

*How did Jesus know what the Scribes were thinking? Based on what Jesus said, do you think they would have accused Him of blasphemy if He hadn't forgiven the man's sins, but had healed his disease?*

*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!" - Mark 2:12 NIV*

Jesus wanted to demonstrate that He, the Son of Man, had Godly authority on earth just as He does in Heaven. Unfortunately, we are limited by our 5 senses and when Jesus forgave sins, we were unable to perceive a difference. So, Jesus provided a visual demonstration of His authority when He healed the paralyzed man.

It is still easier for people to accept or rationalize a miraculous healing than it is to accept the deity and authority of Jesus. Believing in God means believing in the supernatural, but when Jesus came to earth, heaven and earth overlapped. We beheld God wrapped in Human flesh when Jesus walked the earth, and that was the most astounding thing of all.

#### **WRAP-UP**

In Mark 2:12, Jesus astounds everyone by both forgiving the paralyzed man's sins and healing him. The faith of the man's friends was also astounding, as they took bold action to bring him to Jesus, demonstrating that faith involves more than belief—it compels action. While the religious leaders took offense at Jesus' forgiveness, He proved His divine authority, revealing Himself as both God and the Son of Man. This passage highlights the power of intercessory faith, the importance of God's forgiveness of sin, and the astounding truth of Jesus' divine authority on earth.

#### **MEMORY VERSE**

*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." - Mark 2:10-11 NIV*

#### **Challenge-**

*The friends in this passage physically carried their friend, overcame obstacles, and risked humiliation to bring their friend to Jesus. We are in this journey of faith together. Seek out others to share your needs with one another and grow your faith together.*

## **That's Astounding! The Gospel of Mark - Week 9**

### **INTRODUCTION**

When Jesus arrived, people recognized that things were different. He taught differently, and His Ministry to the poor and the sick was definitely different. In fact, it was astounding! In this week's passage we see that as people began to recognize the miraculous power of Jesus, it became more and more difficult even to get up close to Jesus because of the crowds. But for those who believed and were determined nothing was impossible.

#### **Ice Breaker**

*What is the last thing you remember being astounded by?*

#### **Key Passage**

**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!"**  
- Mark 2:12 NIV

### **STUDY QUESTIONS**

#### **1. Astounding Faith**

*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." - Mark 2:3-5 NIV*

*16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. - James 5:16 NIV*

Jesus had both taught and preached in Galilee. The news had spread that there was divine authority and power in this Rabbi. And so, it should be no surprise that when He returned to Capernaum a great crowd gathered. Jesus was preaching the word of God to a packed house when four friends dropped in a paralyzed man from the roof for a chance to be healed.

*When we read this account closely, we see some things that might be unexpected. Whose faith did Jesus take note of? How do you think the faith of this paralyzed man was affected by his friend's faith, or do you think it was the faith of the paralytic that encouraged faith in his friends?*

*Read James 5:16. Why do you think it is important to confess our sins before praying for healing? Do you think it is equally important for the one praying as it is for the one receiving prayer to confess their sins?*

*But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.  
- James 2:18 NIV*

When we think of the word "faith" we sometimes equate that with our beliefs or our understanding. But faith is more than an intellectual assent to something. Faith involves action.

*What did the actions of these four friends reveal about their faith? Now think of who you consider your closest friend. Is there something you need to intercede for on their behalf? Is there anything else God might be urging you to do for them - possibly some practical action to support them in a time of physical or emotional need? If so, how will you respond? Allow your faith to move you to action.*

We may forget the fact that our prayers for others are powerful. Do not be discouraged if your prayers are not answered immediately. Commit to intercession for your friends and family for as long as it takes to see God move on their behalf. Your faith can have an astounding impact just as we see in this account. Have faith and you will see miracles happen.

## 2. Astounding Forgiveness

*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?"  
- Mark 2:5-7 NIV*

As we read further, we find that Jesus' immediate response to faith was not healing of the body, but forgiveness of sin. Sin does far more damage than any natural sickness or disease. Sin separates us from God. So, Jesus' first response to the faith of these friends was spiritual healing; the forgiveness of sins.

*Why did those who studied and taught the Jewish law take offense when Jesus told the man his sins were forgiven?*

The restitution for sin was detailed in the first 5 books of the Hebrew bible (Torah) and required blood sacrifices such as bulls, goats, sheep or birds. These sacrifices were brought before God by the priest on behalf of the people for the forgiveness of sin. So, when Jesus forgave this man's sins, no blood sacrifice had been made, no priest was involved, and Jesus was forgiving sin as if He were God.

*Jesus said he hadn't come to abolish the law but to fulfill it (Matt 5:17). If that is true, then where was the blood sacrifice, who was the priest and where is God in this account?*

*24 "Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. - John 5:24 NIV*

The entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation is one integrated story that points to Jesus, the Messiah. The Scribes called Jesus a blasphemer because He was doing something only God had authority to do- forgive sins. But that is only blasphemy if Jesus was not God. He proceeded to prove that He was in fact God.

## 3. Astounding Healing

*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." - Mark 2:8-11 NIV*

If this was the first time you read this story, the healing of the paralyzed man is probably what you expected when he was first lowered by his friends. It was a miraculous healing. But it was not the only miracle in this account.