



# CONNECT GROUP NOTES

## Sunday 13.08.2023

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“The paralyzed man ”

### **Preacher**

Ps. Nathan Bean

### **Scripture**

“They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 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.”

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?”

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.” 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 2:2-12



## **Thought**

We live in a world where we have all the information we could ever ask for, more knowledge than any generation before us, yet somehow we find ourselves more lost than we've ever been before. We're educated but we have no meaning. We know the price of things, but not the value.

We often approach Jesus in the same way; we want answers to our questions and think that acquired knowledge and mere information will change our lives. It's almost as if there's a silent condition on our following of Christ whereby we'll follow Him if he gives us the appropriate response to our queries.

Yet when we look at the life of Jesus, we find that he doesn't answer questions, rather He asks them. These questions aren't mere intellectual questions, either - they are questions of the heart, questions that invoke a response from the deepest part of us, and the asking of them draws something out of us that no mere eloquent answer ever could.

In today's passage, we see an interaction between a man who was seeking God's help. His friends brought him to Jesus, seeking healing, yet we find Jesus responds with an unexpected statement; "Son, your sins are forgiven".

Jesus, the master teacher, doesn't look at the crowds around Him, but His gaze is fixed on the crippled man. His first word imparts not just a sense of connection and restoration - but a hugely earth shattering degree of intimacy between an all-knowing, all-powerful God and a man who had been rejected by society. "Son" - the very word carries such a deep implication. This is not an employee / boss relationship. This is an invite to the closest of son/daughter and father relationships. Jesus is bringing this man into His own family. We can never get past the tenderness of Jesus. His heart is kind, He is a tender father and His character is always good.

Jesus always sees the need beneath the need. He didn't go straight to the seemingly obvious, He didn't speak to the man's visible disability, rather He addressed a much deeper, less visible need - one of complete acceptance. Could it be that sometimes we seek His hand in order to achieve something that we think will heal us? We ask Jesus to help us so we can achieve a career or health or whatever we think will fulfil us or make our life better.



They're the "if only's" of life. These things are often valid, they're ok, but God knows deeper. He knows the deepest desires of our heart and His desire is to truly change us from the inside out.

The paralytic needed more than physical healing. Yes, Jesus would supply this in His grace, but the miracle on that day was not the man walking out on his feet, but a man walking out forgiven and set free. He left that place restored to the relationship he was made for, finally found in the eyes of a loving saviour who both knows his earthly needs, but more importantly knows the deepest desires and needs of his heart, even the deep places that he dare not explore or reveal.

And so it is with us. We have many needs, and God knows them all. Yet there is something deeper. Are we willing to allow Christ to peel back the layers that we place around our heart? Do we dare invite the master physician to do his deep work in our lives? Jesus is inviting us to truly put our faith in Him by laying down our own desire for answers in place of truly trusting in His goodness and His grace that stretches from everlasting to everlasting.

### **Discussion Points**

1. Do I need to ask God for forgiveness of sins for the first time? Or do I need to lay myself before Him and hear Him accept me as a son or daughter?
2. Do I need to know today that He knows my needs?
3. Do I need to lay down my needs today and allow Him to ask the questions of my heart that lead to deep and everlasting peace and relationship with Christ, my loving father?

### **Personal application + Prayer**

Father,



I thank you that you know me completely. Search my heart and reveal to me the parts of my heart that need surrendering to you. Ask me, Lord, what You need to ask in order that my life would truly be surrendered to You, and lead me on the right paths to know Your forgiveness, Your acceptance and the freedom that comes with a life surrendered to You.

Thank you that your ultimate promise is that I will dwell in Your presence forever and know the fullness of Your joy. Do your work in me and make me new.

Amen.