

Marks

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible Reading
Giving Time, Talents & Resources ■ Spiritual
Friendships ■ Service In & Beyond the Church

of Discipleship

March 13, 2022

Day 1: Mark 2:1-2 When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them.

Capernaum is on the Sea of Galilee and is the village where Jesus stayed when he was not traveling. The house probably belonged to Peter's mother-in-law. The Synagogue where Jesus taught, though in ruins, is not far from the house. His fame preceded Him before going to Capernaum. Jesus had been teaching and healing in the region of the Galilee.

Question: How would people at that time know Jesus was in town?

Challenge: Do a little research to see how big the house might have been.

Day 2: Mark 2:3-4 Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay.

The crowd is a barrier to the man's healing just as his illness is a barrier to the man's full participation in the life of the community. In Jesus' time having physical access to places was not considered by Jesus as the problem with being paralyzed. His main concern has to do with the lame man not being allowed to be a full member of the community. He would not have been allowed to be in the priesthood and at the Qumran community he would be excluded, period. In our time we have passed laws to lessen the exclusion of persons who are handicapped from buildings and other public services. Jesus knows that there are some barriers that cannot be eliminated but those erected to benefit the few are to be taken down. The issue of accessibility is not just one of a physical nature but also of attitude.

Question: Why were there four men carrying him?

Challenge: How do you feel about visiting folks in the hospital? Does it do any good for the patient? Why or why not

Day 3 : Mark 2:5 When Jesus saw their faith; he said to the paralytic, 'Son, your sins are forgiven.'

It is the faith of those helping the paralyzed man that is affirmed by Jesus. We ought not to think that the paralyzed man did not have any faith, but that for some reason he could not use it even for his own healing. When Jesus questioned the disciples for having little faith during the storm at sea he was not saying they had no faith but that they were not using it. Their barrier to faith was the worry about being drowned. The crippled man believed he could not be restored fully to the community. Jesus forgives his sins not because sinning caused the crippling but because Jesus is showing that the real barrier in life is our separation from God. Jesus restores the crippled man to full relationship with the community and God.

Question: Jesus does heal the man but why do you think he said your sins are forgiven first?

Challenge: What should be first - sins forgiven or physical healing

Day 4: Luke 5:12 Once, when he was in one of the cities, there was a man covered with leprosy. When he saw Jesus, he bowed with his face to the ground and begged him, 'Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean.' Leprosy in Jesus' time covered a number of skin disorders and was considered a social disease because those labeled were considered unclean, impure and were to be separated from others (Leviticus 13). The leper comes to Jesus (who by custom he was not supposed to even approach) and calls Jesus Lord, thereby acknowledging Jesus' standing. The leper wants to be made clean, which means that he wants to be part of his family and community once again.

Question: Did the man want to be healed or pronounced clean?

Challenge: You will find this uncomfortable but when you are alone some time pray with your face on the ground.

Day 5: Luke 5:13 Then Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, 'I do choose. Be made clean.' Immediately the leprosy left him. Jesus releases the man from his leprosy.

His illness has chained him to a life of separation and loneliness. To make him clean was to restore him to life. He may or may not have had what we today would call leprosy but whatever it was forced him to be put out of the town. The man demonstrated great faith and understanding of just who Jesus really was. In Jesus' time only a priest could pronounce a person clean. This man understands that Jesus is the Son of God and Jesus' power and authority is above that of the priests. He believed Jesus so was made clean. Today we need to believe that He is the Redeemer so we can be made clean.

Question: Why do you think the lepers were forced to live outside of the town when others with physical problems were not (the blind, lame, etc.)?

Challenge: Can you think of some illnesses today that we partially treat by keeping people separate from one another

Day 6: Luke 5:-14 And he ordered him to tell no one. 'Go', he said, 'and show yourself to the priest, and, as Moses commanded, make an offering for your cleansing, for a testimony to them.'

Even though Jesus' authority and power exceeded the Priests, still He was more concerned with the man's return to society than His own fame. Even though Jesus can release him from the illness, the rest of the community will not accept the man until the priest pronounces him clean. In this verse Jesus shows He is concerned with the person and not with fame. Jesus gives all of us a lesson in humility. The compassion of Jesus is seen in Him lowering Himself for the sake of another. Those in power today could take a lesson. They are elected to recede into the background while those they serve are cared for.

Question: How would the priest know that the man had leprosy?

Challenge: Think of a time that you receded into the background while someone else stood in the limelight. How did you feel