

12/10/23- SERIES: 'FOR EVERYONE' (#2) PASTOR LEE

Luke 5:17-18 On one of these days, as He was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Him to heal. (18) And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus.

Get him
to
Jesus!

- Imagine how very difficult it must have been....in those days...to bring this disabled man.... to this home. We know little of him or his 'carriers'. But we can assume that they just heard of the *miraculous* healing of the leper. Inspired/ spurred by this and with otherwise ungarnered optimism, they are moved to bring him to Jesus!

- How bold...how risky! Yet....as friends...willing to do something (in this case, something big) they ordinarily would NOT do. But even the least of them (all essential 'cogs') recognized that 'we are our friend's best chance to be healed.....IF WE CAN JUST GET HIM TO JESUS'!

- Analogous point: Almost every story about someone coming to Jesus starts with someone caring enough!

Mark 2:1-12- - And when He returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. (2) and many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the Word to them. (3) And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic carried by four men. (4) And when they could not get near Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. (5) And when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." (6) now some of the scribes were sitting, questioning in their hearts, (7) "why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (8) And immediately Jesus, perceiving in His Spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, " why do you question these things in your hearts? (9) Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'? (10) But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"-He said to the paralytic- "I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." (12) And he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

He Heals
And
Forgives

Many Ignored
Signs...

Do We?

Who Needs
Help?
... Everyone

Challenge:
Bring
People
To
Faith!!

Jesus!!!

- Capernaum...where Jesus spent much of adult life and performed many of His miracles....yet in this town, Jesus later reported that many (the people AND the religious leaders) did not come to believe.....an amazing and ironic fact. Just the story above was such a big deal... the Son of Man who could forgive sins and heal lepers, bring people back to life, etc. While they were all waiting for the Messiah, they somehow, inexplicably, did not come to recognize Him.

- Point to all of us: **BE CAREFUL!...WE STAND IN THE HEARING OF THE WORD OF GOD....YET WE IGNORE?...OR TAKE IT FOR GRANTED?**

- We are in the season of Christmas to celebrate Jesus...in the midst of that....some, if not many, will push Him away. Equally as inexplicable as these passages. We need to pray that we don't ourselves, build walls or allow our hearts to harden.

- Second point: considering all the practical logistics and the pure 'moxie' of it all, imagine the boldness and pure faith of the four carriers of the paralytic **INTERCEDING ON HIS BEHALF!** Jesus certainly saw it and responded to it! Haven't we all been in the paralytic's circumstance?.....when things were bad....even possible all things lost.... **WHEN OTHERS HAVE HELPED US ALONG!**

- Third point: while the carriers were faced with all the challenges/risks but went forth anyway, those in the inner room were oblivious as to what was going on outside...then on the roof, etc.....kind of analogous to our feeling comfortable at Church or otherwise in our proverbial 'rooms'. Do we even know when we need help (eg. the paralytic)....do we know and move when someone needs our help!?

- **WRAPPING ALL OF THE ABOVE TOGETHER, DO WE- - RIGHT NOW- - HAVE THE FAITH TO HELP BRING SOMEONE TO JESUS?! WE COULD BE THAT ONE THAT BRINGS THE ONE!**

- Together, let's believe, in faith, that God loves that one outside of this 'room', and let's help bring him/her to faith.....ignoring cultural pressures and accepting the challenge. This same message and challenge is so consistent with our missions...whether in Senegal, Mexico, or even Great Valley.

- Re: Mexico and recognizing that we don't personally have the wherewithal or perhaps the skills to assist hands-on....., but we're challenging ourselves to be bold and risky in our newest support goal so that the Gospel might be spread in these indigenous /remote areas. Someone there needs Jesus...we can be of service to these people!

- And also address people outside our 'local room' (near home). Perhaps start with a 'broad sweep': Pastor Lee challenges us to flood our social media connections with faith-related and Christ First Church messages!

- **FINAL POINT: REMEMBER GOD'S GREATEST MIRACLE** (as in the paralytic).....not healing us...not aiding our lives somehow....but **IN HIS FORGIVENESS, THROUGH JESUS.**

PUT CHRIST FIRST IN YOUR CHRISTMAS!