You wouldn't even know it was the same story. Because Matthew leaves out the section where they climbed on the roof.

And took the tiles away and dropped him down. Matthew doesn't even mention that. But it's really the same record.

Most commentators believe this was probably Peter's home in Capernaum. We know he had one there because his mother-in-law was sick of a fever. And she was at Peter and Andrew's home in Capernaum.

The problem is that Mark's account says this. Mark chapter 2 verse 1. And when he had come to Capernaum several days afterward. It was heard that he was at... And so some say this wasn't Peter's house.

This was Jesus' house. He was at home. He was at his own home.

And some believe he actually had a home in Capernaum. It's not important. The Bible is not dead clear on it.

But I just thought that was interesting. And I'd pass that on to you. We don't know who owned the home where they tore the tiles off the roof.

Maybe Peter. Maybe the Lord Jesus himself. Or some other disciple.

The surface problem this man had is clearly paralysis. King James calls it palsy. My particular version here calls it paralysis.

Clearly he was bedridden. He had to be carried on a bed. Mark is the one who tells us he had four friends.

You don't get that from Luke. We don't know how many. See Luke just says some friends.

But Mark tells us there were four. I picture one on each corner of the mat with a rope to lower him down. If all you had was Luke's account, you wouldn't be dead sure whether they damaged the roof or just opened the trap door.

You know the typical house in those days, they were two stories and there was a stairway on the outside. In the book of Deuteronomy when God gives the law on how to build your house, he says when you make the trap door in the room, make sure you put a fence around it so no one falls down into it. So it was common to have a hole in the roof where they could go up and down.

There were stairs actually to this. Mark's gospel makes it clear that if it was the trap door, it wasn't big enough to drop this man down. And some tiles had to be removed.

You know they had thatched roofs back then and they had the poles going over either the clay or the stone walls. And then they had the thatch and the hay and then clay on top. And so it would have been easy to enlarge that hole by removing.

In one sense this miracle, the miracles overlap. And all of the miracles have this little element of evangelism in it. Soul winning by the way is big on God's heart.

That's what it's all about. He's come to seek and to save that which is law. Just for your own heart, here's a tad.

You can always tell by tracing it to its logical conclusion. If it leads to mission, it's probably true. I think every doctrine in the Bible ends up with mission.

Because that's God's heart. His heart is beating hot for the world. And everything ends up with mission.

And here's a great illustration of real evangelism. These four men are taking their friend to Jesus. That's what soul winning is.

It's bringing someone else to the law. They believe that Jesus can help and they're coming by faith. Now we know they're coming by faith because look at verse 20.

The Bible says, Jesus seeing their faith. Now it doesn't say that the paralytic had faith. But we can assume he did.

That he was in agreement with this and he was acquiescent. I have no doubt he also had faith. It seems clear from the record that Jesus acknowledged their faith.

Because it illustrated the determination to come to Jesus and to bring someone else to Jesus. In spite of all hindrances. No matter what's in the way, I'm coming to Jesus.

And no matter what's in the way, I'm going to bring my friend to Jesus. And that seems to be the faith that he's acknowledging here. They pressed through hindrances.

They would not be turned back by difficulties and by problems. Now I don't think faith is the spiritual message of this peril. But it's here.

And it's one part of this particular miracle. Let me mention a couple of obstacles they went through. The first of course is the physical condition of this particular man.

He was paralyzed. I have an idea. He was just paralyzed from head to foot.

And this personal weakness sometimes gets in the way of somebody coming to the Lord. Well someone else can come but I just, I'm paralyzed. I can't come to the Lord.

Well that didn't stop these four men to bring their friend to Jesus. I think I've told you several times about my paralyzed friend. One of my best friends was paralyzed from head to toe.

His mind was sharp as a tack. But his body was just useless. And this man must have been like that.

And his four friends said, that's not going to hinder us. Some physical thing. Let's go to Jesus.

And then verse 19. It says, they could not find any way to bring him in because of the crowd. And not only sometimes does personal weakness get in the way, but people get in the way.

And in this case, people got in the way. I love the way the King James words, Mark 2, 4. It says, they could not come nigh because of the press. Seemed like CNN was there, you know.

Could not get in because of the press. Just so many people. It's wonderful when faith is so determined to come to the Lord that it's not going to let anything get in the way.

No physical handicap is going to stop. And no people. I can't tell you how many times I have heard someone say, I'm not going to church because of the hypocrites that are in it.

People get in the way. Someone told me once that if you had to hide behind a hypocrite, you have to be smaller than the hypocrite. Well, think about it.

If you hide behind a tree, you got to be smaller than the tree. But interestingly enough, the people that were blocking this man's passage were not the hypocrites. They were the people who were closest to Jesus.

These are the people that wanted most to get to Jesus for whatever reason. I won't develop it now, and Lillian calls it a hobby horse of mine, so I'd better stay off of it. But it grieves my heart sometimes how godly people, those who know the Lord the most and who are closest to the Lord, can get in the way of other people coming to the Lord.

And I think someday we'll find out to bring people to the Lord. And it's a terrible thing when the church becomes a hindrance and people don't find the Lord because of the church. But for these men, they said, we're bringing our friend to Jesus, and personal weakness and limitations are not going to get in the way, and people, no matter hypocrites or otherwise, are not going to get in the way.

And then circumstances, illustrated by the tiles on the roof. Nothing's going to get in the way, nor circumstances. And they just climbed up the roof and ripped a hole in the roof.

And it was when Jesus saw that determination of these men to bring their friend to Jesus that he said, what faith? I told you in a sense this is a story of evangelism because these four men brought their friend to Jesus. It also gives us the end of the... And what I mean by that is this. It's interesting in this whole thing, not a word was spoken.

They didn't pray. They didn't inquire of Jesus. They never said a word.

This man didn't say, have mercy on me. He didn't say, Lord, save us, we perish. He didn't say like the leper, if you will, you can make me clean.

They didn't say one thing. They just brought him to the feet of Jesus and their ministry was over. It's an interesting principle illustrated by this story.

And that is that evangelism must stop at the feet of Jesus. We can bring someone to Jesus, but we can't cure anyone. We can bring someone to the Lord, but that's all we can do.

I think sometimes we put too much dependence on our part in our ministry. Our part, actually we have two parts. The big part, of course, is take our friends to Jesus.

Another hobby horse of mine. I'm so worried about people who try to become co-counselors or co-physicians with Jesus. Jesus, his name shall be called Counselor.

And he's the great physician. And I think sometimes we think we can help the Lord. And what we can really do is bring them to Jesus and you say, well, what part does the counselor have? He can remove the hindrances.

That's what these counselors did. They were used mightily to prepare the way. And sometimes people have hang-ups.

And it's not wrong to counsel and to help and to try to remove the hang-up. Something is hindering them from coming to the Lord. It's not wrong to try to... But then once you bring the person to Jesus, if he doesn't do anything, we're sunk.

If he doesn't do a miracle after we bring him to the Lord, we have nothing else that we can do. And I think that's real ministry. I think that beyond that, we shouldn't go.

Now, although faith is prevalent in this story, it's not the chief spiritual message. Before we look at the chief message, let me introduce you to two groups that Luke now brings up for the first time. Verse 17, there were some Pharisees.

It's the first time Luke mentions them, but it won't be the last. They're going to show up a lot. And teachers of the law sitting there.

And in verse 21, they're described as scribes. You've heard the expression over and over, the scribes and the Pharisees. They're going to be coming around a lot now.

This is the first mention in Luke. I think you're familiar with the fact, basically, that those were the spiritual leaders of the time. The word Pharisee just means to divide or to separate.

And they were the separatists. They were the spiritual people who were determined, we're going to do it right, and we're going to honor God, and we can't hop-knob with the world, and we've got to be different, and we've got to be separate. And they were really the separatists.

And because of that, they became very external, as you know. And they got into all of the forms, and we've got to do it this way, and they had their list of rules and regulations, and so on. Later on, Jesus will blast them for their hypocrisy.

Anyway, they felt like they were the spiritual guardians of the truth. When John, the baptizer, came on the scene, the first thing you saw was all these scribes and Pharisees surrounding him. Alright, who are you? Are you Elijah? Are you Isaac? Where'd you come from? Where'd you get your papers? What school did you go to? Because they felt like they were the ones responsible so that no cultist would come around.

Well, here you have this revolutionary, the Lord Jesus. And now the word is spreading everywhere. He's starting to heal people, and he's saying some strange things.

And so the Bible says in this chapter that the scribes and the Pharisees and the teachers, they came in droves. These are heresy hunters. They're not looking for a miracle.

They're not trying to get some spiritual truth. They are trying to make sure he doesn't say anything that he shouldn't say, that the people are not contaminated with his teaching, and so on. And because this new voice was in town, these professional spiritual hot shots came to check him out.

And that's why they're there. Now let me show you what I believe to be the spiritual lesson of this miracle, the healing of the paralytic. I think the key words are in verse 20.

When they lowered him down after he admired their faith, he said to the paralytic, Friend, your sins are forgiven you. Jesus healed the man with palsy in order to show his authority to forgive sin. As I said, as leprosy illustrated the corruption and defilement of sin, now this palsy will illustrate the paralysis of sin.

I won't develop... where we feel paralyzed in the Christian life. We're going to see this again later on. Every time we feel in any way helpless as a Christian, it's because we haven't fully entered into our forgiveness.

The more we enter into our forgiveness, the freer we become and the less impotent we become. Some have thought because of these first words Jesus said, Your sins are forgiven, that maybe his problem was caused by his sin. Maybe he had done something that caused him to be in this state.

It's not certain whether his physical disability came because of a moral disability. We don't know. It's possible, I guess.

I think in John 5, remember the man at Bethesda, the pool of Bethesda? Jesus said to him, Go and sin no more. Probably his was in some way connected with his problem. But it's not important to know that.

The point is his disease pictures sin and the deliverance from sin. What took place after Jesus said, Friends, your sins are forgiven, is what gives us the special revelation of the Lord. Now picture the scribes and Pharisees sitting there.

They're just waiting for him to say something that they can jump on. They're heresy hunters. And when he said, Your sins are forgiven, they probably expected Jesus to cure him.

Or say, Take up your bed and walk or something like that. But when he said, Your sins are forgiven, they went ballistic. And they went ballistic because they saw that to be a claim that he was God.

He was claiming to be God. Now how is that so? Let's just say that you were the paralytic and you were lowered to the feet of Jesus. First of all, let me ask you this.

Don't answer, just think about it. You've got a problem. You're paralyzed from head to toe.

And Jesus said, Your sins are forgiven. Would you be happy about that or sad? Would you have rather that he said something else? Like, Take up your bed and walk? What would have that meant to you? We'll come back to that in a moment. God's writing a Bible here.

And he's going to show us that root paralysis is always connected to unforgiven sin. And we need to see that. Now let's get back to the reasoning of the scribes and the Pharisees.

Why did they accuse Jesus of blasphemy? Let me just give an illustration here. Let's say, and this has never happened, that I sinned against Lillian in some way. I've never, ever.

Let's say that I offended her by something I said. And my friend Lenny over here walked up to me and said, I forgive you. What's wrong with that? Why can't that work? It can't work because I didn't sin against him.

I sinned against her. And if she would come up and say, I forgive you. That makes sense because I sinned against her.

The one that you sin against is the one that has to forgive you. No one can remit a debt unless it's due to that person. Jesus went up to this person and said, your sins are forgiven.

How could he say that? Because that man had sinned against him. How? He's God. All sins against God.

And they knew it. Those Pharisees knew it. And they said, he's blaspheming.

Only God can forgive sin. Only God is able to walk up to somebody. By the way, this is the first time in the Bible Jesus ever told anybody his sins were forgiven.

In fact, he's only going to do it twice. And this is the first time that he does it. Of course, there are many illustrations that he forgave sin.

But that he actually said the words, your sins are forgiven. This is the first time. Now, look please at verse 23.

This marvelous question. Which is easier? To say your sins are forgiven or to say rise up and walk? Well, to answer that question, it depends on your vantage point. Let me answer the question three times.

And three different ways. Because it depends on how you look at it. The first.

Which is easier? Now notice what it doesn't say. He doesn't say, which is easier? To forgive sins or to raise the paralyzed? He didn't say that. He said, which is easier to say? Your sins are forgiven or take up your bed and walk? Well, if you look at it in terms of which is easier to say.

Then, I think the answer is, it's a lot easier to say, your sins are forgiven. A lot easier. You know why? Because you can't prove it.

You can't see that. And it's a lot easier to say what you can't see. Than to say, take up your bed and walk.

Because then you'd know right away if he's an imposter or if he's a deceiver. But if I said something that you can't see with your eyes. Words are cheap.

It's easy to say things. And especially, you don't know if I'm an imposter or a deceiver if you can't see what I'm saying. If I say to you, the other day God told me.

You're stuck. Either you're going to believe me because hopefully I'm a man of integrity. Or you're not going to believe me because you say God's word says that's not going to happen.

Or whatever. But if I just said, God told me or God appeared to me. Or if I said to you, I have peace in my heart.

You don't know that for sure. You can't see that. So it's a lot easier to say, walk up to someone and say, your sins are forgiven.

Because there's no proof. He's still laying there paralyzed. It's easier to, which is easier? To say your sins are forgiven or to say rise up and walk.

It's easier to say spiritual things. If I say something physical. If I walk up to a man that's crippled and I say, take up your bed and I'll be found out in 20 seconds.

Whether or not I'm a prophet or whether or not the Lord's using me to heal. Then you're on the firing line. If you do something physical.

Physical things can be proved quite easily. I told my father-in-law one time, I can fix my car. It didn't take long for him to know I'm no mechanic.

And I couldn't fix my car. I could tell you some stories about that, but I won't. Which is easier? And I say, to say spiritual things is a lot easier than to do.

It's always easier to say than to do. But let's look at the same question another way. Which is easier? To forgive sins or to raise up someone who is paralyzed.

I think without question, it's a lot easier to heal a physical disease. To say to a crippled man, get up and walk. It's easier to cleanse a leper.

To empower a paralytic. To cause the blind to see, the deaf to hear. And even it's easier to raise the dead than to forgive sin.

You say, how so? Because healing is a work of the mighty word of God. He says it and it's done. All he has to do is say, be healed.

And they're healed. Receive your sight. And they got their sight.

Take up your bed and walk. Lazarus come forth. He just said it and it happened.

But to forgive sin, he had to do more than say it. He could not walk up to somebody and just say, your sins are forgiven. To forgive sin, there was a price.

To forgive sin, God had to humble himself and become a man. And take his place on the cross. And without the shedding of blood, there is no remission.

Which is easier? To say, rise up. Or to say, your sins are forgiven. Oh, I'll tell you.

When God forgives sins, it's a lot harder. Because he had to pay the price. And he had to pay the debt on the cross.

God could create a world or annihilate a world or raise the dead by a word. But to forgive sin, his well beloved had to die on the cross. And had to suffer eternity.

You see, the reality is, sickness has only temporal consequences. Sin has everlasting consequences. And so, which is easier? And the answer is, it's a lot easier to do something physical than something spiritual.

Alright, let's ask the question one more time. Which is easier? To forgive sin or to raise somebody up who is paralyzed? Well, it's easier to say than to do. It's a lot easier to have a church supper than to love your brothers and sisters in the Lord.

It's a lot easier to do something or just to say that something is real. When it comes down to really doing it, there's a cost connected with forgiveness. It's a lot harder to forgive because he had to die.

But that's not the point Luke is making. Which is easier? According to Luke's point, they're both easy. If Jesus is God.

That's the point. What's easier? And the answer is, for God, they're both easy. And so I have the authority as God to forgive sin.

And just like no physical problem can ever hinder me, God, from raising you up. There is no sin that can stand in the way between me and forgiveness. And so because he's God, and that is the claim he's making here.

That he is almighty God. This man came in on a stretcher. He was being borne by his problem.

But when he left, he was carrying the stretcher. He came in through the roof, but he didn't leave through the roof. He left through the front door.

And he came in probably grieving, but he left rejoicing and glorifying God. If I really believe that Jesus is God, then I will not live under condemnation. I'm going to be free in my life.

And what a glorious freedom it is. Now look at verse 24 and 25, please. We wrap it up.

In order that you might know the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sin. He said to the paralytic, I say to you, rise, take up your stretcher and go home. And at once he rose before them and took up what he had been laying on and went home glorifying God.

One of the things that I get out of this, I've tried to put myself in the place of that dear man that received that healing that day. He heard Jesus say that you might know. Of course, he was talking to the Pharisee.

But this man is listening in. That you might know the Son of Man has authority to forgive sin. I say to you, rise up and walk.

My friend who was paralyzed, he was really paralyzed. He couldn't do anything. He couldn't eat.

He couldn't sit up. He couldn't do anything. I wonder if this man, when he went back home and stood in the bathroom and looked in the mirror and brushed his teeth and combed his hair, when he sat at the table and was feeding himself, when he got dressed, I wonder if he was saying, this is so wonderful, I can move around.

I wonder if he thought this. My sins are gone. Every time he brushed his teeth, he knew his sins were gone.

Because in order that you might know the Son of Man has authority to forgive sin, I say, rise up. And every time this man moved a muscle, he remembered, my sins are gone. My sins are gone.

He has forgiven me. If we could only realize the relationship between our power to live as Christians and our understanding that God has dealt with our greatest problem of sin. If we could really live in the knowledge and in the glory that our sins are gone, how free we'd be.

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. And the same one who raised him up is the one who forgives sin. And so once again, he takes this physical miracle in order to illustrate a spiritual truth.

Every time, by the way, every time God does anything physical for you, it's that you might know he has the authority to do the same thing spiritually. Has he prospered you physically? He did that, that you might know he can prosper you spiritually. He always does the external, the physical thing, in order that you might know.

Well, we'll close there. Tom, that's a question. Well, let's bow again before the Lord.

Our Father, thank you again for your precious word. We thank you for this miracle, this miracle of forgiveness of sin. And for the price that you paid to wash us clean.

Oh, Lord, we adore you. We worship you. Thank you so much for that.

And we just pray, Lord, that you would encourage our faith to remove hindrances to our friends, that we might bring them to your feet so that you can do for them what you've done for us. Thank you for allowing us this fellowship this morning, and prepare our hearts for the rest of Luke, and work these things into our lives. We pray because Jesus deserves it, and we claim it.

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