

## **Matthew 20-03-01b**

We had some good discussion and questions on the break, and as we pick up our study here in Matthew chapter 9, looking at the letting down of the paralytic in the midst of Jesus' teaching, one could ask the question, and the question has been asked, isn't that a little bit rude to interrupt Bible class for your own personal needs? But two things to point out here. First of all, in Matthew's account, the interruption isn't brought to the fore. We know this going to the other Gospels, and you could imagine Jesus' teaching, and all of a sudden, people start looking up because there's little bits of straw and mud falling from the overhead.

And next thing you know, there's a skylight where there didn't used to be one, and suddenly, here's this guy, you know, being let down through the hole on ropes. And you can imagine that people did make a landing spot. They couldn't make an opening at the door, but I am sure they made an opening on the floor.

This guy didn't land on top of the people, and so he gets a front row place. Somehow, they manage inside the room to make space, which tells you there was space all along, but to avoid being crushed, as it were, why they get out of the way. But what about this notion of interrupting? This actually is primarily a teaching point, a graphic demonstration of a doctrinal truth that is probably the most important one of the morning.

We don't have a record of whatever else Jesus taught on that day. It could have been portions of what we saw in Matthew 5, 6, 7. It could have been some of the teaching that we're going to see later on, but that's not given. This is an emphatic and important point that Jesus makes using this man and his companions as a demonstration, and so it becomes a part of Bible class.

In the same way that, as I said between sessions here, I really appreciate our small group format because we have so much more fellowship before, in the middle of, and after class, and even during. I actually don't mind questions or someone sticking their hand in the air if I misspeak or obfuscate a point instead of clarifying it. It's fine.

The only real reason we tend to go with more of a lecture format is primarily because these classes are recorded, and if you've ever heard some of these where we've done that in the past, the microphone doesn't pick up the question, and if I don't remember to repeat it, it can delay the proceedings, and so we sort of take our questions, comments, and some of the best parts of fellowship. This is why you can't forsake the assembling. There's just so much extra blessing that you get from the interactions.

The blessing, I don't think, is primarily the class, in my humble opinion. I think it's what the Word of God does in us and amongst us and in our conversation and our fellowship that is the real blessing, and hopefully those of you that join us at a distance, and I'm

sure you do, do that in your own small group when you join us for class. You do the same thing there that we do here.

I wish we could figure out a way to virtually assemble us all in the same room, but that's the point. Jesus uses this to make the most powerful point of the morning's teaching. In this seeming interruption, it actually becomes the focal point and the most memorable event of that day, memorable.

So back to chapter 9 now, He said to the paralytic, Son, be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you. Jesus never wastes a word. This is my belief.

Never wastes a word. Every single word that proceeds from the mouth of God is treasure. So if Jesus says a thing, He's not just making a preamble.

He's not idly filling the void with a few choice words. What does He say here? What's the very first word? Very first word is Son. Son.

What does that tell you about this man? Is he getting saved today? Is he coming to faith in God or in Christ? No. He's already there. Jesus sees their faith.

This is an existing, active faith. Jesus sees their faith and He says, you're a son. This is what sons are supposed to do, is trust the Father and the Father's provision.

This man is a son of the Heavenly Father. Just as Jesus is God's only begotten Son, but what does John 1.12 tell you? As many as received Him, to them, what did He give? The right to be called sons. Had these five individuals received Him? They have.

Jesus sees their faith. So what is their right? Just what Jesus does. Son.

First word, Son. What's our status? We are not only sons, we are heirs. We are body of Christ.

We are a unique group in the history of the world. Not the pre-Deluvians, not the anti-Deluvians, not the post-Deluvians. Pre and anti are both the same thing, by the way.

I just thought I'd double up on that. All of the people, Noah and earlier, all the people, Shem, Ham, and Japheth afterward, all down through the Old Testament days, your great Old Testament believers, Job, David, Daniel, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, Caleb, Joshua, Hananiah, Mishaël, Azariah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, all of these great, solid, faithful, trusting believers don't have what you and I have. We have a new covenant founded on new and better promises.

We are in Christ. If anyone is in Christ, what is he? A new creation. The body of Christ is unique.

We are a wrapped up, tied with a bow gift from the Father to the Son, that he might be

the firstborn among many brethren. This man is a son in the sense of a son in Israel. He came unto his own, his own people.

And those among his people that received him were given the right to be called sons. This man is going to go on in a few years, I have no doubt, to jump the dispensations and end up being a great church age believer. The church age is only a couple of years away.

Pentecost is just a couple of years hence. And these people that come to the Lord Jesus in faith are going to be sons indeed. The Holy Spirit is going to cry out in their hearts and say, Abba, Father, in a heightened and new sense.

But this is something as we tend to be drawn into subjectivity by the influence of the dark forces around us in society, in media. Most of you know that I've read a couple of books by a guy named Dr. David Perlmutter. And he's big on getting off of the GMO-ed wheat that is in everything, and the sugar that is in everything, and the corn syrup that's in everything, because it's bad for your body.

And he explains why. Well, he's got a new thing. He's got a new fundraising episode that they're putting on PBS, you know, send your money in, etc.

So I saw him last night. And it's more of a lifestyle thing that incorporates the diet, but that's only one of eight steps. And so he's giving these eight steps, and I only saw about ten minutes of it.

I was just waiting for them to put the list on the screen, which they did right at the end. But the first one I thought was interesting, because most of these follow in the track of what we've seen in recent Bible classes. So the first one was thoughtfully manage your digital media, which is a polite way of saying watch out what you do on your phone.

That's number one in his healthy life advice. If you look at these kinds of screens, laptops, tablets, phones in the late evening, the light frequencies and so on disturb the oncoming sleep that your body is preparing for. Same channel.

The night before they had a thing on sleep, Patty and I saw part of it, where all of the new things they've learned about sleep and how essential it is and how it works and the difference between REM and all the rest of it. But the things that go on in sleep, and you know how they put electrodes on people's brains? Well, they've got a cap with 256 electrodes. I saw somebody put this thing on, and you need a big wide piece of paper for all those little pens to make the squiggles.

But they were talking about what's good for sleep and what's bad for sleep, what happens during sleep, how necessary it is for every animal. Scientists have not found an animal that doesn't sleep. Any animal with a brain sleeps.

Squids, jellyfish sleep. Everything sleeps in some way, shape or form. It's really

fascinating.

But the idea here, and he goes on to talk about you need to get effective sleep, but looking at a screen after a certain, he says, you really need to turn your TV off, turn your phone off. If you want a good night's sleep, a restful set of sleep cycles, don't look at that thing last before you shut your eyes because, I don't know, something about the blue frequency in the light messes up your whole sleep mechanism. And what could you do instead? Evening and morning and at noon will I pray and cry aloud and he shall hear my voice.

Psalms 4-8, remember, for eight good hours of sleep, I will both lay me down in peace and sleep for thou, Lord, are the last thought in my mind. You make me to dwell in safety. It's my faith and my confidence.

That's where I get laying down in peace and sleeping. Anyway, I bring that up because you have these steps. Everybody's got a program and I wouldn't send a nickel to Perlmutter for this particular thing.

I appreciated his insights into what modern food can do, processed foods, chemicals that are in it, the genetic modifications that have put 20 times the gluten in the wheat that is now in almost everything. But here's the problem with life advice. Easy to say, but where is the power to do it? There is no power in a list.

And his emphasis when he presented all of these eight points was, he used a Mark Twain quote to close out his presentation. And he's also introducing his son, you know, it's like old H. Wayne Dyer did, he tried to get his daughter promoted as he was scrolling off the map and now Perlmutter's got his son Austin in there to carry the torch. But he closed with a Mark Twain quote.

And Mark Twain said, the hardest thing about getting ahead is getting started. It's one thing to know, it is something else to do. People can tell you about the hazards of little flat screens.

People can tell you about the importance of sleep. People can tell you you need to eat right. They can tell you you need to exercise.

One of his steps is meditation and reflection and scientific documentation that focusing your mind on good things changes your brain chemistry. Well, I don't need science to tell me that. That's what the Bible says.

Disciplining our thoughts, cultivating the fruit of the spirit, does that without you having to know that what you choose to think about changes your brain chemistry. If you dwell on the negative, you get brain chemistry as a response, as a reaction. If you choose whatsoever things to the extent that they are good and noble and lovely and pure and of good report, what does the Bible say? Think on these things and the peace of God that

passes all understanding will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

That's all I need to know. But we've got the power to do these things because we have the Holy Spirit. We live in such a unique age.

Don't forget the first word out of Jesus' mouth when he sees these people's faith is son. I want to be that person. When Jesus looks at me and sees me, I hope he sees my faith and I hope he identifies me and says, that's a son.

And more importantly in this age, that's one of my own. That's one of mine, right there, doing what they're supposed to do. What else do you want? What more do you want in life than for the Lord Jesus to look at you and say, I'm taking that one to meet my father, son.

First word, second expression here, what does he say? Be of good cheer. Now if you go to happy hour on a Friday and you see everybody unloading the burdens of the week and you know, drinking the beverage of their choice or whatever it is, I'm thinking back to long ago days in the military where, you know, when you're in garrison and on a Friday everybody's, you know, worked 16, 18 hour days and let's go to happy hour and so you go and they used to have little snacks out and such to make you thirsty. But when everybody's hail fellow well met and they're laughing and, you know, letting off steam and all the rest of it, do you walk in and say, hey everybody, be of good cheer? Why do you not say that? They're already cheerful.

They're already happy. You don't tell happy people, be happy, do you? So why does Jesus say, be of good cheer? Because he's not of good cheer. Jesus is not going to tell him to do something he's already doing.

He doesn't say, don't fear, only believe, because the man is already believing, right? He doesn't say, fear thou not, because the man's not afraid. What does Jesus say? Be of good cheer. And why would Jesus say that? He sees his faith and what else does he see? He's troubled.

Now I'm paralyzed. This is not a cheerful circumstance. Is that all it is? Does Jesus say, son, be of good cheer, you're about to walk home.

It's not what he says, is it? Jesus says, be of good cheer. Why? What is it that has troubled this man? He's beginning to believe social media that says, if you've got physical malady, there's sin in the camp. You've got something that God is punishing, that's why you can't walk.

This man is a man of faith, so what are his concerns? What is this man really concerned about? Remember what Job was concerned about? Job was a great man of faith. What was his concern when his three friends kept coming in trying to convict him of sin? Well you must have sinned. Look at all the bad stuff that's happening to you.

What's Job's concern? I am worried that I have given God offense. I look at myself and I have done righteousness. I don't know of anything against myself, so I don't understand this charge that I must have done something wrong and this is why bad things have happened to me.

Well this man has the same belief. I know this from what Jesus says, son be of good cheer and here's why you can cheer up and no longer be troubled. Your sins are forgiven.

That's what this man is really worried about. Yes, he would love to not be paralyzed, but lots of people have got disabilities or inabilities or limitations of various kinds, both physical and just circumstantial. I'd love to be an astronaut, but I don't qualify for the program.

I'd love to do this or love to do that. I'd love to still be able to run six miles a day. It's a limitation, but that's not what really troubles me.

Other things trouble me. To the extent that you are concerned about relationship with God, to the extent that you are a person of faith, your real concerns are in that area. That's where this man is and he's wrestling with this notion that his condition speaks of sin.

And Jesus says, son, cheer up. Your sins are forgiven. That's the big deal here.

The healing, the walking is actually an afterthought. It's an after effect. It is a proof and demonstration.

But the real miracle here is what the people marvel at at the end. What does Matthew say? What's the last thing said in this story? The people marveled at what? That God had given this authority to men to be forgiven in faith. Turn to Romans chapter 3. It's a brave man that in the second half of the second session will go to Romans, but I'm going to do it anyway.

Romans chapter 3. Romans 3, verse 20. 20. By the deeds of the law, no flesh will be justified in His sight.

21. For by the law comes the knowledge of sin. 22.

But now the righteousness of God, apart from the law, is revealed. 23. It was witnessed by the law and the prophets, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ to all and on all who believe.

That on all is somewhat questionable, but there is righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. All who believe. And the all here is a reference to whether you are a Jew or whether you are a Gentile.

And that's the all in Romans 3.23. For all, meaning whether you're in the people of God or outside the people of God, we've all sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. This is ongoing justification. If you ever go back or if you remember the Roman study, if you go back through it and you remember Romans 3, Romans wrote is a wonderful evangelistic tool.

Romans 3.23, all have sinned. Romans 6.23, the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life. Romans 10, eight through 13, confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, believe in your heart God raised him from the dead, you're saved and so on.

It's nothing wrong with it as a tool, but salvation is not what Paul is talking about here. Paralyzed man is already a believer. He is trusting God.

He believes in who Jesus is. And this day in Capernaum is not the day of his salvation. It is the day of his deliverance from sin and from his feelings of guilt, his troubled heart about sin.

It is the day of his deliverance because Jesus authoritatively pronounces the forgiveness of his sin. Now, has Jesus gone to the cross yet? No, he hasn't. So on what basis does Jesus pronounce forgiveness of sin? I thought there couldn't really be forgiveness.

It could only be covered over. It couldn't be forgiven. But Jesus says, you need to know I've got the power on earth right now to forgive sin.

And he hasn't gone to the cross. What is the basis for the forgiveness? Well, look at what Paul has to say in chapter four of Romans. What should we say about Abraham, our father, according to the flesh? What does scripture say? Verse three, Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace, but as debt. So look at verse nine. We say that by faith, righteousness was accounted to Abraham.

How was it accounted? Verse 10, while he was circumcised or uncircumcised, was he obedient to the law? And God said, well, because you have gotten circumcised, because you are obedient and doing these things, I will assign you righteousness. This is before even the covenant of circumcision is given to Abraham, which is kind of the first step in law. It's the first regulation God gives his chosen people is circumcise the baby boys on the eighth day, right? It's a covenant sign and it's a command and it's reiterated in the law, but it's really the beginning of the law.

But Paul is pointing out here something really important. Verse 11, Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had before he was circumcised. It didn't have anything to do with what Abraham performed by way of ritual or by way of commanded works.

It had to do with what Abraham believed. Now, was this the day of Abraham's salvation when he believed God and it was credited to him for righteousness? When's the first time we know Abraham believes in God? Genesis 12, one, Ur of the Chaldees. God says, get up and go to a place I will show you.

And Abraham gets up and goes. He believes God and he believes his promise way back in Genesis 12. This Abraham believed God and it was credited to him for righteousness is further down in Genesis 15, six.

What was it that Abraham believed in Genesis 15? He believed in the promise of a son. He believed in the promise of heritage. He believed the words of God who told him things about his plan and purpose in, through and for Abraham.

He didn't say, believe in me and otherwise you're going to hell. Believe in me or I'm leaving you to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. God made promises.

Abraham believed the promises and that faith was credited for righteousness. It's believers faith, laying hold of righteousness by faith. And notice this is 2000 years before Jesus comes and there is the atonement on the cross.

Faith is credited for righteousness. Faith is the means of forgiveness, Old Testament and new. So verse 13 tells us what Genesis 15, six constitutes in terms of the object of faith.

The promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law but through the righteousness of faith. It's before the law, it's before circumcision. God made him a promise and he believed it and that brings the reality.

The law brings about wrath. Verse 16, therefore it is a faith that it might be according to grace so that the promise might be sure to all the seed not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham who is the father of us all. When Jesus saw their faith, he has the authority to recognize that faith and to credit it with righteousness.

And it's two sides of the same coin as I said in the first session. You can't have righteousness without forgiveness. There is forgiveness of sin and the crediting of righteousness.

Son, be of good cheer. You no longer need to be troubled and worried and questioning that even though you love God and even though you believe in God and even though you recognize Jesus as the Christ that you're under a cloud due to sin. Jesus says, no, cheer up.

Your sins are forgiven. I suspect, scripture doesn't say but I suspect that this was every bit as great a deliverance in the mind and the heart of this man as the healing itself. And the healing vindicates and pictures and demonstrates to the outside world the inner

truth of the forgiveness of his sins.

The vindication of his faith is made evident and manifest. And that's what Jesus goes on to say. But it is faith that is the key.

It is faith that is the point of this story. We already know Jesus has power to heal but the healing here, especially in Matthew's account is almost incidental. And he purposely, Matthew under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit purposely suppresses almost all of the other interesting details because he doesn't want us to miss the point.

People marvel that this authority has been given to men. Authority for forgiveness of sin through faith. And we don't wanna miss that.

So back to Matthew chapter nine. He could easily mine the riches of Romans chapter four here. And I encourage you to read it and think about Paul's message.

He's not trying to get people saved in Romans chapter three and four. He's already said in Romans 1.16, I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ is the power of God and salvation to everyone who is trusting. It's present tense.

Those who are faithing, that's you and me. We're supposed to be faithing on a daily basis. I want the Lord Jesus to look at you and look at me and see our faith.

Our ongoing faith for life. Our ongoing laying hold of righteousness by faith. Our ongoing remembering that we are sons.

And if sons, then heirs. Heirs according to promise. So at once in verse three, he says, son, be of good cheer.

Your sins are forgiven you. And that's it. There's a pause.

There's a break. And you can hear mumbling in the crowd and these teachers that have assembled from every different part of the country. And why did they do that, by the way? It's another good observation made during the break.

Why does scripture in the other gospels point out that there are these teachers and scribes from all over? Every town and village in the north and in the south have come. Why have they come? We're so interested in the theological truth. We're gonna mine the riches of understanding and insight that the teacher of Galilee has.

Why have they all come? For this purpose. At once. Doesn't take them two seconds.

They've been waiting for something to jump on. They've been leaning forward to trap him in his words. This message undermines everything that they have set up by way of a system for themselves of self-righteousness and aggrandizement and so on.

At once, some of the scribes said within themselves, this man blasphemes. Remember when the old King James, Jesus said, you know, the kingdom of God is within you. But what it really means is in your midst.

Well, you have the same kind of an idea here where when they say within themselves, this is among themselves. They finally found something. They say, well, doesn't this qualify? Can't we hang him with this? Isn't this blasphemy? Hey, you know, build that.

Hey, Ahab, isn't this, isn't he, that's blasphemy, isn't it? Can't we write this down and, you know, take it back to the Sanhedrin, get this guy, you know, dragged out? So they say this among themselves. This man blasphemes. Jesus, knowing their thoughts, really not that hard to deduce, you know, the immediate frown at the mention of forgiveness of sins, knowing their thoughts, not that Jesus didn't have a supernatural knowledge as well, but it wouldn't be too hard to deduce.

I think he knew their hearts as they arrived from their attitude, from their, you know, a lot of these guys are the guys that wouldn't move when the paralytic came. And why wouldn't they? Why should I make room for a sinner? I'm a teacher of the law. I'm a scribe.

If anybody has a right to be here, it's me. You know, I've got the good seat and it belongs to me. I'm a good guy.

I'm above these rabble. I'm not gonna make way for this obvious guy being punished by God for sin. So he knows their thoughts.

Why do you think evil in your hearts? Notice the identification of this kind of thinking. This isn't a legitimate theological question. They're not wide-eyed, objective interpreters of the law saying, well, I wonder how this fits into my understanding.

No, he says, you're thinking evil thoughts. And what does evil do? You ever noticed if you get into discussion with someone who is representing an evil viewpoint, is in the grip of evil themselves, what does evil do? What's the result of our study of demons in the last section? What do they do? What's their primary weapon, past, present, and future? Subjectivity. Here is faith and forgiveness.

What does their question do? This man is a guilty guy. This man is doing wrong. This man, not this truth can't be reconciled with scripture.

This statement flies in the face of my understanding. No, this man. And Jesus says, you're ad hominem, you're personal attack.

You're jumping at the chance to personally attack the speaker is evil. And that's what it is. It's subjectivity, eyes on the person.

Let me find some fault with the person. Political season, oh, that's all you're gonna get is subjectivity and it's demonic. It is employed, it is leveraged, it is encouraged, it is inspired, it is spoken through human lips by demons.

Don't get tar babied by the evil. Can't even talk about the tar baby now, it's politically incorrect. Why do you think evil in your hearts? Notice the question.

He doesn't say, you're thinking evil in your hearts. What's the question? Why? Why are you thinking evil in your hearts? It's evil. I could just say, that's an evil thought.

But Jesus penetrates to the very heart of the matter. Why are you thinking this evil? You have a problem with the good news of God's compassion and God's deliverance and God's forgiveness, God's restoration, God's long suffering and desire to heal and restore his people. You've got a problem with that? What's the matter with you? Why are you thinking evil in your heart? You ought to be saying, can this be true? Has this authority come? Are we in the midst of a present deliverance from sin that goes beyond the ritual sacrifices of the law? Can this be, oh no.

Why are you thinking evil in your heart? Which is easier to say, your sins are forgiven you or to say arise and walk? Which is easier? What's the answer to that question? Your sins are forgiven you, it's invisible. Oh, okay, thanks a lot. Yeah, this is like saying, well, you'll go to heaven when you die.

Well, I can't falsify that. I can't prove that it's not so. Your sins are forgiven you, it's unfalsifiable.

So how can it be known for sure that the speaker has the authority to say so and that it's the real deal? It's a pretty straightforward point, which is easier to say. Sins are forgiven you or arise and walk. But so that you all may know that the son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins.

So that you may know. This is a wonderful key when you study, we've done the miracles study where we took 36 miracles of the Lord Jesus and just trace them through and saw that every miracle isn't just a healing for its own sake. It makes a point, it underscores, it emphasizes, it illustrates, it demonstrates, it magnificently communicates truth.

And this one is a signature example of that. So that you may know that the son of man, lots you could say about that term, the son of man, where does it first occur? We saw this when he used it a chapter or two ago. Why does he call himself the son of man? It would have hit the ears of these people.

They're already thinking evil about him. Now he's basically alluding to himself as son of man. Who is the son of man? This is Daniel chapter seven, right? I was looking at heaven, Daniel says, and I saw one like a son of man coming before the throne.

These guys know when he says son of man, that self-identification is talking about his preexistent word was with God and word was God status. He's the son of man. He's the son of man of Daniel, Daniel's vision.

Now the word we've talked about faith. We know this is the regular word for faith. It's pistus, he saw their faith and he says, your sins are forgiven you.

And the word for forgiveness is aphiemi. And aphiemi means to forgive, but our word forgive has a couple of different values. And just real quickly, what's another word for forgive in English? If you're gonna try to move through a crowd, you might say, forgive me, you might say, excuse me, or you might say, pardon me.

Forgive and pardon are actually the exact same words. And the etymology is interesting to a guy like me. Both of them come from the Latin word that underlies these and it's perdonare, P-E-R-D-O-N-A-R-E.

And forgive is actually pardon. But if you take perdonare in Latin and you break it into its pieces, which is per, which is kind of like Spanish por, P-O-R, for. Well, through German, you turn that into for.

And then you take the donare, which is where we get the word donate, which means to give. I'm gonna donate these clothes. I'm going to give these clothes.

I'm going to forgive. I'm going to por donate, por donare. Well, pardonare comes through French and we get the word pardon.

Forgive, in German, the word give is vergeben. And so they just take two different routes through German and French to give us the very same thing, to pardon. Now, what's interesting about this and the only reason I bring it up is that we're helpfully informed about the original meaning in both Greek and Latin by those words.

What are they talking about in terms of student loans in political promises today? What do some of the candidates want to do for student loans? They want to forgive them, to forgive a debt. This doesn't mean I'll get over my anger at your bad behavior, does it? To forgive the debt means to do what? Set it aside, take away all of its consequences. Yes, technically you spent money that you didn't have and you owe it, but we're going to forgive that debt.

There's still a deficit somewhere. Somebody didn't get paid. Some loan institution, the government backed it, whatever it is, somebody's not getting paid.

It has to be paid somewhere by somebody, but it's not paid by you. We have forgiven your debt. We have, for reasons of our own, given that debt away.

You see it? For some reason, it's been given to be somebody else's problem. The debt is

still there. Tuition was paid.

Teachers got their salaries. University classrooms burned electricity and so on. You incurred a debt, but we're going to forgive the debt.

That's the best way to think about, son, be of good cheer. Your sins are forgiven. God has put those in a place where he will deal with it in his own time and in his own way.

Don't necessarily know the details at this point. How can Abraham be forgiven? How can Old Testament saints be forgiven when Jesus hasn't gone to the cross yet? Well, the debt is there. Remember, this is where the idea of covering over comes from.

The sins were covered over and you have a different word that is used for, you know, the apocalypse? The name for revelation is the apocalypsis, which is apo, away from, and calypsis is the covering. So you pull the covering away. You reveal the future.

Revelation is the apocalypse. They say, oh, it's apocalyptic, as though it's tragic and post-nuclear nightmare and all the rest of it. Apocalypse means to pull the cover away.

The word for covering over sins in Greek is epikalupto. And it's instead of apo, pulling the cover away, it's epi, putting the cover upon. Epikalupsis is the covering over of sins.

And it's another way of describing forgiveness. So on what basis will God forgive, remove your responsibility for payment of the debt? Somebody's gonna have to pay it somewhere. It is a real debt.

But what is the basis on which that forgiveness is granted? It isn't merit. It isn't you paid it yourself. What is the basis? How can Jesus say, I've got the authority to tell you, you have your sins forgiven.

Your debt is forgiven. Don't worry about its consequences, its implications on you. What's the basis on which that can be granted by God? Faith, faith.

In the example prayer, what did Jesus say? Forgive us our debts as we forgive those who are indebted to us. Forgive. If you do not forgive others, you yourself will not be forgiven.

And the forgiveness of others is an expression of faith. God will make that right. God will reconcile this.

God will repay. God will work in that situation for his own glory, either by fixing it or by his justice. It'll either be grace or justice.

It's up to that person, but I forgive it. I am just turning it loose. I'm disinvesting from it.

Son, be of good cheer. Your sins are no longer an issue for you. They're going to be an issue for the Lord Jesus on the cross, but they're not an issue for you.

So be of good cheer. And this is granted to you on the basis of faith. This is our privilege.

This is our gift. This is our opportunity day by day by day. This is why 1 John 1, 9 is in the Bible.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. Confession is an act of faith and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. The after effects of the presence of that, that wakens the corruption in our nature is remedied.

So we've only gotten partway through this rather short miracle, but it is so critical to understand why it's here and why Matthew gives it in this abbreviated form. Look again at the last line, they marveled and glorified God who had given such power to men. God who had given such power to men.

What kind of power is this? We have five different words in Greek for power. This is exousia. This is authority.

To them gave he authority to be called the sons of God. So that you may know that the son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins. In verse six.

So what are our primary things to remember from this? You have faith, you have forgiveness, you have authority for that forgiveness in the realm of sin. That really has little to do with paralysis, little to do with rolling up the bed and walking home. But you will notice that this man, being a man of faith and being a son, when Jesus says, get up and go home, he doesn't say, but can't I stay for the rest of Bible class? Jesus said, pack your stuff and go home.

By the way, he couldn't walk into the room due to his paralysis. Even if he could walk, he couldn't have walked into the room, but they clear a space for him to come down. And how does he leave the room? He walks out.

They managed to make a path for the man to leave, carrying a bed. So why couldn't he get in? We don't wanna be an assembly of people so insensitive that we can't make room, we can't accommodate others who are coming with a need. Anyway, lots of applications here, but the primary one, just look at the red ink.

Son, be of good cheer. Your sins are forgiven. Nothing better than that in the Bible.

Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the ministry of the Lord Jesus, your love for us expressed through him, his willingness to sacrifice himself on our behalf, his ongoing ministry of intercession and representation at your right hand, his soon return to gather us to himself and to take us, hopefully, if we qualify, into your presence.

We pray that as we reflect on these things, your Holy Spirit will impress them on our

hearts and help us to see their pertinence and their application in the specific details of our individual lives. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.