

10.8.25 am

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Preacher: Stuart King

[0 : 0 0] Well good morning. It's wonderful to be together on this Lord's day as we seek to see his face and we seek blessing by hearing his word and singing praises to his most glorious name.

! Welcome! I saw a few visitors on the way and welcome if you're visiting with us especially. We hope after the service just here at the left hand side of the pulpit to have a time of fellowship with tea and coffee.

So please do if you're able please do stay behind if you can. The intimations have been going round. I'll not go through every one of them. I'll pick out a couple that are important to note.

This evening's service will be at 6pm and will be led by one of our elders, Dr Angus McKellar. Just to note that won't be on the live stream so you can just note that in your minds if you want to hear that.

We look forward to seeing you here for those of you that are able. So that won't be on the live stream this evening. A couple of other things to note. Our own minister is in Barvis this day so pray for him as he brings the word to that congregation there.

[1 : 0 2] A vacant congregation, one of many in our presbytery and on our island. So continue to pray for those congregations that are without a minister at the moment so we pray for him.

A couple of other things just to note before we sing. There's a number of shoe boxes at the door. You maybe saw them on the way in. They're empty boxes so feel free to take them in preparation for the Blytheswood Appeal which I think will take place later in October time.

So feel free to take them and start beginning to pack them up ready for the Blytheswood Appeal. And then the last thing to note, there's some lost property much probably from the holiday club.

We had our holiday club and we'll speak to the young ones in a wee minute about that. But there's some lost property as well just beside the boxes so if you have anything please take it. If you don't take it, the charity shop will welcome it.

So if it's unclaimed we'll put it to the charity shop shortly. Well not shortly as in today but maybe give yourselves a couple of weeks to pick up any lost property from the front of the church.

[2 : 0 3] So I've nothing else to say in terms of intimations. Hopefully you've had the chance to read those that have been going on on the screens. But we'll begin our public worship of God today by singing to his praise in Psalm 130 from the Scottish Psalter.

Psalm 130 from the Scottish Psalter. And we'll sing the whole of the psalm. Lord, from the depths to thee I cried my voice. Lord, do thou hear. Unto my supplications voice give an attentive ear.

Lord, who shall stand if thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquity? But yet with thee forgiveness is that feared thou mayest be. Down to the end of the psalm, to the end of verse 8 to God's praise.

And we'll stand to sing this psalm. Lord, from the earth next to thee I cried my voice, Lord, do appear.

Unto my supplications voice give an attentive ear. Unto my supplications voice give an attentive ear.

[3 : 23] Lord, who shall stand if thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquity?

But yet with thee forgiveness is that fear thou mayest be.

I wait for God. My soul doth wait. My hope is in his word.

I sing more than lay that to watch. For morning watch My soul is for the Lord I say for God They love to watch The morning light To see Let Israel Open the Lord For with Him Where she's weak On grand the earth

Redemption Is ever found within And from all His Iniquities He Israel Shall redeem Let us come together in prayer Let us pray Our eternal and ever gracious God Lord we give you thanks as we come before you This morning we come before a most gracious And a most holy God We thank you Lord As we again look to you We see that you are the one who is sovereign over each and every one of us

[6 : 21] You are our wonderful creator We thank you Lord Again as we look out Even these very windows As we wake up this morning We see the beauty of your Glorious handiworks And we so often take for granted The beauty of your creation Yet we have it around us It's so evident Lord So we thank you for it We pray Lord That as we wake up each and every day With breath in our lungs That we would be able to Remember afresh That you are indeed our creator That you are the one Who set us here You are the one that Gives us life each and every day Lord So we Are so grateful for that We thank you that when we look to you We see a just God Where sin needs to be dealt with And we see a loving God And that love is so clear in the sending of your son Him who knew no sin Who became sin for us We thank you for that gift We know each and every one of us here Each and every one of us listening online Is entirely undeserving of that

Most glorious gift of salvation Yet you saw fit from before time began To institute that salvation plan That one that would send your son To die on the cross for us So we pray That each and every day Each and every time we open your word Wherever we find ourselves From Genesis through Revelation Wherever we find ourselves That we look To see Christ crucified We're able to see That golden thread of salvation Running through your word So we pray Lord That as we Look to your word again today That you would speak to us That you would reveal yourself to us Reveal your peace to us Reveal your light to us So that we may be able to see you In that word That we may be able to Wrestle with your word To meditate upon your word Not just to have it go through One ear and into the other This day and into the afternoon But that we would go and chew upon that word That we would read it again That we would read the surrounding verses The context of the word before us And that we would seek to understand better Who you are And what you've done for us Lord So we pray for your word

We give you thanks That we have it so readily available to us We pray for those around the world Where that is not the case Where they are unable to even Utter your name Without the fear of Of persecution Or the fear of their own life Lord So we pray for those Those that we know Those that we know intimately Those where Many in our congregation Have been to these places Lord So we pray for them We pray for the Christians in these places Lord Those that meet In silence Those that are maybe even unable to meet But are able to meet with you In their hearts Lord So we pray for them We ask that you would Build them up That you would Comfort them In these times of difficulty Lord And that they would be able to To know that there are Prayers from all Across your glorious creation Being lifted up To you for them Lord So we pray for them And ask that you would be with them In these difficult times Lord We pray for The word that's being preached Across your island In Tarbert here In our neighbouring congregations Where Christ crucified Is preached Lord

We ask that you would Bless them We pray for David As he brings your word To the congregation in Barbus We ask that as that word Goes out Those who hear it Would be moved That they would be transformed And we pray for them As a congregation Lord That they would be Able to To call one of your own choosing Into their midst To be their To be their minister Lord So we pray that you Would be with them We pray for all other Congregations that are vacant At this time as well In our own presbytery And afar Lord We ask that you would be With them That you would Give them opportunities To have their Pool pits filled With supply Lord But ultimately That they would be Prayerfully considering Who it is that you Have chosen To set amongst those people To go amongst the flock And to shepherd them By sharing the gospel with them And we pray for the gospel Across our country Those corners of the country That we know Are barren Where the word Is not preached Where your name Is only used As a profanity Lord We pray for these places

We pray for our denomination As it seeks to plant churches Across our nation Lord And ask that In these places Where Your name Is not spoken We pray Lord For those that go there To share that word To share that glorious Gospel message With those Who don't know you We were once A nation That was very well Acquainted with your book Lord Yet we know That in recent years And decades Lord That has Slowly changed Lord So we pray for our nation We pray for those Over our nation We pray for those In Holyrood And in Westminster Ask that you would Be with them We pray that they would Recognise the sin In their own lives And they would be Turning to you For wisdom That they would not Be seeking the counsel Of the world But they would be Seeking your counsel And they would be Turning to you In all that they do In every decision That is made In every policy That is drafted That they would be Turning to you First and foremost For your guidance And that they would Seek discernment From you And from you alone Lord So we bring them

[11 : 25] Before you We pray for those In our own community We pray for those That are vulnerable Those that are unable To be with us Whether through Illness For whatever reason Lord Those that are unable To be with us today We pray for them Lord Ask that you would be With them And that you would Comfort them Pray for those That are maybe Grieving at this time Possibly not Even a recent Grievance Lord But we pray for those Who are grieving Those that have lost And those that have Gone before us Lord We know it is difficult To grieve That is one sure thing Of life And as a reminder To us Of the cursed nature Of our world here Lord That the sin That entered into the world So that death Would indeed Be the only Way in which Our lives would go Lord It's one of the only Guarantees That we have in our life That we will Leave this place So we pray Lord That we would Not be leaving As those Who don't know you And that realise A truth later In eternity In a lost eternity But that we would be Those who know you

In this life That we would be Turning to you And that we would be Seeking to live a life That is pleasing To you Seeking to see your Will done On earth As it is in heaven Lord So we pray for those That don't know you In our community Give us opportunities Give us boldness And courage To take The multitude Of opportunities That present ourselves To share the word To share the gospel To bring Our loved ones To you Our friends Our family Those that we know Are destined For a lost eternity Lord Equip us To share the gospel Equip us To bring them To your feet Lord That they would Turn to you Hopefully In the days Of their youth As we saw With the holiday club We see a number Of young people In the congregation Here today And even more Came through the holiday club This week Lord So we pray for each And every soul Each and every young person That came into your house This week We pray for the message The seed that was sown And ask Lord That it would indeed Bear fruit over the coming Weeks, months and years Lord And we pray for the parents That were there as well Those who heard your word

Through singings Through readings And through the different lessons That were being shared Lord We pray for that As it goes out And ask that you Would indeed do a work In the lives of those That were there Lord So we pray That you would go before us This day Lord That you would bless Our time together That you would forgive us For all of our sins In Christ's precious And glorious name we pray Amen Okay boys and girls I don't know how many are here But it would be good If you could come forward And if there's any visitors Feel free I should have said If there are any There's a crest behind The wall here You can just go out there If you feel the need To go to crest But after The singing After we have a wee Discussion just now We will have a bit of time There's a Sunday school For you guys as well Those that are in primary Can go through to Sunday school So just follow The children here So How many of you Are glad That school Is going back this week A couple Two or three of you Good How many parents are glad There's probably

Going to be a lot more hands I'll be delighted To see you going back But how many of you Made it to holiday club I'm not sure if any of you Were away Some of you might have Only just arrived on holiday So there was some of you That made it to holiday club So I want us to Help share with some Of the bigger ones About what Happened at holiday club But I've got two pictures That I maybe want to show Just kind of In your own time So what's First of all What is this You're probably thinking Stuart you went at holiday club You have no idea What was happening But can anyone tell me What that is First of all Does anyone know What that is Harris Pardon Attila I'll say maybe Because I can't say no Because I don't know What else might it look like What do you have to get Apart from a plane How do you get off This island Yeah So what Steers the ferry A rudder Yeah And then the next picture What's that in the middle Ant Whoa Good shout Literally Good shout Yes it's an ant So are you able to see

The link between So can you now tell everybody What happened at holiday club Based on these two pictures You've got no idea Why I used those two pictures Have you So that's following Yeah but what's it carrying Good shout This is good I'm loving this Keep it coming So we've got an ant Carrying a leaf Is that leaf bigger than the ant Yeah It looks a lot bigger And the rudder Was the rudder bigger Or smaller than the ship A lot lot smaller But it was able to move Some of these massive tankers It's able to move them And turn them In the sea But what do those pictures Have in common With holiday club What was the theme Of your holiday club This year What was it called Yeah So junior heroes And there was three days That you did holiday club And I want us to Very briefly You don't need to tell me This story I'll quickly summarise I wasn't there But hopefully it follows What was actually spoken About at holiday club Can you remember What was on day one Who did you learn about There was a story each day That you learned about Michael What was the story on day one

[16:30] You put your hand up So I'm like Day one There was a Begins with M And ends in O'ses Good one So So yeah You heard about the story Of Moses Who led the people Out of Egypt But we remembered That story You remember That he was once A little baby What was his sister's name Can anyone remember What his sister's name was Miriam Good shout I think you said Miriam there So his sister Miriam She was a young girl So we see two young people In that story Being used by God And later As a young boy Moses was learning He was growing And he was getting ready For the big job That God had planned for him And what does that tell us About how God can use us You're all young Well we're all probably young We can put ourselves In that category But do you feel That God can use you Or do you think I'm just a wee bit too young I think God can still use you At this age Yeah Absolutely

And that's why it's called Junior heroes Because even you guys Can still be used By the Lord mightily What about the day two Are you ready for that one Michael You're not getting it David and Goliath So you heard again Another story About a young boy David was just a young shepherd boy How many people Do you think Thought that David Would be able to defeat Goliath Do you think anyone Gave him a chance No You're right One Well who He gave him Yeah But did you think He was actually going to succeed much He probably thought This boy's got no chance Try to give him his own Armour But David wasn't afraid He stepped forward In faith Because he thought he was strong No Because he trusted in who Who was it he trusted in That gave him that strength Finley God He trusted in God He wasn't afraid Because he knew God was with him He would use his sling And a small stone And with God's help He defeats the giant So we see even in day two Of holiday club

That David was also A junior hero He showed everyone That when God's on your side You can do absolutely anything What about day three This is the one you were helping with Naaman But who was the young person In that story On day three Can anyone remember Was there a servant girl That helped Yeah Who It was her It was Charis Okay Wow You've aged well So yeah It was the story of Naaman The servant girl So Naaman Was a great soldier He had a terrible sickness Called leprosy And this little servant girl Who was a foreigner And she was a slave She wasn't afraid To speak up She told Naaman's wife About the prophet Elisha Who could heal him And because of her brave words Naaman went to the prophet Was healed And learned about The one true God So we see again A young person Being used mightily By God And I think just in closing Every one of you here And some of the young ones

That aren't here Some of the slightly older young ones You can put yourself In that if you wish Just like Moses David And that servant girl None of you here And maybe aren't listening online Are too young To be junior heroes For the Lord God has given each of you Special talents He's given you all something What have you all got Inside your mouths That makes a noise Your voices So we've all got a voice You can all use your voice And these voices That have been given to us By God Can be used for God To share his love To be kind to others To share his word With those Maybe in your school Maybe you go back To school this week And you tell the first person You speak to About holiday club What did you learn about And what does that tell you About how God Sees us as young people So we can As young people I counted myself In that one there We can be young heroes In all that we do By sharing the glorious gospel With others So just remember Even just the two pictures As well as the stories

Remember that ant Is carrying a massive leaf Way heavier than itself But it's been But it's a reminder to us Similar to that rudder That small things Can be used to do Amazing powerful things But not with those two pictures But with us Something very different Is in control It's not the mechanics Of the boat That makes a rudder move That's not what we've got In our own lives We have the Lord And if we hand everything Over to him There is nothing That he can't do For you So remember that Remember that The holiday club Is a great time I meant to say I was going to intimate But I'll maybe say it just now I completely forgot to say it Just as a bit of encouragement For those That were praying For the holiday club We're very grateful For those that were praying But I believe There was a text To say how many kids Came along I'll not go into Any great detail But we had over A total of 42 children Through the door Across the week Across those three days For at least one day

[21 : 31] Of the holiday club And some of them Come from church backgrounds Some don't So we pray for those And we pray for the word That goes out And there was a lot of Families on the Friday That came A lot of parents That came on the Friday afternoon After the last day So we pray for each And every one of them Pray for the young people Pray for all of you And we'll do that just now If we just close our eyes Hands together And I'll just say A wee word of prayer For you all Heavenly Father Lord We do again Give you thanks That through your strength And through you We can indeed Be junior heroes That we can Work mightily for you That there can be Such power In the use of young people We thank you For the holiday club We thank you For those 42 young ones That came across the week We pray for them We pray for their homes We pray for that message That they heard And that it will be still Doing something In their own lives This very day Lord That they would be asking Questions Asking questions Of their parents Asking questions Of Sunday school teachers Asking questions Of their friends That they know Come to church

Lord We pray That they would be able To continue to Learn a little bit more About who you are And what you've done For them Lord So we thank you That we have that example In the Bible And there are many more Of young people being used To your glory Not to the glory of self Not to the glory of Each and every one of us Not to the glory of North Harris Free Church But to your glory Lord So we thank you Again that you Are available to us In prayer That we can turn to you We can read your word We can hear you speaking to us And we pray Lord That as the young ones Go to Sunday school just now That they would learn again About who you are And that they would grow And that they would turn to you In the days of their youth And live a life That is indeed pleasing to you Lord So be with them just now Forgive us for all of our sins In Jesus name we pray Amen Well just before you go off To Sunday school We'll sing the hymn His mercy is more And again we'll stand to sing After the introduction What love could remember No wrongs we have done Omniscient all knowing He counts not their sum Thrown into a sea Without bottom or shore Our sins they are many

His mercy is more So we'll sing this hymn To God's praise And we'll stand to sing What love could remember No wrongs we have done Omniscient all knowing He counts not their sum Down into the sea Without bottom or shore Our sins they are many His mercy is more Praise the Lord His mercy is more Stronger than darkness You every morn Our sins they are many His mercy is more

Patience would wait As we constantly roam What Father so tender Is calling us home He welcomes the weak As we can still find As we can still find The poor Our sins they are many His mercy is more Praise the Lord His mercy is more Stronger than darkness You every morn The sins they are many His mercy is more The sins they are many His mercy is more On riches of kindness He lavished on us His blood was the payment His life was the cost We soon need the debt

We could never afford The sins they are many His mercy is more Praise the Lord His mercy is more Stronger than darkness You every morn Our sins they are many His mercy is more As the young ones leave If you've got your Bibles there If you turn to the New Testament And the Gospel of Mark Mark chapter 1 And we'll begin From verse 35 And we'll read through Into verse 12 Of chapter 2 So reading from verse 35

[26 : 43] Of chapter 1 Of Mark And rising very early In the morning While it was still dark He, Christ, departed And went out to a desolate place And there he prayed And Simon and those who were with him Searched for him And they found him And said to him Everyone is looking for you And he said to them Let us go on To the next towns That I may preach there also For that is why I came out And he went throughout all Galilee Preaching in their synagogues And casting out demons And a leper came to him Imploring him And kneeling Said to him If you will You can make me clean Move with pity Moved with pity Sorry He stretched out his hand And touched him And said I will Be clean And immediately The leprosy left him And he was made clean And Jesus sternly charged him And sent him away at once And said to him See that you say nothing To anyone But go Show yourself to the priest And offer for your cleansing What Moses commanded For a proof to them But he went out

And began to talk freely about it And to spread the news So that Jesus could no longer Openly enter a town But was out In desolate places And people were coming to him From every quarter And when he returned to Capernaum After some days It was reported That he was at home And many were gathered together He was at home And many were gathered together So that there was no more room Not even at the door And he was preaching the word to them And they came bringing to him A paralytic Carried by four men And 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 And when Jesus saw their faith He said to the paralytic Son Your sins are forgiven Now some of the scribes Were sitting there Questioning in their hearts Why does this man speak like that?

He's blaspheming Who can forgive sins But God alone? And immediately Jesus Perceiving in his spirit That they thus questioned Within themselves He said to them Why did you question These things in your heart?

Which is easier to say To the paralytic Your sins are forgiven Or to say Rise Take up your bed And walk But you may know That the son of man Has authority On earth To forgive sins He said to the paralytic I say to you Rise Pick up your bed And go home And he rose And immediately Picked up his bed And went out Before them all So that they were all amazed And glorify God Saying We never saw Anything like this Amen And may the Lord bless That reading Of his own holy word Before we come back To that passage We'll sing again This time in Gaelic The first two stanzas Of Psalm 32 And we remain seated For any visitors We remain seated To sing in Gaelic But I'll just read The two verse First two verses Of Psalm 32 In English O blessed is the man To whom is freely pardoned All the transgressions He hath done Whose sin is covered Blessed is the man To whom the Lord Imputeth not his sin And in whose spirit There is no guile

Nor fraud Is found therein So we'll sing these two stanzas In Gaelic And remain seated To God's praise Shabal Tammy Thank you.

[31 : 02] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[33 : 32] Thank you.

And even just reading it, we can see how much of a wonderfully powerful story it is, this beginning of the second chapter here in Mark. It's a story of this day in Capernaum, one of those amazing days that would probably forever have been etched in the minds of those who were there.

was teaching in his early ministry so why was there such a crowd and we won't go into the specifics of the previous passages but if we just look at if you quickly were to glance back to mark the first chapter in mark verses 21 to 28 we see and read of jesus healing the man with the unclean spirit verse 29 through 34 we read of him healing many that were sick and casting out demons and in the one that we did just briefly read at the end of chapter 1 verses 40 through 45 we see jesus cleansing a leper so this is what the people were seeing in that area so it was a varied crowd drawn to the teachings and miracles of jesus and even just in reading those first 12 verses you can almost feel the press of the crowd the even the desperation of those friends and that wonderful authority of christ at the end as we read those verses and it's a wonderful illustration to us of faith the friendship that we can have and show our faith in our friendship and the wonderful forgiveness of god that is found so just as we dive into this text i want us to consider really three main points first of which is uh following the crowd or the following crowd sorry and then the second example is of the faithful friends and then finally i want us to look at the incredible act which we see in forgiving sins uh during this uh miracle in this passage so starting off with the following crowd we've spoken a little bit about why they would have been following and what the people would have seen in the preceding days and the first thing i suppose we notice in verse 2 of chapter 2 there and many were gathered together so that there were no room not even at the door and he that's christ was preaching the word to them so we see this crowd that are following him and the crowds indeed play quite an important role in the book of mark one of the commentators i was using in my study said it's mentioned crowds are mentioned over 40 times just in the first 10 chapters of the book of mark so the crowd here and other crowds represent a lot of different things on the one hand it represents those that have a genuine hunger to hear jesus the text tells us that jesus had just returned to capernaum after being away for some days and as soon as the word spread that he was in the house people flocked to him so they came to him they weren't just coming for miracles this time mark tells us that he preached the word to them they weren't just all there some probably were but they weren't all just there to see what he could do he preached to them they were gathering to hear the message of god's spoken word through the son of god and that's just that's the positive side of this crowd a group of people there would have been believers there would have also been skeptics but they're drawn together by a desire to be in the presence of jesus to hear his teaching and to experience his power and it may be the same here today many maybe are coming skeptical and seeking to to see how the lord would speak to them through his word and many come as believers ready to hear god's word again and spurgeon says it far more eloquently than i could he says the gospel when it is preached draws many to itself who are not saved by it the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net which men cast into the sea and it gathered every kind there is a day coming in which they will be put and there will be those put good the good into the vessel and the cast they will cast out the bad but throughout this dispensation there will be every kind in the net and that's what we see in this crowd many of the crowd would have been coming to see more

miracles they would have been fascinated by what they could see some came to receive benefits for their bodies because they'd heard of and seen miracles in the past a number came out of admiration and an interest for who jesus was and what he had to say spurgeon again says a large number came to our lord from the region of region of enthusiasm there were stony ground hearers in those days his blade of promise because it had no depth of earth sprang up very speedily and as speedily it withered away others however came with malice in their hearts you can go back even to a couple of weeks when richard was preaching on that and listen again to how those religious leaders expected a different kind of messiah not one that had compassion forgives and mixes with sinners so within this congested crowd we see different types of people with different motives and different reasons to be there there are believers there are the curious but also there's the skeptics not looking for truth but looking for a flaw but we also see here that the crowd also presents a challenge to these four men they present a logistical challenge to these four friends there's an obstacle in the way it's a physical barrier that prevents them bringing their friend a desperate man in need from getting to the one person who needs to help him or who can help him the house is so packed that no one else can get in the doorway is jammed and people are probably spilling out onto the street and in my studies i was reading about what those houses would look like and it was houses if you can just imagine in your mind's eye they had an outside stairway that climbed up to a second floor and the roof was easily reached from this stairway and would have been made of tile-like rocks matted together with straw and clay-like substance so these men go up the stairs and they begin to dig an opening through the roof they were so sure of jesus's power to help their friend that nothing was going to prevent them from getting to jesus they had an unrelenting faith and there was nothing that was going to stop them from taking their friend to the lord who can help so this crowd that we look at is a story of both a symbol for longing for jesus those that are flocking and following to hear jesus but also represents the very things that can get in the way of our fellowship the crowd we have a crowd in our own lives sometimes that crowd can be our careers it can be the things that get in the way of us and jesus and our fellowship with him it can be an obstacle it can be so often the busyness of our lives our commitments to other things even our well-intentioned friends who maybe crave our attention our bank balances our hobbies these are all gracious gifts that we've been given to us but if we see them as a crowd and we put them in the way of us and the lord they can quickly become deadly substitutes for him it's an interesting paradox though that the very people who gathered to hear jesus became the greatest hindrance to the man at that moment who needed him the most i know what happens at the end of the story i'll just quickly jump to verse 12 there what do the crowd do um we read there in verse 12 and he rose this was the man the paralytic man 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 what started as a barrier ends as a chorus of praise as they glorify god and it's just not a throwaway remark that they glorify god it's a it's a wonderful statement from people who unlike the scribes who attended here with bad intentions these people have no trouble understanding what just happened before their eyes who was standing before them preaching and carrying out this miracle they saw the miracle and knew that this was the work of god they rightly glorified him this crowd for all the different reasons they found themselves there was a group of people with enough honesty to see a miracle and call it a miracle and enough understanding that after they

see that miracle they rightly glorify god because of it so we see just briefly there the first part of that story we look at that crowd that following crowd why they were there who was in the crowd but ultimately they were drawn to the teachings and actions of this glorious man that they saw in jesus now briefly i want us to turn to the second point these faithful friends and we'll spend most of our time i think looking at these faithful friends and the forgiven sin at the end so i want us to turn attention to these four people who brought the paralytic man to jesus the story simply mark simply calls them four men we don't know their names we don't know their backgrounds but their actions in and of themselves tell us a lot about them they speak volumes about what it means to be a true friend and a person of faith these four men knew that their friend was in a difficult place he was a paralytic so unable to work possibly unable to provide for himself it was a man who could probably do little more than just converse with those who were around him in his home the friend that he had the friends that he had saw his need and they didn't just offer empty words of sympathy and they didn't just say we'll pray for you and then walk on they took action they made it a priority to bring their friend to jesus the one person who could truly help him it isn't to say that prayer alone doesn't work but taking these steps and bringing him to the lord was a sure sign of the faith that they had in jesus you just have to think about the effort involved we often just glean glaze over some of these passages we read through them we don't ever actually put ourselves in the place and imagine what it would have actually taken to see this thing done so it wasn't just a simple task that was before them this was a man grown man on a bed or a mat and four men had to carry him up there would have been a significant weight and take him up this stairway which wouldn't have been designed to take four people in a in a paralytic man they weren't just strolling to a house walking through the front door they were faced with a seemingly impenetrable crowd and i think if we're honest a lesser group of friends might have looked at the situation and said oh we tried we took him this far the crowd's too big let's just go home most people would have maybe given up at that point they could have accepted that there was a vast crowd and that that was reason enough for us to to not continue any longer we did our best but not these men they were intentional in their love for their friend they were determined when the way was congested they came up with a plan they took their friend up the outside stairs to the roof and they started digging you can just imagine the scene from the inside of this house jesus is preaching the word and then suddenly chunks of clay and dust start falling from the ceiling and as a light comes in people in the crowd are probably wondering what on earth is going on here then they realize that somebody is breaking through the roof this was not just a a small insignificant act we're not told this in the passage but quite likely um these men would have been responsible for repairing the roof i can't imagine the homeowner would have just let it let it slide um they were however these four men were however so focused on the needs of their friend that they were willing to endure the inconvenience possibly the expense but definitely the awkwardness of tearing up someone's home just to get them to jesus this was that unstoppable friendship and what an unstoppable friendship looks like it's a friendship that's not afraid of obstacles it's a friendship that is sacrificial and is driven by a deep love for the other person and the story itself that we read off here reminds us um that sometimes we have to be the ones to make an opportunity just think in our minds i know not name names but you'll know some in your own minds if you think of somebody in your own life somebody that you've maybe prayed for regularly that maybe you've asked multiple times for them to come to church they've still not done it it's not their thing it's not their bag they don't want to come you've maybe asked them a long long time ago but you haven't asked them again since we can't just

[46 : 29] wait for our lost friends and family to come begging for help we need to be proactive we need to be intentional and we need to be willing to go to great lengths to bring them into the presence of jesus these friends could have easily asked those at the edge of the crowd can you just pass him along to the front and hope that he gets there but no they were determined to take him directly to jesus themselves are we like that it's a question i asked myself and was challenged very much in my own study do we hope that someone else will do what these friends did to someone and and someone in our own lives do i look to somebody that i know is lost is going through a difficult time like hopefully somebody else will speak to them hopefully somebody else will ask that person along to church maybe someone else will bring them to the lord how is it that you approach those around you maybe in your own homes maybe your place of work maybe in school wherever you are how do you approach these people and bring them to the lord how would we have acted if we were one of those four friends would it have been a case of let's not make a scene and there's a lot of people here and what will people say what will people do i need to go back and work with that person these are the sort of things that come into our minds but friends as one of the authors put in a different book it's a book called intentional um i think his name's either paul or peter williams you know if our fear of being embarrassed when sharing the word is such that it stops us from doing it then our fear of others and their thoughts is greater than our love for the lord so what of these friends now they've penetrated this roof notice what jesus says in verse 5 and when jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic son your sins are forgiven so whose faith is it is it just the four friends or is it the paralytic man included as well well it talks about the he saw their faith so it implies that it's those four but if we look at the text later on it makes clear that the man on the mat once he was in front of jesus he must have had a faith as well because he immediately got up and did what jesus commanded but it was the faith of the friends that palpable visible visible faith of those four men that jesus saw first their actions to take their friend to christ was the evidence of their faith another commentator said their faith was not passive it was a demolishing rope lowering hard-working kind of faith this is a powerful lesson for us to take away today about the true nature of faith and what it looks like in action faith as seen here is more than just an intellectual conclusion to a number of facts before them it's more than a belief it's more than just a simple belief in god belief in god is not enough james 2 verse 19 tells us you believe that god is one you do well even the demons believe and shudder even the demons believe so belief in jesus is not enough it's believing that jesus will act and you step into that place in faith knowing that he will the friend's faith was a conviction that if they could just get their friend in front of christ he would not only be able to heal him he would also be willing to heal him that's the kind of faith that moves mountains or in this case demolishes through roofs we've briefly looked at the crowd and then we've focused a little bit on the friends and the faith that they had and i want us to close with the most important part of this passage the forgiven sins that we see the friends finally lower their paralytic friend down placing him right in front of jesus the jesus that they know is the one this man needs they've seen jesus do great things they expect miracles a miracle of healing but jesus's first words are not what anyone would have expected he looks at the man and says son your sins are forgiven you can almost imagine the collective disappointment in the room friends on the roof the man on the mat who desperately wanted to walk might have been confused by this response the crowd themselves were probably expecting a spectacle ended up getting a theological statement

and the scribes and the religious leaders who were there to criticize saw their opening they immediately began to question Jesus in their hearts verses six through seven says why does this man speak like that he is blaspheming who can forgive sins but God alone the interesting thing is the scribes were correct in their theology they were right that only God can forgive sins but they were wrong in their conclusion of who Jesus was they assumed that Jesus could not possibly be God so he must be a blasphemer they're not asking a genuine truth-seeking question like could this be the Messiah or have we misunderstood this far who is this man and why has he come no their question was rooted in a hardened preconceived assumption that blinded them to the truth they were so dedicated to their own views that they couldn't see the Son of God standing right in front of them Jesus perceiving their thoughts calls them out even this calling out of their thoughts didn't give them the shudder that it should have doesn't just read their minds but he exposes the hypocrisy of their reasoning he asks them a penetrating question in verse nine which is easier to say that the parent to say to the paralytic your sins are forgiven or to say rise take up your bed and walk now on the surface we would all agree that it's easier to say your sins are forgiven because well there's no way to prove it at that moment in that house you can't see forgiveness but to say rise take up your bed and walk is a claim that can immediately and undeniably be proven true or false by the crowd and the scribes but Jesus is making a weighty point here he's about to perform a miracle that is physically demonstrable to prove a miracle that is spiritually verifiable the healing of the man's paralysis is the evidence of the forgiveness of his sins that secondary temporary miracle of physical healing is a powerful marker pointing to the primary eternal spiritual healing of this man and so to the silence to silence his critics and to show the crowd his divine authority Jesus speaks to the paralytic again look at verse 10 and 11 but that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins he said to the paralytic I say to you rise pick up your bed and go home Jesus proclaimed forgiveness in his own authority Jesus doesn't say here God forgive this man or Father please allow this man to have his sins forgiven no he forgave the sins himself in his own name in his own power and his own authority and the point is unmistakable for that crowd and for us here listening today that Jesus is proclaiming to be God the very Son of God and people understand exactly what he is doing and what happens next is the absolute embodiment of Jesus's divine power verse 12 again we read it earlier on and he rose and immediately picked up his bed and went out before them all so they were all amazed and glorified God saying we never saw anything like this that man who was lowered through the roof now gets up rolls up his mat and walks out the door on his own two feet he's no longer burdened by that physical ailment he's no longer the paralytic who has to rely on his friends and family to transport him around each day he has a new life to live but even more important than that physical healing is the spiritual one the healing of his legs is temporary one day he would lay down for the last time and not get up again until Christ's second coming but the forgiveness of sin was eternal the greatest problem this man faced wasn't his paralysis as him his friends and likely his um the whole crowd thought it was his sin and it's the same for each and every one of us here today we may be going through really difficult times trials and

tribulations physical ailments as well but these things are not the biggest problems in our lives it's the sin that is at the center of the problems in our lives and the greatest gift that he received and that we can receive that day isn't the ability to walk but it was to see his sins forgiven and this is the heart of the gospel men and women need forgiveness jesus is the one who gives it no one else can we can't get it ourselves we can't reach a certain status or a certain number of services that we've heard or a number of prayer meetings that we've been to none of us can be saved in and of ourselves it's in christ alone that hope is found so as we come to a close for those of us that are maybe not yet christians the point is clear here in this passage the first requirement to forgiveness of sin is coming to jesus person must come to jesus for forgiveness even if they've not been brought there on their own you must still come to christ are you like the paralytic burdened by your own palsy the sin that paralyzes our lives and keeps us from god if that is you and then you need to turn to the lord we may not have a group of friends who are literally going to tear a hole in the roof i can just imagine if it was today the deacons would be going mad and we're not we might not have those friends um that are going to tear that hole in the roof but we do still have an open invitation to come to jesus with our burdens and that crowdedness of our own lives may get in the way and the world may question jesus's authority but this story gives us absolute undeniable proof and hope that jesus has the power to forgive he is the son of man and he alone can wash away the stain of sin and give us new resurrected life so we've seen the following crowd the faithful friends and the forgiven sins i'll close i've got a wee bit to say but i'll close with a quote it's quite a lengthy quote i'll not say it twice so you can listen back on youtube if i if it's a wee bit too long um but it's a wonderful quote i was reading it in my preparations and i was going to bring parts of it in but it was just too good i had to um copy and paste the whole thing in here so it was jc ryle and his commentary on the book of mark so i'll take my time to read through this and then we'll just come to a close but jc ryle talks of this event that we see here in copernum and he says it is good for us all to mark well this case of copernum we are all too apt to suppose that it needs nothing but the powerful preaching of the gospel to convert people's souls and that if the gospel is only brought into a place everybody must believe we forget the amazing power of unbelief and the depth of man's enmity against god we forget that the copernites heard the most faultless preaching and saw it confirmed by surprising miracles and yet remain dead in trespasses and sins we need reminding that the same gospel which is the savor of life to some is the savor of death to others and that the same fire which softens wax will also harden clay nothing in fact seems to harden man's heart so much as to hear the gospel regularly and yet deliberately prefer the service of sin and the world never was there a people so highly favored as a people of copernum and never was a people who appear to have become so hard and just in closing friends i would ask that you don't harden your heart don't leave it too late to come to the lord don't leave it too late to come to him who forgives sins we've seen the sins that can be forgiven this amazing day in copernum shows us that when faith meets the author of faith nothing is impossible the crowd may be an obstacle whatever the crowd is in your own life but unstoppable friends can overcome it by bringing you to the only one who can offer true and lasting forgiveness and when you receive that forgiveness you'll be able to

stand up take up your bed and walk out into a new life may we all be found in that same place of unstoppable faith that loving friendship and gracious forgiveness of our lord and saviour jesus christ amen and may the lord bless these very short reflections um on this glorious passage and his word we'll close with a word of prayer and then we will sing eternal and ever blessed father lord we thank you again that we're able to read your word we're able to see of those faithful friends that wonderful faith that knew that you were not only able to heal but you were willing to heal and it's the same for our own lives for the sin in our own lives that we know that you can do it but just knowing and believing it is not enough we have to come to you we have to come bringing our own friends that we know for those of us that are already believers we need to bring those others to you bring them to you in prayer actively coming to them inviting them to your word to hear your most glorious name preached but we pray as well lord for those of us that are not necessarily brought by others but that we pray in our own hearts that we would be coming to you not just believing the things that we see before us but that we would be stepping out in faith that we would be trusting in you that we would be handing everything over in our lives to you and that we'd be asking for you to lead us that you would be the one that as the the first catechism tells us our chief end would be to glorify you and to enjoy you not for a moment not for a day not for a week but forever and that we would have that eternal life lord so we pray and give thanks for these passages that we're able to read for these four faithful friends and what it tells us but also of that crowd and that there are those who do seek to hear your word but do not seek to to be transformed by it and that there are crowds crowdedness in our own lives whether it's our careers whether it's our um our hobbies whatever it may be there are things that separate us and keep us distant from you lord so we pray that we would be intentional to remove those things that we would be praying to the the opportunities to get past the crowd and to get past the things that get in the way of our fellowship and our time with you and that we would be intentional and bringing others to you in praying and asking for forgiveness of our sins knowing that you are the one that can forgive lord so be with us just now as we go into the rest of this day pray for um the the bringing of your word this evening and not just in this place but across our islands lord we thank you for that word and we thank you as it goes out and that the holy spirit would move in our islands and that we would indeed see a revival here and that we would see many more souls coming to you lord so go before us just now forgive us for all of our sins in jesus name we pray amen we will conclude um our service this morning by singing to god's praise and mission praise 746 mission praise 746 what a friend we have in jesus all our sins and griefs to bear what a privilege to carry everything to god in prayer oh what peace we often forfeit oh what needless pain we bear all because we do not carry everything to god in prayer um and even just that that last verse are we weak and heavy laden cumbered with a load of care precious savior still a refuge take it to the lord in prayer do thy friends despise forsake thee take it to the lord in prayer in his arms he'll take and shield thee thou wilt find a solace there so we'll sing um this hymn 746 what a friend we have in jesus and we'll stand to sing to god's praise what a friend we have in jesus all our sins and griefs to bear

all our sins and miracle Everything to God in prayer Oh, what peace we often forget Oh, what needless pain we bear Oh, because we do not carry Everything to God in prayer But with trials and temptations Is there trouble anywhere?

[63 : 25] We should never be discouraged Take it to the Lord in prayer Can we find a prayer so faithful Who will all our sorrows share?

Jesus knows for every weakness Take it to the Lord in prayer Are we weak and heavy laden Comfort with the Lord of care Racious Savior, still our refuge Take it to the Lord in prayer Do thy friends despise for safety Take it to the Lord in prayer To bring his arms to drink and cheer thee Thou would find us all as well We'll conclude with the words of Ephesians 3, verses 58-21 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly

Than all that we ask or think According to the power at work within us To him be glory in
the church And in Christ Jesus Throughout all generations Forever and ever Amen Amen
Thank you.