

# A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

## An Expository Study of **The Gospel According to Luke** **Chapter 5- Luke 5:17-26** 67- What is Saving Faith?- Part 3

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April 11, 2010

### **Luke 5:17-26**

Now in this passage- there are three key verses that give us the meaning of the entire passage. They are the last part of verses 20 & 21, & 24 that says:

**...Friend, your sins are forgiven you.**

**... Who can forgive sins, but God alone?**

And the first part of verse 24 that says:

**But, so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,**

So this entire passage of ten verses is not about physical healing- but it is about Jesus having the Power and the Authority to forgive sins.

And because of what Jesus said to this paralyzed man here in verse 20- he became *permanently* forgiven- or in other words- this man was saved- even though he was physically healed and even though later on he died.

Now this statement by Jesus in verse 20 in the Greek is in what is called the "perfect tense"- so Dr. Luke is telling us that this man was permanently forgiven by Jesus for all his sins. And this absolutely stunned the Pharisees and the scribes- it just stunned them. And their brains began to buzz. Look again at verse 21:

**The scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this *man* who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"**

So here- the scribes and Pharisees began to reason- and their brains started to spin. And this group of religious experts was called the *grammateus*- the legal experts- they supposedly were experts of God's Law, and their minds started to sort out what they had just heard and seen. And they knew their theology well that only God Almighty had the Authority and the Power to forgive sins, and yet Jesus had just forgiven this man. So Jesus had just declared the guilty innocent- violating one of the most sacred sections of Jewish Law that we studied two weeks ago in **Proverbs 17** that teaches that anybody who forgives the guilty or who accuses the innocent is an abomination to the Lord.

Now you have to understand that these self-righteous Pharisees believed that most sick people were sick because they were sinful, and they believed and taught that God was angry with them, and so He had put a disease on them. And so they saw what Jesus did and they heard what Jesus said- their brains began to reel with this.

And it doesn't say they actually said anything. Their minds just began to explode and I'm sure that all the while their minds were reeling because of this incredible statement that Jesus had just made- that Jesus went right on teaching and speaking to the people as though nothing unusual had happened.

And Dr. Luke tells us what these men were thinking in their minds- in verse 21:

**...Who is this *man* who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?**

And as I told you last week- this was actually very sound and Biblical theology. It is true that only God has the Power and the Ability to forgive sins.

So if Jesus was simply a man like every other man- then what He said was outright blasphemy of the worst kind- so this is a huge issue with these people. How could Jesus say what he just said if God alone is the only One Who can forgive sins? What- does Jesus think He's God? And, of course, they quickly ruled that out and so the Pharisees reasoned among themselves that Jesus must have just committed blasphemy, and as you go through the other Gospel Accounts of Matthew, Mark and John, this became the constant perspective of the

Pharisees- that Jesus was not just somebody who periodically did something that they didn't like- but that Jesus was the worst blasphemer they had ever seen because Jesus was constantly saying things and constantly doing things that are reserved solely for God Himself to say and do.

So every single time that Jesus claimed to be God, every time Jesus attributed God as being His Father, every time Jesus performed a miracle, every time people worshipped Jesus- these men saw it as the worst case of blasphemy. And by doing this- they utterly rejected that Jesus was God in human flesh, and by doing this- they utterly rejected that Salvation comes only through Him, and so the Pharisees ultimately determined that what Jesus did was not by the Power of God- but by the power of Satan, which actually put them in the worst of all possible places because by doing this they were blaspheming the Holy Ghost- damning their own souls to hell.

You do not blaspheme the Holy Ghost by criticizing ministries or because you ask questions about somebody's ministry or because you don't understand or don't agree with what somebody is teaching. That is not how you blaspheme the Holy Ghost. People say that and teach that because they don't want to have to answer those questions and they don't want to be held accountable to Scripture and they don't want to have to live their lives underneath the same rules that they apply to you.

But we need to understand, dear friends, that all men are sinners and no minister is beyond reproach, and every minister has need to be corrected at times, and any minister that is worth his salt has no problem at all with people asking questions and of clarifying statements they make, and- when they say something that isn't Biblically accurate- they will be quick to repent.

Wayward ministers, and wayward and unbiblical ministries, use that tactic to put the fear of man in you so that you will simply agree to whatever they teach without hesitation and without question so they can manipulate and use you as the fleece the sheep.

But all of God's children are commanded by Scripture to try the spirits to see if they are of God, and we are commanded to judge righteous judgment, and we are commanded to use the Berean Test- the test of Biblical accuracy on every minister and on every sermon and on every doctrine and on every statement made by anyone in authority. So

you do not blaspheme the Holy Ghost by criticizing or even condemning another man- you blaspheme the Holy Ghost when you attribute something that Jesus does to satan.

I want you to read and study the Bible so you will know the Bible. That is why I developed a Bible reading Plan for you to follow- even though I realize that most of you don't follow it. I give you more information about theology and Scripture and Biblical positions of current issues that any ministry that I know of- even though I fully realize that most of you never read anything that I give- I still give it out precisely because I do not want you to be ignorant.

We have more Bible Studies that anyone I know, and we are one of the few Churches left that have a prominent night of prayer- all because I fear God, and I know what it is like to be led astray by someone and I am doing everything that I can to teach God's precious Word to you so that when the devil comes knocking on your door- you will not fall.

If you do not avail yourself of what I give you to read - that is between you and God- but take heed to yourselves, dear friends, that when you stand before God- you do not say that this Pastor didn't provide you with what you needed to be strong in the Lord and in the Power of His Might, but that the reason why you were weak and easily tricked by satan to live a very shallow and unproductive life is because you simply would not take the time to read and study and understand God's Word.

These men had to have an explanation of why and how Jesus was doing what He was doing, and that explanation had to be supernatural, and so they attributed the Works and the Words of the Incarnate God to satan, and by doing this- they blasphemed the Holy Ghost and forever damned their own souls into hell. They accused the perfect Lamb of God of being a wicked blasphemer. And they did it so long and so often and with such force that they finally get the majority of the people to turn against Jesus, and they are then able to get the Romans to execute Him.

Now you have to understand that the worst crime you could ever commit within the framework of OT Judaism was blasphemy because blasphemy was a direct assault on God Himself, and even though they didn't serve Him- they revered God. I mean, they did revere God in their own sort of twisted way. And Jewish tradition said that there are five ways you blaspheme God.

One, you speak evil of the Law of God which was speaking evil of the written Word of God or Scripture. And you remember that when the Apostle Paul came to Jerusalem after his last missionary journey and they accused him of speaking against the Law. That was a kind of blasphemy. Any attack on Scripture which was the Law of God to them and even their extended Law that they had developed beyond Scripture, any attack on what they saw as the Law of God was a form of blasphemy. That was the first kind of blasphemy.

The second step in blasphemy was to slander God Himself. First to speak evil of His Law, or His Word, second, to speak evil of Him. So for anyone to reject the Law, or to depreciate the Law, or to curse the Law, or to scorn the Law- that was blasphemy.

But thirdly- what was worse than speaking evil of God's Word was speaking evil of God Himself. So to curse the Name of God, to speak evil against God Himself was a worse form of blasphemy than to speak against the Word.

Fourthly was to put something in the place of God. So any idol, any other god was a violation of the first Commandment; worshiping any idol raised up in the place of God was an even higher or lower form of blasphemy.

But you want to go one step beyond that? The single most terrible form of blasphemy was to act like you *are* God. And this was blasphemy upon blasphemy upon blasphemy. And their distorted minds were just overwhelmed by this. So for Jesus to Claim to be able to forgive sin, and to say to this wicked man, *"Your sins are forgiven"*, or to say to somebody- *"You are not only exonerated- but you just moved from the category of guilty to the innocent, from being unjust to being just, from being unacceptable to God to being acceptable to God"*- this was the most outrageous blasphemy conceivable.

Why this man, Jesus, is talking as if He is God. Because by saying this to this man- Jesus might as well have said He's the Creator of the universe and that He's the Holy One of Israel and that He's the Redeemer of Zion. By telling this man that his sins were forgiven- Jesus was saying that He's the holy and Almighty One, the eternal judge, the God of glory.

So Jesus might as well have said all that because- these guys are thinking- *"Who can forgive sins but God alone?"* And they were right.

So after this moment- nobody can ever come to Jesus with any of that patronizing nonsense about Him being just a good teacher or an example or a humanitarian. No, He's either God or He is a blasphemer- one of the two. Now some people have said, "*Well, you know, the Jewish people, they rejected Jesus because they didn't quite get what He was saying.*" No, they got exactly what He was saying here and they rejected it. These self-righteous Jews rejected Jesus because they absolutely got what He was saying. Jesus was telling these men that he was God and they rejected Him based on that claim. This was not a case of misunderstanding- the Jews rejected Jesus then and they reject Him today, along with the Muslims and the atheists and other false religions, precisely because they absolutely *do* understand what Jesus is saying about Himself and they outright reject it. That is why you cannot be saved and believe what Islam teaches. You cannot be saved and believe what modern Judaism teaches.

But they were right about what they were thinking in the sense that Who *can* forgive sin but God alone? And the answer to that is- not another human being. So either Jesus is God or He's the rankest blasphemer that ever lived. And there aren't any other options.

Now these guys knew the Old Testament Law. And **Leviticus 24** told them exactly what to do with a blasphemer. And to them what Jesus had just done and said- was the most *extreme* form of blasphemy imaginable. It's worse than speaking against the Law of God; it's worse than speaking against God Himself. This is the most severe form of idolatry in that you are saying that You are God.

Now please turn with me to **Leviticus 24**. And in verses 10-24- the Holy Bible says:

**10 Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the sons of Israel; and the Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel struggled with each other in the camp.**

**11 The son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the Name and cursed. So they brought him to Moses. (Now his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.)**

**12 They put him in custody so that the command of the LORD might be made clear to them.**

**13 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,**

**14 “Bring the one who has cursed outside the camp, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head; then let all the congregation stone him.**

**15 You shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘If anyone curses his God, then he will bear his sin.**

**16 Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.**

Now many people would say today- *“What's the big deal here? I mean I hear people curse God every single day of my life.”* And that is true. The fact is that we are so far away from God and so used to sin and so used to people cursing God that we really don't think anything about it anymore. We can go and pay good money that God blessed us with to listen to people blaspheme God and it really doesn't bother us anymore- even though it should. We can sit and watch so-called comedy and laugh at jokes that mock righteousness and that promote evil and wicked and we think nothing about it.

And doing these things doesn't show us how sophisticated or open-minded we are or how far we have developed as a society- no- doing these things only tells us how far we have all fallen away from God and how we really enjoy people who blaspheme God. And that speaks volumes about our relationship with God.

These people in **Leviticus 24** were having a fight, and right in the middle of the fight- they curse. They curse God. And so they immediately brought the man to Moses. And it even tells everything about the man. *His mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan-* so God doesn't mind mentioning names and even genealogies. And they put this guy in custody. So Moses took him and put him in custody, he had cursed God, he had blasphemed God. And they waited to find out what the Lord would tell them to do with the guy.

So the Lord came at that time and spoke to Moses. This is what the Lord said, “Bring the one who has cursed outside the camp and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head and then let all the congregation stone him.” You talk about putting a somber mood on the party- but this was it.

And you shall speak to the sons of Israel saying, 'If anyone else curses God, he shall bear his sin- or in other words- you will stone him

too.' Moreover the one who blasphemes the Name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the alien as well as the native when he blasphemes the name shall be put to death.

And everybody gets involved with the stoning so that everybody sees the price of cursing God. And then **Leviticus 24:23** says,

**Then Moses spoke to the sons of Israel, and they brought the one who had cursed outside the camp and stoned him with stones. Thus the sons of Israel did, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.**

Now the Pharisees in Jesus' day knew this passage in **Leviticus** very well. Some of them had actually memorized entire Books of the OT and some had even memorized ever verse of the first five Books of the Bible. This was common among the people of God and it was common among them until about 150 years ago. I pray that God's people will once again value the Word of God enough to memorize entire sections of Scripture so that if and when they quit printing the Bible- we will have it written on our hearts.

And so these guys knew what should be done to a blasphemer, and they were absolutely ready to do it because Jesus is either a blasphemer or He's God. He either can forgive sin as God, or He has blasphemed God by saying that He can. And they could not and they would not accept the fact that Jesus was God. So in the blindness of their wickedness, in the blindness of their self-righteousness, they were unable to make the right decision about Who Jesus was. And so they categorically rejected Jesus as being God and they concluded that He was nothing but an evil blasphemer Who was energized by the devil himself.

Now please look at the first part of **Luke 5:22**:

**But Jesus, aware of their reasonings...**

Now I love this! **Jesus, aware of their reasonings...**, or their thoughts...Now keep in mind- they never actually said anything verbally- but Jesus- being fully Deity- knew what these Jewish leaders were actually thinking. Now the word that was translated here as "perceived" comes from the Greek word *epiginos*, which is a derivative



of the verb *epiginosko*, that means: *deep knowledge*. *Ginosko* by itself means: to know, and you add the preposition *epi* to the front of it for intensification and the word becomes: *deep knowledge*.

So Luke is telling us that Jesus had deep, penetrating, true, and full knowledge of their thoughts or their reasoning- which is *dialogismos* and means: *their mental dialoguing*. So in Alabama English- Jesus knew exactly what these men were thinking.

Now back in **Luke 2:35**, the old man, Simeon had said this to Mary about Jesus:

**A sword will pierce even your own soul—to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.**

... and here in **Luke 5**- this prophecy comes to pass, and this is one time when the very thoughts of the hearts of the Pharisees and scribes were clearly revealed to the Son of God. Now back in **Mark 2:8**, John Mark wrote:

**Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, “Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts?”**

So Jesus knew exactly what their thoughts were. So now Jesus moves to confront these people head on and He said to them in **Luke 5:22**,

**22 But Jesus, aware of their reasonings, answered and said to them, “Why are you reasoning in your hearts?”**

**23 Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins have been forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’?**

And the implication here is, “*Why are you reasoning like this in your hearts? Why are you having those kind of wicked thoughts? Why are you questioning My absolute Authority to forgive sin?*”

Now just stop for a moment and think about this. Only God Almighty knows what people are thinking. **1Samuel 16:7** says:

**...<sup>1</sup>God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.**

**1Kings 8:39b**

**...for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men,**

**1Chronicles 28:9**

**... for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.**

**Jeremiah 17:10**

**I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds.**

**Ezekiel 11:5**

**... 'Thus says the LORD, "So you think, house of Israel, for I know your thoughts.**

And you can read for yourself **Psalm 139**- particularly the first half that shows what God knows about the thoughts and intents of our hearts.

That is why every single human being on earth should hold what they do and what they think and what they say and how they live their lives up next to the Scriptures because unlike any other book on earth- the 66 Books of the Holy Bible have the Power and the Ability to discern between the very thoughts and intents of our hearts, and they are able to identify sin when we can't see it so clearly, and Scripture is able to keep our feet on the straight and narrow path, and to uncover where we are lukewarm and where we are backslidden and where we are sinning against God.

And so Jesus knew what they were thinking because Jesus is God. The Apostle John writes about Jesus in **John 2:25** and says,

**And because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.**

And so Jesus knew what they were thinking, and He knew they were thinking that He was a blasphemer. And He also knew that they wanted Him to kill Him. And so in **Luke 5:23**- Jesus confronts them with a question:

**Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?**

Now with that one question- Jesus penetrates to the real issue here and He forever seals the evidence of His Own Deity, and so this is a very provocative question.

Now notice that Jesus says,

**Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?**

So Jesus didn't ask which one was easier to *do*- but which one was easier to say. Not easier to "do"- but easier to "say". Now before I answer that question, let me talk about the connection here between this man's physical problem and his sin.

For Man- any man- you, me or anybody else- forgiving sin or healing organic diseases are both impossible. So here's this paralytic- here's a man who let's say is a quadriplegic- he is at least a paraplegic and is totally immobile. For how long- I don't know. But he has been paralyzed long enough that his muscles are all atrophied. And his bones are brittle and his brain has forgotten how to move his limbs, and were he somehow given the ability to move- his brain wouldn't know what to tell his legs to do. Anyone who is in this kind of condition for any length of time and suddenly regains his ability to move again- has to go through long drawn out therapy and rehabilitation so that his brain can become once again coordinated with his limbs.

So who among us has the power to say to a paralyzed man, "*Rise up and walk?*" Who has the power to say that? No man does. No human being can immediately touch this man and instantly and completely eliminate his paralysis and reverse the *cause* of his paralysis, and instantaneously give him brand new muscles and brand new bones and touch his brain so that his brain knows how to walk again. No man can do that.

But as true as it is that no human being has the power within himself to instantly heal this man- it is also true that no human being can forgive this man his sins either. And both of these things are connected. And this is very important- so listen up. For us humans- both physical healing *and* forgiveness are impossible- one is not easier

than the other- both are totally outside the realm of what we can do.

But for God- both physical healing and the forgiveness of sins are completely possible. God alone can forgive sins- and these Jews would agree with that. But God alone is also the only One who can create- God alone is the Creator and if He needs to create new limbs or new bones or new muscles or a new memory- then God can absolutely do that with no problem at all.

So both of these two things are possible only to God and not to any man.

But we can't stop here- we need to dig a little deeper into this- because both physical healing *and* the forgiveness of sins are absolutely inseparable. Sin and sickness are inseparable because they're both in the plan of Salvation.

Now there is a common teaching that has come into the modern Church in recent years that I need to address here. This teaching says that Physical Healing is part of the Atonement. And it sounds very spiritual and it sounds wonderful and it has taken the Church by storm and is one of the most popular and attractive teachings that exists in the modern Church. The only problem with this teaching is that it isn't true- the Bible doesn't teach it. Other than that- it's just fine.

But if we are going to examine this- we need to put definitions of these words. The word "Atonement" refers to the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. So when you attach physical healing to the Atonement- what you are saying is that by virtue of the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ- every believer has access to physical healing every single time they get sick.

Some go so far as to teach that not only is physical healing *available* to all believers by virtue of what Jesus has done for us- but that all believers *must* and *should* be healed every time they get sick. Now this teaching sounds pretty good until you come to the inevitable reality that all believers are not healed of physical diseases every time they get sick. And it is at this point where this teaching becomes very, very wrong- very, very quickly.

When people are healed - everyone rejoices and it appears that this teaching is confirmed among those who teach it. But when that poor soul who loves Jesus and is saved is *not* healed- then we are left to try to explain why. And at this point- there are two main avenues that most people take. In order to try to explain why they were not healed

some teach that the sick people simply didn't have enough faith to believe for their healing and that is why they were not healed.

So as it becomes painfully obvious that God has not healed them- and they are still sick- these pitiful people are told to go back and "get more faith", like it is some commodity that you can buy down at Wal-Mart, and after they have "built up their faith", then they can come back and try to be healed again. And, of course, there are some hidden keys and ancient secrets and special prayers and secret formulas that many of the leaders of the modern Church have either developed or that they have found or that they have received directly from God that they would be happy to share with you if you but their book for \$19.95 or agree to a monthly pledge or if you sow some "seed money" into the ministry.

Now what is even more horrible than this- is that many of these people try over and over and over for several years to be healed and most of the time when their diseases persists- these people sink down into total despair because they are being told that it is their fault as to why they are not being healed. These people were miraculously given enough faith to be saved- but somehow that is not enough to be healed and so they remain sick and discouraged, and many enter into eternity completely broken- having given up on God and everything about Him.

Now to add insult to injury- there are ministries that actually teach that in addition to these poor sick people not having enough faith to be healed- they obviously have committed some terrible sin and God is angry with them, and that is why they remain sick. So now in addition to trying to live sick and discouraged because they don't have enough faith to be healed- these poor sick people sink down into absolute moral condemnation- repenting of everything they can think of- trying as hard as they can to get saved as often as they can- working as hard as any Muslim or Roman Catholic- trying to get good enough to earn physical healing. I tell you- it's enough to break your heart.

So at the hardest time in their lives- instead of offering these people love and hope and comfort, and instead of them being encouraged by the Church to trust that because God is Absolutely Sovereign- that their trial of sickness is *not* in vain, it is *not* arbitrary, and it is *not* without purpose, and instead of being ministered to by the Church to trust in the Promises of God- that the Holy Bible declares that God Almighty is working all things together in their lives for the

greater good of the Glory of God- these people are condemned by the Church as being wicked sinners without enough faith to receive what so many others are freely getting.

That is why I tell you that the teaching of the modern Church that says that physical healing is part of the Atonement is the most vile and cruel teaching that has come into the Church in a long time. And it is very reminiscent of the Catholic Church back in Medieval Europe that taught the lie that in order for your family member who has died to ever see Heaven- you must give money to the Church to help build St. Peter's Basilica and buy an indulgence from the pope to free your dead uncle from the prison of Purgatory.

It was the manipulation of the poor illiterate people of 16th Century Europe through the selling of these indulgences to raise money to build St. Peter's Basilica that so outraged Martin Luther - that he wrote his 95 Thesis and nailed them to the door of the Church at Wittenberg- denouncing the practice of selling indulgences and said,

"If it is true that the pope has the power to release souls from Purgatory- would he not rather do it for love than for money?"

And if any human being on earth had the ability to relive people of their illnesses and did not- then that man would be the most cruel man in all the world. I am often rebuked because of what I say about this- and I always challenge those who do believe that they have a hot hand of who believe that God uses them to heal physical bodies today with this challenge.

I say to them. *"Look, we can cut to the chase real quick here. You don't have to agree with me about this at all- all you have to do is prove me wrong. Let's go down to Memorial Hospital and let's walk through the hospital and you go in each room and lay hands on the people in those beds who are dying of cancer and heart failure and kidney failure and AIDS and other terrible diseases and just lift them off their bed of illness in the Name of Jesus, and let them walk out of the Hospital totally healed of organic diseases and clean out the entire Hospital and I will join with you and I will repent of what I am saying. But until you do that- until you get away from your controlled environment where you control the situation and do that- you need to keep your mouth shut and stop deceiving people."*

So physical healing is *not* part of the Atonement in that sense- in the sense that every single child of God may be healed and should be healed every time they are sick or hurt or have a malfunction of their bodies.

God can and God does heal. He is a healing God by nature- but God heals as He wills- for His Glory and according to His purposes - and not based on our faith and not based on the faith of the one laying hands of you and not based on physical healing being part of the Atonement. Now like I said- this teaching is very popular because it is exciting and stimulating, but it simply is not taught anywhere in Scripture.

But what *is* taught in the Bible and where Physical Healing *is* part of the Atonement is in the sense that the day is coming when all of those who are saved are going to get new bodies, and those bodies will be perfect and those bodies will be glorified bodies and those bodies will never get sick and they will never be overweight and those bodies will never fail and those bodies will never be hurt and those bodies will never die.

And we will live in those new glorified bodies forever with Jesus, and that *is* part of the Atonement and that *is* part of what Jesus accomplished through His Death, Burial, and Resurrection.

If you go back to **Matthew 8:16&17**, the Bible tells us that in the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ- in the Atonement- is not only the salvation of our souls- but another provision has been made and that is ultimately the healing of our bodies.

So when you put all your faith in Jesus Christ your soul is saved, and then **Romans 8** says that from the very instant you are Justified until you enter into Heaven- you're waiting for the redemption of your body.

So in the end- as we stand before God in Heaven- we'll have new souls, and we'll have new spirits and we will also have new glorified bodies. So *ultimately* God has to deal with the sin that's in our soul and the infirmity as a result of that sin that's in our body. And God alone can do that. God alone can deal with sin, the root cause, and sickness and death, which are the effect of that cause. Now here is what is very important because Whoever is God- He has to be able to not only save our souls, but he also must be able to redeem our bodies as well.

So if this is the true Messiah of God, if Jesus is the one true Son of God, if He is God Incarnate Who brings the eternal kingdom of heaven, where there is no sin and no sickness and no death, then He has to be able not only to forgive sin, but He also to be able to remove all of sins consequences in the physical realm, too.

And when Jesus came into the world and healed people- He was making a very, very important statement by doing that. He came forgiving sin, and that's dealing with the cause, and He also came healing sickness- showing beyond any doubt whatsoever that He can also deal with the symptoms of sin and He can ultimately redeem our bodies as well.

And our final story, you know the final story on your life, the final story on my life and the life of all believers demands that the Lord be able to overpower both sin and weak frail bodies, right? And when we go to heaven- there's no sin there- but there is also no sickness there either, and in Heaven there will be no death.

What good would it do if Jesus could put away sickness, if He could put away disease, if He could put away death, if He could overpower sickness, and overpower illnesses, and overpower disease and overpower paralysis and even bring people back from the dead, but He couldn't forgive sin? What good would that do in an eternal sense?

Because if Jesus could not deal with the root cause of sickness which is sin- then all the other symptoms of sin like disease and crime and injustice and poverty and war and crime would just keep appearing and appearing and appearing and appearing and appearing, and He'd have to constantly keep dealing with them and dealing with them and dealing with them.

And if that was the case- then there never would be Heaven. And there never would be a sinless Paradise. And there never would be an eternal kingdom of holiness and righteousness. So God as part of His Salvation Plan deals with sin, and He, ultimately, in the next life- He also deals with all of the symptoms of sin in the physical realm. And we will get new spirits and new souls that are free from sin, and we will get new bodies that are totally and eternally free from disease and death. And that is the future of every single genuinely born again soul- that's the future we are looking forward to.

So as fully God- Jesus could deal with both the sin and the effects of sin which was this paralyzed body. He could deal with both. And the



two are ultimately inseparable. Healing and forgiveness go together in an ultimate sense of the word. They are both wondrous Works of God and God alone. Removing sickness and removing sin, sin being the cause and sickness being one of the symptoms. Jesus said He came to take care of both. So they go together.

Now let's go back to the question. Only God can do this, not man, only God. So Jesus says, *"Which is easier to say, your sins have been forgiven you, or to say rise and walk?"* And He's kind of picking at their thoughts that are thinking- *"How dare Him say your sins are forgiven, how dare He say that He is God. How dare He blaspheme like that."*

So He says to them, *"Which is easier to say, your sins have been forgiven or to say rise and walk?"* And the answer is it's easier to say your sins are forgiven. Now it's not easier to *do* either one of them because both are impossible for any man to do- but that isn't the question. The question is which is easier to "say", and that's easy...it's easier to say your sins are forgiven.

And it's easy to say that because you can't see if it happened, right? I mean, Jesus said to the man, "Your sins are forgiven." Well that was a Divine transaction. That occurred in the Mind of God. That occurred in the councils of the Trinity. But it isn't immediately evident to us. It isn't visible.

The man didn't all of a sudden get a permanent halo that marked him. There was no visible evidence that his sins were forgiven. There was no experimental way to determine whether or not his sins had actually been forgiven. That's all in the Council of God.

So Jesus says to the Pharisees, "You're questioning whether I can forgive that man's sin, aren't you? And you think it's real easy to say, 'Your sins are forgiven.' In fact, you think I'm saying it as a blasphemer and I've overstepped the bounds that any man should ever, ever come near. So let me do this for you." Verse 24, "But in order 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 and take up your stretcher and go home."

Now remember, human beings can't do either one. Man can do neither- but God can do both. And these men don't believe that Jesus is God, and they believe that saying to that man "Your sins are forgiven" is blasphemous because Jesus is not God, and simply saying it doesn't prove that anything happened.

But if Jesus can instantly heal this man- which only God can do- then verse 24 says, "You will know without any doubt- unless your heart is hard that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.

And this is really the issue here- not the man, not his paralysis, not his sin, but the heart of unbelieving people who will not trust in Jesus.

Where is your heart today? Is your heart soft so that it can be touched by the majesty and the Glory of Christ, or is your heart hard - so hard that it will not break, it will not bend, and it will not bow before Jesus?

Let's come and pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.