

Introduction

We are in an election year. The various candidates of both parties have decided what the most critical issues are in our country, and are making campaign promises to address them. I do not want to make this a political rally or campaign for any candidate. My understanding of Romans 13:1-7 is that government officials should promote godly behavior, and restrain ungodly or evil behavior. Therefore, we should elect officials that will do exactly that. The positions that the candidates take are critical and should be carefully examined. I ask questions about where a candidate stands on the sanctity of life. Where does the candidate stand on marriage between a man and a woman? There are other important issues, like being fiscally responsible and not spending more than we are taking in. But each candidate must take a look at our country and decide what are the most important issues for them to tackle. Here are two different platforms. I got the Bernie Sander's Platform from his website. I could not find Donald Trump's platform for 2020 at his website, so I got this from PBS' website, and it is a little biased.

Bernie Sanders' Platform (from Sanders)	Donald Trump's Platform (from PBS)
1. Welcoming and Safe America for all	1. Reform legal immigration
2. Medicare for all	2. Lower individual and corporate taxes
3. Green New Deal	3. Cut regulations
4. College for all	4. End trade deficits
5. Workplace democracy	5. Reform Medicaid
6. Expand Social Security	6. Limit access to abortion
	7. Appoint judges to defend the constitution

We could probably contrast these perceived needs with what God told us in 2 Chronicles 7:14. God tells us there what must be done for the land to be healed. He said that His people must humble themselves and pray, and seek His face, and turn from our wicked ways. If we do that, God will hear from heaven, forgive us of our sins, and heal our land. This is not the obvious answer, and it is not what the politicians may put forth. God's assessment addresses the true need of our nation, not the obvious or apparent needs of the country.

(2 Chron 7:14) "and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

In our text today, Mark 2:1-13, the friends of a paralytic bring him to Jesus to be healed. That is the biggest obvious need in his life. When they dig through the roof of Jesus' house and set him before Jesus, Jesus does not address that obvious need. Instead, Jesus addresses the true need of the man. Jesus tells the man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." The scribes who are there witnessing this are infuriated that Jesus pronounced forgiveness. They said that only God can forgive, and that Jesus was blaspheming. Jesus asked them which was easier, to heal the paralytic or forgive him of his sins. Jesus then healed the paralytic to show them that He had authority to also forgive sins. We are going to look at the obvious need, the true need, and the authority to forgive sins.

11 Jesus' Authority To Forgive Sins (Mark 2:1-13)

1. The Obvious Need
2. The Ultimate Need
3. The Authority To Meet All Needs

(Mark 2:1-13) “When He had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home. {2} And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, not even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them. {3} And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men. {4} Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying. {5} And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." {6} But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, {7} "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?" {8} Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, "Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts? {9} "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'? {10} "But so 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, get up, pick up your pallet and go home." {12} And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this." {13} And He went out again by the seashore; and all the people were coming to Him, and He was teaching them.”

1. The Obvious Need (Mark 2:1-4)

In Mark 1:39, Jesus had been going throughout Galilee, preaching and casting out demons. In Mark 1:45, after Jesus had cleansed the leper, and the news spread so rapidly that Jesus was unable to go into the cities. Instead, He stayed out in the unpopulated areas and people were coming to Him from everywhere.

(Mark 1:39) “And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons...”{1:45} “But he (leper) went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news around, to such an extent that Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in unpopulated areas; and they were coming to Him from everywhere.”

Our text starts today by saying when Jesus had come back to Capernaum and had been there several days, people heard that Jesus was home. We don't know how long Jesus had been out preaching in the various synagogues and then out in the unpopulated areas, but He had been out doing ministry for a while. He probably came home to get some rest and to see Mary, His brothers, and His sisters. Capernaum was a good spot for Jesus to call home. Even though Peter and Andrew were from Bethsaida, they were living in Capernaum. In Mark 1, Jesus had gone to their house and healed Peter's mother-in-law. It was good for Jesus and His disciples to be in the same area. This was their spiritual family. It was good for the disciples to be with the One who was discipling them and making them fishers of men.

(Mark 1:29) “And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.”

When people heard that Jesus was home, many gathered there to hear him. So many people gathered that there was no longer any room, not even near the door. This was a packed house. It was packed with people that were truly hungry for God and wanted to learn more about the kingdom of God, and it was also packed with religious leaders. In verse six we see that the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts. In many places of worship there are two groups of people, those who are religious, proud and full of unbelief, and there are those who are

humbly and hungry to hear the Word of the Lord. In James 1:21, we are exhorted to put aside all filthiness and in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save our souls. People were going to John and were confessing their sins and getting baptized. But, there were religious leaders who were not being baptized. They were there to check out what was going on. They were self-righteous and did not see a need to confess their sins. When John saw them, he said, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come. He told them to repent and bear the fruit of repentance. Jesus had both groups of people in His house.

(James 1:21) "Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and *all* that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls."

(Matt 3:1-8) "Now in those days John the Baptist *came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, {2} "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand...{6} and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins. {7} But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? {8} "Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance;"

As Jesus was teaching them, four men brought a paralytic to Him to be healed. That was the apparent need. He had a physical need and they knew that Jesus could heal him. Jesus had healed the sick, healed the diseased, healed the lepers, and had cast out many demons. This paralytic had a need to be physically healed. This man also had some great friends. It is nice to have friends that care enough about you to carry you to a place where you can get healed. I pray that the Connection Church will be full of these kinds of friends. When we see people that need physical healing, we will bring them to Jesus. When we see people that have any kind of physical, emotional, or spiritual need, we will do whatever it takes to get them to Jesus.

These four friends were determined to get their friend to Jesus. When they saw that there was no room, they removed the roof above Jesus. This was Jesus' house that they were tearing the roof off of. I see two attitudes here. First, I see the determination of these four friends. They would not take no for an answer. They were going to do whatever it takes to bring their friend to Jesus. Are we going to do whatever it takes to get our friends in the neighborhood to Jesus? Are we going to do whatever it takes to get our friends at work to Jesus? Are we going to do whatever it takes to bring our family and relatives to Jesus? Are we going to pray and remove the spiritual strongholds in the heavenlies so that there are clear skies above our friends? I pray that we will have a church full of these four friends that are determined and will do anything it takes to bring their friends to Jesus.

The second attitude I see is the attitude of Jesus. He came home, presumably to rest. He had been out ministering for weeks or months and came home for some downtime. When people heard He was there, they came in droves and filled His house to overflowing. When there was no more room, they tore apart His roof to bring a paralytic to Him. I think my attitude would have shifted. I would have probably drawn a line. It is okay to come to my house. It is okay to disrupt my rest. It is okay to come to me with your needs. But, why do you come to tear apart my house. Enough is enough. Stop destroying my home. That was not Jesus' attitude. He valued people more than possessions. Helping this paralytic get healed and forgiven was far more important than earthly possessions. Jesus sought first the kingdom of God, not the things of the earth. Jesus had a proper perspective on worldly treasures and eternal treasures. I pray that the Connection Church, including me, would always have this attitude that was in Christ, people not possessions.

In 1979, BJ Thomas had a hit song called, "Using things and Loving People."¹ BJ got it right. That is the way it has got to be. We have to use our homes, but love people. Jesus exemplified that attitude. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tp6qWiXYe3w>

There is one more thing that these four friends had that I want to mention. Verse five starts with, "And Jesus seeing their faith." These four friends were full of faith. They had no doubt in their mind that Jesus could and would heal their friend. I pray that the Connection Church would be filled with people who are full of faith. We want to have faith to see people healed, delivered, and saved.

(Mark 2:5a) "And Jesus seeing their faith..."

2. The Ultimate Need (Mark 2:5)

There were two needs. The obvious need was for physical healing. I don't think that most of the people were focused on the ultimate need. But Jesus knew the true need. Physical healing is temporary, but our souls are eternal. This paralytic had a spiritual need for his sins to be forgiven. They brought the paralytic to Jesus for physical healing and Jesus said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Jesus did not ignore the physical need, but He spoke first of his spiritual need.

(Mark 2:5) "And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

In Isaiah 59:2, the prophet said that our iniquities have made a separation between us and God. This man needed forgiveness so that his relationship with God could be restored. In Romans 3:23 we read that all of us have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. All of us have the same sin condition that the paralytic had. All of us have sinned and our sins have separated us from God. Jesus always kept an eternal perspective and was aware of the man's true need.

(Is 59:2) "But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden *His* face from you so that He does not hear."

(Rom 3:23) "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"

When Jesus saw the faith of the paralytic's friends, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Jesus prioritized the most important need that all of us have, and that is forgiven. Notice the priorities that Jesus gave in Matthew 18:8-9. He said if your hand or foot causes you to stumble, cut it off, for it is better to enter life crippled or lame, than to have two hand or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire. They, He repeats this using our eyes. He said it is better to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be cast into fiery hell. It was more important for this paralytic to have his sins forgiven than to be healed and yet cast into the fiery hell. There is a heaven and a hell. Our souls are eternal. The most important decision we will ever make in life is about where we will spend our eternity. Have you received Christ's forgiveness in your life? No matter what else may be going on in your life, this is the most critical decision of your life. When we confess Jesus as Lord of our lives, we are born again.

¹¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tp6qWiXYe3w>

In 2 Corinthians 5:21, Paul wrote that “He who knew no sin was made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” When we receive Christ into our lives, we enter into a covenant with Him and He takes our sins and gives us His righteousness. Our future is sealed once and for all. We will spend an eternity in heaven. May we be a church that always sees the true needs that people have. We may help them by serving them. We may feed the poor, clothe the naked, or meet some other need, but the true need in their life is Jesus’ forgiveness. May we be a church that preaches forgiveness for sins. That is the good news of the gospel.

(Matt 18:8-9) “If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire. {9} If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be cast into the fiery hell.”

3. The Authority To Meet All Needs (Mark 2:6-13)

When Jesus told the paralytic that his sins were forgiven, the bells and whistles went off in the heads of the scribes. They reasoned in their hearts, “He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone.” They were thinking that Jesus was making Himself out to be God. They understood that all sin is ultimately against God, and only God could forgive sins against God.

(Mark 2:6-7) “But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, {7} “Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?”

David understood this. In Psalm 51 he asked God to wash him thoroughly from his iniquity and to cleanse him of his sin. Then he said, “Against You, You only, I have sinned and done what is evil in Your sight.” David sinned against Uriah the Hittite. He committed adultery with his wife and then he had Uriah put to death on the front lines. David had sinned against others, not just God. But David understood that any and all sin was ultimately against God.

(Ps 51:2-4) “Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. {3} For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. {4} Against You, You only, I have sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are justified when You speak and blameless when You judge.”

Jesus was aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way in themselves. Only God knows the thoughts of a man. He knows every thought before we even speak. In Psalm 139, David said, “Even before there is a word on my tongue, behold, O Lord, You know it all.” So, Jesus asked them, “Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts.” Their eyes should have been opened to who Jesus was by his question to them.

(Mark 2:8) “Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, “Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts?”

(Ps 139:4) “Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all.”

Then, Jesus asked them, “Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven’, or to say, ‘Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk’? Only God could forgive sins and heal the

paralytic. Jesus is clearly telling them who He is. Then, Jesus said, "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins," Jesus said to the paralytic, "I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home." Jesus forgave the paralytic and then He healed the paralytic. Jesus had authority to do both.

(Mark 2:9-11) "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'? {10} "But so 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, get up, pick up your pallet and go home."

I believe that this is the main point of the whole passage. Yes, Jesus cared about healing the paralytic. Yes, Jesus cared about forgiving this man of his sins. But, Jesus was using the opportunity to reveal to these scribes that He was the Messianic King who had all authority. If you recall in Isaiah, that the Messiah is the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace. Jesus was and is the Mighty God. Jesus was and is the Eternal Father. Jesus and the Father are One.

(Is 9:6-7) "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. {7} There will be no end to the increase of *His* government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this."

In Philippians 2:5-7, Paul wrote that Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men." Even though Jesus existed in the form of God, He emptied and humbled Himself to come here as the Son of God and the Son of Man. He was both God and Man.

(Phil 2:5-7) "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, {6} who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, {7} but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men."

In Colossians 1:19, Paul said, "for it was the Father's good pleasure for a the fullness to dwell in Him." Then, in Colossians 2:9, Paul wrote, "for in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form." Jesus, the Messiah, was God, and He had authority to forgive sins and to heal people.

(Col 1:19) "For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,"

(Col 2:9) "For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,"

Jesus did not just tell the scribes who He was, He demonstrated who He was. He ordered the paralytic to pick up his pallet and go home, something that the paralytic could not do. But, Jesus healed the paralytic and now the paralytic did exactly what the Lord commanded him. "He got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone." These were not just words that Jesus was speaking; this was a miracle of healing, seen by them and everyone

else that was at Jesus' house that day. They were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying "We have never seen anything like this."

(Mark 2:12) "And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

In 1 Corinthians 2:4-5, Paul wrote that his message and "preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God." This is exactly what Jesus did. His message was not just in words, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

(1 Cor 2:4-5) "and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, {5} so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God."

If you can recall in Mark 1, the people were amazed at Jesus' teaching, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him." Jesus taught with authority, and had demonstrated that He had authority over sickness, disease, and demons. In this passage, Jesus broadened our understanding to know that He also had authority to forgive sins.

(Mark 1:27) "They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."

When Jesus was baptized and anointed by the Holy Spirit, John said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." Jesus came here to forgive us of our sins. He came to give His life as a perfect sacrifice and took our punishment, dying on the cross for our sins. The greatest need that all of us have is for our sins to be forgiven so that we can be with God forever.

(John 1:29) "The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and *said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

After healing and forgiving the paralytic, Jesus went out again by the seashore and all the people were coming to Him, and He was teaching them. This was just one of many incidents in the life of Jesus. Mark zeroed in on this incident in Jesus' ministry to teach us that Jesus also had authority to forgive. After this incident, Jesus continued on doing what He said He must do, to go to other cities and preach the kingdom of God.

(Mark 2:13) "And He went out again by the seashore; and all the people were coming to Him, and He was teaching them."

Conclusion and Applications

What are the needs in your life today? Do you have an obvious need like the paralytic? If so, let's ask the Father to heal you. If you need wisdom, He promises to give wisdom. If you need provision, He is Jehovah Jireh and promises to provide for you. What needs do you have in your life. Your friends are here today to go with you to request God meet those needs.

Or, do you have a spiritual need like the paralytic? Has the ultimate need in your life been met? Have you been cleansed of your sins? Have you received God's forgiveness for your sins? Jesus has authority to heal and He has authority to forgive you of your sins. When a person receives Christ, Jesus comes in and forgives the person of all his sins. If you believe that Jesus came and died for our sins and was raised from the dead, you simply need to confess Him as Lord of your life. You can simply pray something like this:

Jesus, I believe that You came and died for my sins. I believe that You were raised from the dead. I ask You to come into my life and to forgive me of my sins. I give my life to You and make You my Lord and Savior. Thank You for a new life with You. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Perhaps you are here this morning and your need is for friends like the paralytic had. Perhaps you need a church family. If you would like to make CCA your church home, we have lots of friends who are determined and full of faith. On the Connection Cards, just indicate that you want to become a member of CCA. If you have other needs, write those and we will pray for those needs.

If you would like prayer for something this morning, whether it is a physical need, or whether it is a spiritual need, I encourage you to come to the front and we will pray for you.

Introduction (Mark 2:1-13)

1. **The Obvious Need** (Mark 2:1-4, 1:29, 39, 45, James 1:21, Matt 3:1-8, Mark 2:5a)

2. **The Ultimate Need** (Mark 2:5, Is 59:2, Rom 3:23, Matt 18:8-9, 2 Cor 5:21)

3. **The Authority To Meet All Needs** (Mark 2:6-13, Ps 51:2-4, Ps 139:4, Is 9:6-7, Phil 2:5-7, Col 1:18, 2:9, 1 Cor 2:4-5, Mark 1:27, John 1:29)

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