

**OUR PRIMARY TEXT**

- V1 When He had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home. *[many believe Jesus' "home" was the house of Peter]*
- V2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them.
- V3 And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men.
- V4 And being unable to get to Him on account of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying.
- V5 And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "**My son, your sins are forgiven.**"
- V6 But there were some of the scribes sitting there and reasoning in their hearts,
- V7 "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?" *[true statement]*
- V8 And immediately Jesus, perceiving in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, "Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts?
- V9 "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, Arise, and take up your pallet and walk'?
- V10 "But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins," He said to the paralytic,
- V11 "I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home."
- V12 And he rose and immediately took up the pallet and went out in the sight of all, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

[This account, in not quite as much detail, is also given in Matt. 9:2-8 and Luke 5:18-26]

**THE MIRACLE IN CONTEXT**

The paralytic, more paralyzed by his sin than by his disease, was set free of his sins by a word of the Master.

Note:

1. The friends' faith was expressed in their action (v.5)
2. The friend's faith moved Jesus to forgive the man's sins (v.5)
3. Jesus could read the minds of the reasoning scribes (v.8)
4. The miracle of spiritual healing is the greater miracle (v.9)
5. Jesus healed the paralysis as a verification of His Deity (v.10)

The story's emphasis and outstanding miracle is that **JESUS FORGIVES SINS**.

Though unseen by the eyes of all, this miracle transformed a man from a lost, blind and dead soul – destined for an eternity apart from God – to a soul covered by the blood of Jesus, yet to be shed for him, and bound for an eternity in God's presence – sinner to saint in a word and a moment of time.

The physical paralysis would limit him for but a few more years of life, but the spiritual paralysis would bind him for an eternity, apart from the intervention of Jesus. We must not deliberate on whether this man was saved, not by his own faith, but by the faith of others. Scripture teaches us that it is always the individual's faith that brings forgiveness of sins, though in this story it was the faith of his friends that Jesus notes.

In application, so it is when we believe and pray for our unsaved family and friends and God takes note of our faith and brings the one prayed for to a place of conviction. Don't give up on believing in and praying for our unsaved loved ones!

Jesus indicates that physical healing, though impressive and greatly prized, is nothing to be compared to the miracle of spiritual healing. Medical science has learned and will continue to learn much of the ability to heal physically. The apostles in the book of Acts, empowered by the hand of God, were able to heal and even bring resurrection from the dead in some cases – verifying the hand of God on their ministry.

BUT – no physician and no apostle could ever forgive sins. The scribes were correct – ONLY GOD CAN FORGIVE SINS (v 7). Thus, Jesus is indeed Divine – God in flesh.

### **LET US PONDER THE MIRACLE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS**

*Ephesians 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.*

### **TURNING THE CORNER – THE MIRACLE OF OUR FORGIVING OTHERS**

#### **3 THINGS FORGIVENESS IS NOT**

1. Play acting – or pretending that there is no resentment
2. Denial – “stuffing” or trying to forget that the hurt happened
3. Lack of vengeance, but still harboring a smoldering hurt

#### **4 GREAT MISCONCEPTIONS OF WHAT MUST ACCOMPANY FORGIVENESS**

1. Condoning the wrong done
2. Reconciliation (ideal – but it only takes 1 to forgive, but 2 to reconcile)
3. Apology (again, often helpful but not necessary since forgiveness is in your heart)

4. Forgetting (time might help to forget, but we will probably always remember)

## THE ROOT MEANING OF THE ENGLISH WORD

To forgive = FOR + GIVE = a "giving up" "before" the other does

## THE ESSENCE OF WHAT FORGIVENESS IS (by definition)

The mental and spiritual process of...

1. Ceasing to feel                      a) resentment    b) indignation or    c) anger
2. Ceasing to demand              a) punishment    b) restitution or    c) apology

## WHAT ONLY GOD CAN DO (Mark 1:7 – the key to the miracle)

When God says we should do something that is reasonably within our power, then we can mistake our own carnal self-efforts for Spirit-led obedience. But when we hear Him say something impossible or impractical like "be perfect" (Mat 5:48) we despair and realize that it will only be by grace that we are saved, through faith in Him who alone has the qualities God requires. **For this is "God stuff" we are talking about here.** If "perfection" is not given to us from Christ, we will never get it on our own.

John 15:5 "... apart from Me you can do nothing."

On the scale of things Jesus told us we must do, perhaps just below His demand of "perfection" as being impossible to attain in our own resources... is forgiveness.

Let us recognize that only God can forgive. It is not humanly possible. If we "get it" at all, it will be by God's very nature being imputed to us. And right here is the secret to real forgiveness. It is divine.

## REMEMBER WHAT WE HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN BY GOD

Mat 18:21-27 (NIV) Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. "The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go."

Mat 18:28-35 (NIV) "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow-servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what

you owe me!' he demanded. His fellow-servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened. Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow-servant just as I had on you?' In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

Where this servant failed, then, is in FORGETTING the merciful treatment His master gave him. He FORGOT the great sin he was forgiven of.

2 Pet 1:9 (NAS) ...For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.

Let us not make the same mistake. Let us make sure to remember our salvation from former sins, even if it means some people accuse us of being "negative".

### **MATTHEW 6:9-15**

- V9 "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.  
V10 'Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
V11 'Give us this day our daily bread.  
V12 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.  
V13 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]'  
V14 "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.  
V15 "But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

### **MY FAVORITE QUOTES ON FORGIVENESS**

Alexander Pope

To err is human, to forgive is divine.

IT IS DIVINE

C.S. Lewis

Everyone says that forgiveness is a lovely idea until he has something to forgive.

IT IS DIFFICULT

Holmgren

Seeing with better eyes "We can recognize that the offender is a valuable human being who struggles with the same needs, pressures, and confusions that we struggle with. We will recognize that the incident really may not have been about us in the first place.

Instead it was about the wrongdoer's misguided attempt to meet his or her own needs.

As we regard offenders from this point of view (regardless of whether they repent and regardless of what they have done or suffered), we will be in a position to forgive them.

IT IS PERSPECTIVE

Peter Ustinov

Love is an act of endless forgiveness.

IT IS LOVE EXTENDED

Marianne Williamson

Forgiveness does not mean that we suppress anger; forgiveness means that we have asked for a miracle: the ability to see through mistakes that someone has made to the truth that lies in all of our hearts. Forgiveness is not always easy. At times, it feels more painful than the wound we suffered, to forgive the one that inflicted it. And yet, there is no peace without forgiveness. Attack thoughts towards others are attack thoughts towards ourselves. The first step in forgiveness is the willingness to forgive.

IT IS THERAPUTIC

**MARK THE WORD OF JESUS in Mark 2:5: "My son, your sins are forgiven."**

1. The miracle of Jesus forgiving the paralytic – greater than his physical healing
2. The miracle of God forgiving my sin – and the sin of the world
3. The miracle of my forgiving the sin of another