



SoulShare Normally the 3rd Saturday after October

This Month, October 22 , 2016, 9:00—10:30 am Breakfast & Discussion

The Crippled Man, Carried by 4 Friends to Jesus

Matthew 9:2 – 8 Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!" Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home." And the man got up and went home. When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men.

Crippled Man: I don't know why my friends cared about me. I was an unpleasant, bitter man who did not even appreciate their acts of kindness. They had heard about the healer and decided to bring me there. From what they said, even I began to get a little hope. But after they carried me to the house where he was speaking and found it full, my thought was, "Of course, nothing ever goes right for me."

But they found a way to lower me through the ceiling right in front of Jesus so he could not help but notice me. As he looked at me and spoke, my dreams of walking, running, living as other men do returned to my discouraged imagination. But the words I heard were all wrong, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." I wanted to shout, "No! I want to walk!" but something stopped me.

And in an instant, I had a vision of my life as it truly is and how it might have been. I actually wanted my health in order to pursue my own pleasure and would have made myself a horror of degradation and those around me casualties of my selfishness were it not for my disability. I pictured myself healthy in body and sick in soul, headed towards the eternal punishment reserved for evil-doers because of the hardened and crippled heart that cherished anger, self-pity and hate. Forgiveness of my sins was what I really needed!

I was vaguely aware of a disturbance in the crowd and some calling him a blasphemer for claiming to forgive sins and he responded to them, "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk?'" Then he turned to me again and said it, "Get up, take your mat and go home."

Just as I had come to peace with my condition, it was changed and with joy in my heart and strength in my legs, I leapt up and walked, as the bewildered crowd parted around me and my faithful friends followed along.

What did I do after that? I began to live! Not for myself but for others. And that included bringing everyone I could to the healer of body and soul. I could start a conversation with anyone now and have their complete attention. I did not do it for the fame or acclamation but for the opportunity to allow others to experience what had happened to me. (Based on Matthew 9:2-8, Mark 2:1-12, Luke 5:17-26)

Remember that these monologues are essentially historical fiction, based on the Scripture but filling in plausible subjective details, both emotional responses and motivations. Your first task is to decide if they are reasonable.

Crippled Man

Who showed the faith in coming to Jesus?

Did Jesus ever talk about sin when healing in other cases?

What might Jesus' point be in this case?

Is it reasonable that he sensed spiritual need?

Was Jesus probably deliberately confronting the Pharisees?

What do we make of the man blind from birth?

John 9:1-3 "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, 'Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.'"

Is there a question of sin in John 5:5-8

"One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, 'Do you want to get well?' 'Sir,' the invalid replied, 'I have no-one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.'"

Is illness related to sin?

How? In general and in specific individuals.

What is the danger of making assumptions? (see Job)

What are some ways that God works through illness?