

## INTRO

Peace. Unity. Seems impossible right now doesn't it? Things keep getting crazier and crazier...

But it's not just the world around us that seems out of control, is it?...

Our relationships: spouses, kids, parents, friendships, co-workers...

The turmoil we feel inside of us... guilt, shame, anger...

**The turmoil we see around us mirrors the turmoil we experience inside of us.**

What do we do?

Change politicians, laws, jobs, churches, media inputs, spouses, move out... never works for long... things just seem to go bad or even get worse.

The answer... might seem trite/cliche', might sound impossible... especially after what you might have experienced from others claiming to speak for God...

But the answer is a man, ancient Jewish rabbi, who did impossible things and said even more impossible things...

Who offered us the only thing that can fix the turmoil around us and in us...

**Jesus did the impossible to prove what is actually possible.**

**GOD** (Mark. Just starting ministry... getting pretty popular.)

**V. 1-4** When Jesus returned to Capernaum several days later, the news spread quickly that he was back home. Soon the house where he was staying was so packed with visitors that there was no more room, even outside the door. While he was preaching God's word to them, four men arrived carrying a paralyzed man on a mat. They couldn't bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, so they dug a hole through the roof above his head. Then they lowered the man on his mat, right down in front of Jesus.

Set scene

What Jesus does next is actually pretty weird if you think about it.

Why did these people go through so much effort to bring their friend to Jesus? To heal him right? They had heard he could do the impossible and they wanted their friend healed, so they brought their friend to Jesus. They acted on a belief that Jesus could heal their friend.

So what does Jesus do?

**V. 5** Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "My child, your sins are forgiven."

"Seeing their faith"- **Faith is proven by what we do.** (Come back to that later)

Ok these guys dig through the roof, interrupt everybody inside the house including Jesus, lower their friend down to get him in front of the miracle worker... and after all of that what does Jesus do? Heal him? No... just says your sins are forgiven. WHAT!

“That’s nice Jesus, but uh, you see the actual issue right?” Jesus- “Yes I do. Do you?”

**Jesus knows our real needs better than we do.**

Gives the man the one thing no one else could... forgiveness.

He knew his heart, his true need, the turmoil that was going on in him, his true condition.

A couple of questions...

- Did this man ask for forgiveness?
- Did he do anything to get it?
- Members class/test/initiation/candle/apology letter, anything?

**Jesus gives forgiveness away like it's free** or something.

One problem...

This is what God had said through the prophet Isaiah-

**Isaiah 43:25** “I—yes, I alone—will blot out your sins for my own sake and will never think of them again.

So the religious leaders who were there had an issue with this...

**V. 6-7** But some of the teachers of religious law who were sitting there thought to themselves, “What is he saying? This is blasphemy! Only God can forgive sins!”

Can’t blame them too much can you? If Jesus really was a rabbi from God he would know this...

He’s claiming to have an authority God said he reserved only for himself and putting himself on God’s level.

The things Jesus said were so impossible they were offensive.

Offensive... unless he’s not just a rabbi.

**V. 8-9** Jesus knew immediately what they were thinking, so he asked them, “Why do you question this in your hearts? Is it easier to say to the paralyzed man ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or ‘Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk’?”

What’s easier to say? Sins are forgiven, right? Don’t see immediate results if it's true or not.

But what’s actually more impossible?

I would say Jesus is turning this around... it might be easier to say your sins are forgiven but actually doing it... that’s harder... that’s impossible for everyone except...

Let’s just watch and see...

**V. 10-12** So I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins.” Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said, “Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!”

**And the man jumped up, grabbed his mat, and walked out through the stunned onlookers. They were all amazed and praised God, exclaiming, "We've never seen anything like this before!"**

If miracles seem unbelievable... they were just as unbelievable to the people who were actually there too... why do you think so many people followed him around? Why do you think he caught everyone's attention?

BUT... Jesus' miracles had a point... proof.

Proof of his true identity... God in a body.

**Incarnation-** Jesus fully human and fully God.

So what does that mean for you... right now?

**YOU Jesus did the impossible to prove he can forgive and heal the impossible.**

And that's why I think this account is so important for the moment we are in...

The impossible things Jesus did proved he was God.

And nothing was more impossible than him predicting his death and resurrection and then doing it.

Jesus proved he was the only one with the authority to forgive sin. To heal the separation we have created between us and God, us and others, and even ourselves.

But he also proved that he is more than willing to forgive...

**The only person with the authority to judge our sin is the only person who died to forgive our sin.**

He offers it for free... b/c there's nothing we can do to earn it... or erase our past.

Maybe you feel like YOU can't forgive yourself... tell you plainly... it's not your authority to not forgive yourself.

**If Jesus forgives it... it's forgiven.** You don't get to be harder on yourself than God himself is.

It might take work or time, but remind yourself when those feelings come... Jesus forgives me... I can forgive me.

**Make offer to accept.** Never been a point in your life...

Once we accept what he's forgiven in us... we can forgive others.

**We can forgive the impossible in others because Jesus forgives the impossible in us.**

"But they don't deserve it..." nope

"You don't know what they did..." I don't I do know You were forgiven so that you can now forgive.

"They haven't even said sorry or asked for forgiveness."

"But they need to be held accountable"... probably... but you still need to forgive.

Forgiveness is not about them... it's about you.

You know this... **Being willing to forgive is being willing to heal.**

Yes it gives a chance for them to heal BUT it definitely heals you... Holding on to the hurt only hurts you.. They are doing fine.

Jesus Follower... **Refusing to forgive is refusing to trust.**

Jesus says he will take care of you... he will ultimately right the wrongs done to us.

When we choose to forgive we choose to trust that he is taking care of us... we are choosing to release the judgment we want to take from him or execute for him.

And just as Jesus didn't just tell the man he was forgiven, but proved it... we can also prove it...

The mans friends proved their faith by digging through the roof and bringing their friend to Jesus

Faith is proven by what we do... **Forgiveness is proven by what we do.**

Might be a kind word, even commenting kindly on a social media post is a small step.

Might mean stop bringing it up, writing a letter, having a conversation. Listening first to understand, hearing their perspective or experience.

Serve in some way... **#1-----Pray FOR them.**

"They haven't changed, repented, whatever..."

**Jesus-Followers go first.**

Love our neighbors as ourselves means going first, taking the first steps to show others who Jesus is... In faith/trust we go first.

Who needs healing, who needs forgiveness?

Maybe they are angry, antagonistic, mean... It's easier to judge than to forgive... to pray for them.

Bring them to Jesus anyway... pray for them.

This man's friends did what they could and then Jesus did his thing. They had no idea what would actually happen... they just brought him to Jesus. Forgive them for what you can see and let Jesus deal with what you can't

Do your part and trust the one who can truly heal what needs to be healed.

**WE**

Do we want the chaos around us to calm... do we want peace and unity?

The answer is forgiveness rooted in the forgiveness only Jesus gives...

- Accept Jesus' forgiveness for yourself
- Forgive those who have hurt you
- Forgive the "other side". There is no "other side", we are all God's kids.
- And remember Jesus-Followers go first.

What could happen?

**When the world sees us forgiving the impossible they will see what is truly possible.**

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What stood out to you in this week's episode and/or passage (Mark 2:1-12)? What challenges you or encourages you?
2. Read Matthew 18:21-35. How does this clarify the concept of forgiveness for you?
3. What are you struggling to forgive or be forgiven for right now and why do you think that is? How can your group pray for you in this?