

Lent devotions

READ:

Mark 2:1-17 ([click to open link](#))

REFLECT:

Being physically paralyzed in the twenty-first century in the United States with today's technology and disability access laws is tough enough. Two-thousand years ago, a paralyzed person would have been homebound and helpless. Fully dependent on others. So four men brought a buddy to see Jesus. Their friend couldn't walk.

Jesus was out and about healing people. He wiped out a woman's fever. He cured a man with leprosy. The paralyzed man had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to get his life back. His four friends carried him to be healed by Jesus. And Jesus immediately healed him. Just not how people thought. Everybody present was thinking Jesus would tell him to stand up and jump. Instead Jesus forgave his sins.

The forgiveness of sins isn't as tangible as a physical healing. But it is the healing Jesus knew the man, and the future readers of this story, needed most. When we read this Scripture, we get the sense that the only reason Jesus even told him to get up and walk was to prove his power so that the man could fully experience forgiveness.

We believe that physical or emotional or relational or financial healing will change us. Jesus says: Start with spiritual healing. Seek, accept, and embrace the forgiveness of sins God offers through Jesus Christ. Things like guilt and bitterness will disappear. Things like grace and hope will appear. Those are the things that matter most.

RESPOND:

Ask yourself the question: "What could my life look like if I lived as a forgiven person?" Write down some differences of what the forgiven life would look like compared to the life you are living now. Then begin the process of receiving God's forgiveness which will lead to your freedom.