

HEALING THE PARALYTIC

Luke 5:17-26

INTRODUCTION:

It's easy to get caught up in the idea of missions without realizing our personal role in the mission. For example, many love sports. They sit on the sidelines and pull for their favorite team but never step foot on the playing field to make a contribution themselves. They are great cheerleaders but not actual contributors. Sadly, the same can be said for members of the local church as well.

MAIN TEXT:

On one of those days while he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea, and also from Jerusalem. And the Lord's power to heal was in him. Just then some men came, carrying on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed. They tried to bring him in and set him down before him. Since they could not find a way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on the stretcher through the roof tiles into the middle of the crowd before Jesus.

Seeing their faith he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

Then the scribes and the Pharisees began to think to themselves: "Who is this man who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

But perceiving their thoughts, Jesus replied to them, "Why are you thinking this in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he told the paralyzed man, "I tell you: Get up, take your stretcher, and go home."

Immediately he got up before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went home glorifying God. Then everyone was astounded, and they were giving glory to God. And they were filled with awe and said, "We have seen incredible things today" (Luke 5:17-26, CSB).

PASSAGE OUTLINE:

I. THESE MEN HAD A MISSION.

Mission drives us, doesn't it? It drives us as individuals, and it also drives our culture. Some of you are All-Conference Christians. You have a mission statement for your family. You've even got them painted by some really artsy person, and it hangs over your fireplace. We develop mission statements for our companies to help keep us on course. When we get off course from our mission statement, all of a sudden, we're not doing what our company was created to do. It defines the basics and essentials. For example,

INSTAGRAM: *To capture and share the world's moments.*

Jesus had a mission statement: "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10, CSB).

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

- What drives you?
- What things, spiritually, has God put on your heart that you long to see come to fruition in your lifetime?
- Do you have kingdom dreams (such as people coming to faith in Christ), or are your dreams all tied to this life?

- When was the last time you stopped to think about those dreams?

II. THESE MEN HAD AN EAGER EXPECTATION.

They actually believed that Jesus could heal this man. They thought, “Maybe, just maybe.” They took a risk because of the mission. This is true of men and women throughout the Bible (e.g., Joshua leading the Israelites into the Promised Land or Elijah on Mt. Carmel). We now live on the other side of Jesus’ work on the cross and through the empty tomb. How much greater should our expectations be?

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

- Do you have an eager expectation of someone coming to faith?
- Does your eager expectation move you to action?

III. THESE MEN ENCOUNTERED AN OBSTACLE.

Because of the crowd, there was no way to Jesus. At this point, many of us give up. We throw up the white flag of surrender. There’s no way in—or so it seems. We assume that an open door is equal to the path of least resistance. Imagine for a moment if the apostle Paul would have only walked through open doors? Half of the New Testament would have never been written. These men saw the obstacle, but because their hope and belief were so strong, they kicked open that closed door.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

- What obstacles have derailed you from the mission?
- What would it look like for you to dig a hole in the roof?

IV. THESE MEN GOT MORE THAN THEY BARGAINED FOR.

Don’t settle for the mundane when Jesus wants the miraculous. People thought the primary need was external. What Jesus did in this passage is true for everyone. He shows us that the greatest need is an internal posture of a heart that needs to be changed. And, when Jesus addressed the deeper need, the people were filled with awe! I love the order that takes place here. It’s actually the heart of the gospel.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

- How did others play a role in your trusting in Jesus?
- In what ways has Jesus transformed your life?
- Why would you not long for this same type of transformation in others?

CONCLUSION:

“Now it came to pass that a group existed who called themselves fishermen. And lo, there were many fish in the waters all

around. In fact, the whole area was surrounded by streams and lakes filled with fish. And the fish were hungry.

“Week after week, month after month and year after year, these who called themselves fishermen met in meetings and talked about their call to fish, the abundance of fish and how they might go about fishing. Year after year, they carefully defined what fishing means, defended fishing as an occupation and declared that fishing is always to be a primary task of fishermen.

“Continually, they searched for new and better methods of fishing and for new and better definitions of fishing. They created witty slogans and displayed them on big, beautiful banners.

“These fishermen built large, beautiful buildings called “Fishing Headquarters.” The plea was that everyone should be a fisherman and every fisherman should fish. One thing they didn’t do, however: They did not fish.

“In addition to meeting regularly, they organized a board to send out fishermen to other places where there were many fish. The board hired staffs and appointed committees and held many meetings to define fishing, to defend fishing and to decide what new streams should be thought about. But the staff and committee members did not fish.

“Large, elaborate and expensive training centers were built whose original and primary purpose was to teach fishermen how to fish. Over the years, courses were offered on the needs of fish, the nature of fish, where to find fish, the psychological reactions of fish and how to approach and feed fish.

“Those who taught had doctorates in fishology, but the teachers did not fish. They only taught fishing. Year after year, after tedious training, many graduated and were given fishing licenses. They were sent to do full-time fishing, some to distant waters, which were filled with fish. Many who felt the call to be fishermen responded. They were commissioned and sent to fish. But like the fishermen back home, they never fished.

“They engaged in all kinds of other occupations. Some felt their job was to relate to the fish in a good way, so the fish would know the difference between good and bad fishermen. Others felt that simply letting the fish know they were nice, land-loving neighbors and how loving and kind they were was enough.

“Now it’s true that many of the fishermen sacrificed and put up with all kinds of difficulties. Some lived near the water and bore the smell of dead fish every day. They received the ridicule of some who made fun of their fishermen’s clubs and the fact that they claimed to be fishermen yet never fished.

“Imagine how hurt some were when one day a person suggested that those who don’t fish were really not fishermen, no matter how much they claimed to be. Yet it did sound correct. Is a person a fisherman if, year after year, he never fishes? More plainly stated: Is one really following if he isn’t fishing?”

It’s time to start casting our nets. Who’s the one you’re going to go after?

Who’s your one?