

Greatest Need

- Introduction
 - New Year
 - Transitions

Tension: What is the greatest human need? Conversation about meeting the 'needs' of my congregation. Only Jesus/God can meet needs

Mark 2:1-12

1And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. 2And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was **preaching the word to them.**

- Capernaum
 - Series of miracles begin and end here (1:21-2:12)
 - Fishing village
 - Called 5 of the 12 on the shore here
 - Main through through, easy access to many people
 - Access to fertile mission field= receptive listeners
 - Francis Chan and Myrmar
- Large crowds followed Jesus
 - No room in the house
- What did Jesus do?
 - Crowds no doubt came to get/see miracles but Jesus preached the word, that's what he came to do
 - After he was baptized by John and tempted in the wilderness the very next verse: **Mark 1:14 After the arrest of John, Jesus went into Galilee and proclaimed the gospel of God.**
- Signs, miracles & healings, had a purpose, they pointed to something

3And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. 4And 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. 5And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, **your sins are forgiven.**"

- Jesus saw 'their faith'
 - Miracles don't produce faith, faith produces miracles
 - Miracles can raise faith but doesn't produce faith
- Gravity of this statement is Huge. . . . "sins are forgiven"
- What did this man "need"
 - Obvious, right?= healing
 - Wrong
- There is no bigger need in humanity than forgiveness
 - No matter what the situation or need is, the greatest need is forgiveness

6Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 7"Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

- Scribes were right= no one can forgive sins but God
- Kinda just doing their job, now their heart wasn't necessarily in the right place, but were doing their job
- Claim to forgive sins was a claim to be God
 - Scribes keeping everyone honest

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? 9Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’? 10But that you may know that the **Son of Man has authority** on earth to forgive sins”—he said to the paralytic— 11“**I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.**”

- ‘Jesus knew in His spirit’
 - Holy Spirit gift of discernment
- Easier to say?
 - Sins are forgiven or get up and walk
 - Easier to say sins are forgiven= no one can tell that
 - ‘So that you may know’
 - Miracles are sign pointing to something, in this case to Jesus’ authority to forgive sins
 - Son of Man has authority to forgive sins
 - Son of Man= fully human
 - Authority= power with right to exercise it
 - Forgive sins= fully God

12And 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!”

- Immediately
- “They were all astounded and glorified God”
 - No doubt they were astounded by the healing
 - However, remember ‘sign points to something’
 - Here= Jesus ‘authority to forgive sins’
 - Jesus was wowed by ‘their faith’
 - The important thing wasn’t healing, but forgiveness
 - Faith didn’t produce the miracle/healing, it produced forgiveness
 - The greatest need
 - When Jesus saw their faith he didn’t heal first thing, he forgave sins
 - Forgiveness came because of faith, your faith produces not only miracles but forgiveness
- What does this mean for today?
 - Sin= Greek word Hamartia= archery term, missing the mark
 - Our greatest need is forgiveness= Only one can forgive sins= God
 - Can’t forgive yourself? You don’t have that authority, only God

Closing