

sermon study guide

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Date: May 16 / 17, 2020

Sermon Title: Thy Kingdom Come - Part 5: Authority To Forgive / Authority Over Sin

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. Tell of a time when you either gave someone the perfect gift or when someone gave you the perfect gift. How did it make you feel?
2. If you were to ask a handful of people what the greatest problem in the world is today, what do you think would be some of the responses you would hear? Would you agree that sin is the greatest problem humanity faces? Why?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read *Matthew 9:1-8*

3. Over the past few weeks we have heard of Jesus' authority over disease, nature, and evil. In this Scripture, when faced with someone with a physical infirmity, why does Jesus raise the issue of forgiveness first? Why did the teachers of the law have a problem with Jesus' forgiveness?
4. In what ways did Jesus respond? How did Jesus prove His authority to forgive?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. How have you experienced the connection between physical, emotional, relational and spiritual problems? How do we help people see that our greatest need is spiritual?
6. How does the knowledge of God's forgiveness affect the choices you make each day?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

What in your life needs to be forgiven? Ask Jesus for forgiveness, and hear His words: "Take heart, child; your sins are forgiven." Take a moment to thank Jesus for meeting your greatest need.

For Daily Reflections from CSC Pastors, visit <https://www.cschurch.ca/daily-reflections/>

THE WORD (NIV)

Matthew 9:1-8

Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. ² Some men brought to him a paralyzed man, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

³ At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!"

⁴ Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? ⁵ Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? ⁶ But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "Get up, take your mat and go home." ⁷ Then the man got up and went home. ⁸ When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to man.

sermon study summary

Thy Kingdom Come – Part 5: Authority To Forgive / Authority Over Sin

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When Jesus came, he inaugurated the Kingdom of God and demonstrated authority over everything that defies this Kingdom—sickness, nature, and the demonic world. In our message today, we read that Jesus, through forgiveness, broke the power of sin. “Forgiveness is God’s greatest gift because it meets our greatest need” (Pastor David Platt).

Life’s problems are not what we think they are. What we identify as problems are just symptoms: relational breakdown, the loss of a job, sickness, addictions, low self-esteem, or anxiety. What we desperately need is not freedom from the symptoms but something that will address the root. Jesus shows us that at the bottom lies sin and self-centeredness which separate us from God. Sin is saying to ourselves, “I decide how I will live my life.” Ignoring God and pursuing our own path gets us into trouble. Our greatest need is spiritual healing.

In our scripture today, four men brought a paralyzed man to Jesus, hoping for a physical miracle (Matthew 9:1-8, Mark 2:3-12, Luke 5:17-26). When Jesus saw the faith of the friends, he said to the paralyzed man, “Take heart, your sins are forgiven” (Matt 9:2b). The man’s fundamental problem was deeper than his physical situation. Jesus directed his attention to his spiritual need and extended forgiveness. The man became a new child of God.

If Jesus had healed the paralyzed man and sent him home, the miracle wouldn’t have brought lasting change. In a few weeks, the novelty of healing would have worn off and the man would still have struggled for purpose, meaning and true satisfaction. That is why Jesus addressed the man’s spiritual needs first.

When Jesus proclaimed forgiveness, he equated himself with God. However, some religious leaders charged Jesus for claiming an authority that they thought belonged to God alone—only God could forgive sins. Jesus, knowing their evil thoughts, answered with a question: “Which is easier – to proclaim forgiveness or to bring physical healing?” (Matt 9:4-5). As proof that he had authority to forgive sins, he said to the paralyzed man, “Get up, take your mat and go home” (Matt 9:6). The crowd was amazed! They saw Jesus’ authority to forgive and heal, and they praised God (Matt 9:8).

Although many illnesses can be treated by today’s medical technology, only God can forgive sins. Preacher Martyn Lloyd-Jones once said, “Forgiveness of sins is the greatest problem that God ever faced.” A price had to be paid, and God created the greatest possible solution. The sinless Son of God, Jesus, suffered and died and took upon himself the sins of the entire world. Jesus breaks the shackle of sin and sets us free. So all who embrace Christ can know immediately that our sins which were scarlet have become white as snow (Isaiah 1:18).

There is a universal longing to seek divine forgiveness, and no other faith offers this. Jesus alone can meet that deepest need. If you come to Jesus in repentance – no matter what your sins look like, Jesus will speak the words you most need to hear: “Son, daughter – your sins are forgiven.” And God affirmed this forgiveness when he said: “As far as the east is from the west, so far have I removed your sins, and I remember them no more” (Psalm 103:12).

If you need forgiveness today, ask Jesus and receive his assurance. Not only are you forgiven, but you are also adopted into God’s family!

If you have already received forgiveness, take a moment to thank Jesus and cherish His gift for meeting your greatest need.