

Matthew 9:1-8
Authority to Forgive

Above a crowded room ...

- I. A Paralytic & His Friends
 - A. A Desperate Man
 - B. Needs More than Meets the Eye
- II. Jesus: Healer of Souls
 - A. A Deeper Healing
 - B. At the Word of God
 - C. And A Word for Detractors
- III. To God Be the Glory
 - A. General Awe
 - B. Personal Praise

... face to face with forgiveness.

Children, Listen ...

1. What did the paralytic's friends help him do?
2. What is the first thing Jesus says to the man?
3. What does Jesus do next for the man?
4. Why are some of the people upset because Jesus said He forgave the man's sin?
5. How should we react to being forgiven of our sin by Jesus?

Which is Easier?

Matthew has recorded for us a string of miracles. Jesus has healed a leper, a paralytic from a distance, and numerous others. He has calmed a raging storm and cast an army of demons out of a tormented fellow. Now in the middle of a preaching session He is interrupted by four men who cleverly repel their paralyzed friend down from the roof of the jam-packed house Jesus has been staying in. Seeing their faith, and before any words were spoken by the intruders the Lord preempts any requests by declaring the forgiveness of sins! For the moment it may have seemed like a grave disappointment to the crippled man. To the pharisees and scribes, and probably to many other devout Jews what Jesus said was blasphemy as only God can pronounce the absolution of sin. Well, this was not disappointment the poor man because a problem bigger than his disability was solved (that would be taken care of too) his sins were forgiven! And the detractors were wrong, because Jesus is God incarnate and has exclusive rights to declare sin forgiven – this is not blasphemy, it is divine decree! So, Jesus question “which is easier” kind of turns things on its head. Think about it. And further, which is more important after all? While God can decree forgiveness when we get to chapter 27 we will that the necessary means of forgiveness is anything but easy. The writer of Hebrews reflects back on the incidents recorded there.

Hebrews 9:12

He entered once for all into the holy places,
not by means of the blood of goats and calves
but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

Hebrews 9:26

He has appeared once for all at the end of the ages
to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.