

Wreck this House

Mark 2:1-12

Where Are We in the Gospel? (v.1-2)

Jesus has been preaching, healing, teaching all around Galilee.
He hasn't been able to set foot in any town without being swarmed.
He finally comes home and is swarmed again.

Wreck this House

Story of Uncle Sam

Paralyzed when he was a university student in a car accident.
Visiting him when he was in his care facility.
The difficulties faced by a paralyzed person beyond the physical
Lost his fiancée
Loneliness
Loss of dignity - diapers, nurses
Stuck in a care facility

You find out who your friends are.

This paralyzed man had four amazing friends.
Friends who cared for him more than anything else.
Friends who hope faith, had hope, had love.

A paralytic has no value in the economy.

They are a drain on funds, time and energy.
Socially it's not like they are going to do all the "fun" things.
Life now is better for those with disabilities, but not in Jesus' day.
But a broken body or even a broken mind
does not make a person worthless in God's eyes.

A friend called me up and wanted to sort out his feelings about abortion.

His brother and girlfriend were told that there was a chance their baby
may have a disability so they aborted the baby.
My friend had mixed feelings about it.
He was sad that there was an abortion but grew up with the
message that maybe it was better that the baby was aborted.
Life would be "better" for his brother without the difficulty of
raising a physically challenged child.
He called me in order to get a different perspective.

Life is easier without wounded people.

It is more convenient.

It is less economically, emotionally and psychologically draining.

But life is not better.

In fact it is the difficult things in life, the sacrifices we are willing to make that grow us and define us in our character and in our souls.

God's love is for the broken, spiritually, emotionally, psychologically and yes, physically.

We always have a choice, but babies do not.

This is not about guilt, but truth.

This paralytic, was not kicked to the curb or ignored.

He was carried by his four friends.

So they carried him up to the roof and started wrecking this guys house.

They did not care about social propriety or convenience.

They wanted to bring their friend to Jesus.

Jesus was their hope, they had faith he could do something.

Who has carried you in the past?

Who have you had the courage to carry?

Forgiveness through the faith of others.

Jesus doesn't heal the man.

Instead "seeing their faith" he forgives him his sins.

Whoa, there.

No one here asked for forgiveness.

What is going on?

Theologians can guess.

Maybe the man felt guilty.

Maybe people thought he was guilty and that is why he's sick.

Or maybe, like his friends he believed that God was good.

Whatever it was Jesus is making a very clear statement.

He has come not to attend just to the outside of a person but the inside.

Jesus sees not just and individual but the community - the networks.

It matters what church you are in.

You will become like those you are with and those you open your heart to.

Stuck

The Experts in the Law Notice right away.

It's not the hole in the roof.
It's not compassion for the paralyzed man.
It's about their old way of understanding.
It's about their idea of right theology and religion.
No one can forgive but God.
But they never accepted Jesus as God, even to this day.

Jesus didn't have to be a mind reader he could see what they thought.

He could see the contempt in their eyes.
The indignation.
He knew that what they saw was not the man, his friends or his faith.
They couldn't see.

A person's way always seems right to themselves.

Self-righteousness is a sin God cannot abide.
It despises others out of pride, fear, insecurity.
It plain has to feel better than.
There is no love in it.
We too hold on to ways of thinking about the church,
about people, about life, that are oppressive.
Not only to others but to ourselves.
It is like the shrivelled up Grinch heart.

Healing & Forgiveness

And why didn't Jesus heal him first?

What a disappointment!

I remember praying for a friend's mom to be healed of cancer.

The whole church prayed - we had prayer meetings.

She died.

But the secret of this passage is in what Jesus says and does.

Jesus asked them Why they think the way they do.

The asks whether healing or forgiveness is harder.

This is a rhetorical question.

To show that he did indeed have power to heal the inside
he heals the outside.

But really they are one and the same.

Jesus healed the man's soul out of mercy and compassion.

He also heals the man's paralysis out of mercy and compassion.

Forgiveness and healing both reveal God's affection and love.

Sometimes bad things happen to us because of our own stupidity or sin.

At other times bad things happen because of the stupidity and sin of others.

They are natural consequences that are logical and casual.

But then there are sufferings that are inexplicable that perplex us.

At this point people ask where God is and if he cares and if he exists.

Jesus' words and actions reveal something very important.

God does not forgive for forgiveness' sake.

God does not heal for healing sake.

He does it because it is his nature to do so.

God loves us whether we live or die, whether we are wise or foolish,
whether we suffer or are comfortable.

His love trumps the absurdity of our suffering.

It reaches into and beyond the grave, beyond cancer, beyond loneliness.

It is greater than all our sin.

The one who believes finds peace.

The one who does not, does not.

For one crippled man, he walked away, forgiven and free.

The people were amazed, praised God and said,

"We've never seen anything like this!"

Ask God to show you where you are stuck.

Tell him about your disappointments.