

2025-07-13

What Is Easier to Say?

Mark 2:1-12

Questions to ask yourself:

Why do I believe certain things people tell me?

Am I believing people who I know are trustworthy?

Do I believe the Bible is true?

(Psalm 33:4 / 119:160 / John 17:17 / 2 Timothy 3:16 / 2 Peter 1:20-21)

Why would the Jewish scribes come to listen to Jesus?

Is there someone I can bring to Jesus? How can I make this happen?

What does my faith look like?

How does God see my faith in action?

Have you asked God to forgive your sins?

Are your sins forgiven?

Does God remind you of your past sins?

Do people?

Does Satan?

How do you handle these?

What did Jesus do to forgive our sins?

Do you forgive people?

Actions to take:

Evaluate why you believe what people tell you or what you read, whether they are a preacher, politician, reporter, family, friend or foe.

Jesus wants us to believe He is the truth and He speaks the truth. Chose to believe the truth. Chose to believe Jesus and His word. Follow Jesus' teaching.

Forgive others as God has forgiven you. (Matthew 6:14-15)

Next week: Mark 2:13-17

How Can Jesus Do That?

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What is Easier to Say?

Mark 2:1-12

Do you believe everything people say? Probably not. Do you believe just anything people say? Again, probably not. There are times we believe what people say because we trust them to speak the truth. Hopefully, the main reason we trust them is because they have proven themselves in the past to be trustworthy. We do not need continuous proof. Sometimes we will believe what people say because we want to believe what they say. What is being said fits with what I believe and I like it that way. We have to be careful in this area especially if we base our belief on our feelings more than facts. Someone once said, **stop confusing me with the facts**. We should backup our beliefs with truth. For Christians, the scriptures are our primary source of truth. Other times we will not believe what people say unless they can prove what they say to be true. We begin with doubt, which is not a bad thing, because we do not know if they are trustworthy or not. In a courtroom, evidence is presented to help the judge and jury to determine who is telling the truth. We should want proof that what is being said is true. And there are times that even when someone can prove what they say is true, we still will not believe them. Jesus was dealing with people with each of these different attitudes and convictions. In our scripture today, Jesus is questioned about His claim of being God and His claim to be the Messiah.

Mark 2:1 “*And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house.*” Jesus and His disciples had to leave Capernaum because the people of Capernaum were more interested in the healing power of Jesus than hearing His preaching. Jesus and His disciples went to the surrounding villages to preach repentance and the good news of God’s kingdom. Things were going well for Jesus. It seems like people were listening and responding well to His messages. Then a leper came to Jesus and asked to be healed. Jesus knew what was going to happen, still He was willing to heal the leper. Jesus strictly warned this man who was healed not to speak about his healing to anyone but to show the priest and follow the law (Mark 1:44). The man did not follow the instructions of Jesus. He spread the news about his healing and not the teachings of Jesus. Jesus and His disciples had to go out into the deserted areas. Still people “*came to Him from every direction*” (1:45). At some point Jesus and His disciples returned to Capernaum “*after some days.*” How many days? No one knows. What we do know is that Jesus taught in the synagogues of the surrounding towns (1:39). The important matter for Jesus was, the people of Capernaum were now ready to listen to what He had to teach them. The word spread throughout the town that Jesus had returned. More than likely the house Jesus and His disciples went to and taught from was Peter and Andrew’s home.

Verse 2 *“Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.* It did not take long for Peter’s house to be filled with people. People actually came to hear Jesus preach. We will learn that even some of the **scribes** had come to hear Jesus. When you hear the word ‘scribe,’ what do you think of? Scribes were generally Pharisees who made copies of the law. They knew the law inside and out. We might want to think of them as **lawyers** or attorneys. Why did they come to hear Jesus? They wanted to make sure that what He was teaching was true. These scribes generally fell into that fourth group of people. They were people who refuse to believe even when the facts are presented and actions are done. Jesus will prove who He is but some people refused to believe Him. As Jesus taught, the room filled up. People were shoulder to shoulder. The doorway was blocked with more people trying to listen. People also crowded around the windows to listen to Jesus.

Verse 3 *“Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men.”* It is possible that this man did not make it to Jesus the first time He was in town and healed many people (1:34). It is very probable that this man was not even a paralytic when Jesus was in town the last time. Why was this man a paralytic? We are not told. Why does Jesus focus on forgiving his sins first before a physical healing? People have suggested that the man’s paralysis was caused by something he did wrong. It is not every time that our sinful actions cause physical problems, but sometimes they do. Have you ever done something wrong and ended up getting yourself or someone else hurt? I have. Maybe these four men were part of the reason this man was a paralytic. Not only did this man need physical healing, more importantly, he needed spiritual healing and Jesus knew it.

Verse 4 *“And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.”* What an interesting scene. Homes in Capernaum had flat roofs. There was an outside stairway to access the roof. Roofs were used for storage, for drying out things and for sleeping on hot summer nights. Since these men could not get in the door, nor could they get close to a window to get Jesus’ attention, they went to the roof. These four men dug through the roof. They made a big enough hole for a mat with a paralyzed man laying on it to be lowered into the house. I am glad they did not have an HOA. They would have had a fit! Think of those sitting in the room below those men digging a big hole in the roof. What a mess. Think of Jesus. Did He stop teaching? Did He just watch this whole process take place. Did He look over at Peter and Andrew to see if they were a bit angry because someone was digging a big hole in their roof? How was Jesus going to handle this? Should Jesus be concerned about the roof or being interrupted?

Verse 5 *“When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, ‘Son, your sins are forgiven you.’”* What does faith look like? In this instance, faith is seen in the men digging a big hole in a roof. Does God see your faith? Does God want to see your faith? Yes, He does! What does your faith look like? What are you willing to do to show God you believe Him? I imagine Jesus sitting there, brushing off the debris that fell on Him. He looked up at the four men on the roof who were peering through the hole, wanting to see what Jesus was going to do. Then Jesus looked at the man on the mat before Him. Jesus told the man, *“Son, your sins are forgiven you.”* Some people may think the man was disappointed. He came for a physical healing and did not get it. I believe Jesus gave this man something greater and the man knew it. When the man heard these words from Jesus, he was released from all of his guilt. He was a free man. The word *‘forgiven’* carries the truth that **God removes the guilt of our sin from our lives so that we are not hindered by our sin any longer** (Psalm 103:12). I can imagine that this man began to cry. He forgot all about his paralysis. He would have been happy the rest of his life in the physical condition he was in, knowing his sins were all forgiven.

Verses 6-7 *“And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, ‘Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?’”* These scribes, these lawyers were not overjoyed because a life had been redeemed. **They were offended because Jesus forgave his sins.** These scribes knew the scripture. Only God can forgive sins (Isaiah 43:25 / Jeremiah 31:34). When these scribes heard the truth, they did not believe it. By His action Jesus openly claimed to be God by forgiving sins. These Scribes thought Jesus was speaking a lie. Why was Jesus crucified? Because He claimed to be God by His words and actions (Mark 14:62-64 / John 10:33). Do you know the hardest thing Jesus ever had to do? He prayed for another way, but there was none. Jesus had to take our sins upon Himself and die in our place for our sins so that we can be forgiven and enjoy a right relationship with God (Romans 4:24-5:1).

Verses 8-9 *“But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, ‘Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk’?”* These scribes were trying to figure out how a person could make the statement that Jesus made. *“Son, your sins are forgiven you.”* **Why should they believe Jesus?** Why were they reasoning this out? Shouldn’t they just believe Him? What proof has Jesus shown that He can forgive sins and that He is God? We do the same thing. In our hearts and minds we try and reason things out. We try to understand. We try to believe. What am I supposed to believe? How am I supposed to act? What am I supposed to do? Jesus had a great teachable

moment. What is easier? To say to the paralytic, your sins are forgiven, or to say rise up and walk? When spoken, one is mostly invisible, the other should be very visible.

Verses 10-11 *“But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins—He said to the paralytic, ‘I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.’”* Jesus tried to help the scribes and everyone else who were reasoning in their hearts about who Jesus was, to believe. Jesus used the term “*Son of Man*” to emphasize that He is the Messiah (Daniel 7:13). He wanted them to make that connection. Then to prove He has power to forgive our sins, Jesus healed the paralytic. Jesus wanted everyone to see that what He says is true. It happens.

Verse 12 *“Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, ‘We never saw anything like this!’”* The healing was immediate. Everyone witnessed it. What Jesus said was true. The paralyzed man was not paralyzed any longer. He was able to pick up his mat and walk out the door to his home. If that is true, and it is, then when Jesus told the man his sins were forgiven, that also immediately happened too. Everyone was amazed, they were beside themselves with amazement in seeing this healing. Hopefully the people made the connection, what Jesus says, happens. It is true. Since this man is healed completely, his sins were forgiven completely. Since Jesus forgave his sins, and only God can forgive sins, then Jesus must be God.

Do you believe Jesus is God? Do you believe He can forgive your sins? Though this man never asked to be forgiven, I think Jesus saw his need before he had a chance to ask. Jesus forgave him. He will forgive us too. *“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you”* (Luke 11:9). This works in the area of forgiveness as well. Jesus gave to us this ministry of forgiveness. The first thing Jesus taught His disciples after His resurrection was to forgive. The first time He appeared to them as a group, the one thing He told them was, *“If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained”* (John 20:23). A good work of Jesus is forgiving others. A good work we can do is to forgive others. God has every right to condemn us and everyone. Instead, He chooses to forgive all who seek His forgiveness through Jesus. Forgive (Matthew 6:14-15).

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