

Lent 2 - Skit - The Paralytic

Part 1 - Before the Sermon

Jill: Hi Trey.

Trey: Hi, Jill.

Jill: How are you doing?

Trey: Umm. O the same. You know. Things aren't great when you can't walk. Life stinks.

Jill: I'm sorry.

Trey: Why? Why are you sorry?

Jill: I care about you Trey. We've grown up together. We've gone to church together. (Pause). Trey, don't you see God's love even though the accident paralyzed you?

Trey: God? Julie, I was the most active youth at church? I loved God. If He loved me why did this happen?

Jill: You know, Trey, God does love us. But, we live in an imperfect and sinful world. Still, God is there for us in time of trouble.

Trey: If God were there for me then this wouldn't have happened. I've always believed in God . . . but right now I'm not sure. And if I believe in Him, **I think he blew it this time!**

Isaiah 29:22-24 22 Therefore this is what the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, says to the house of Jacob: "No longer will Jacob be ashamed; no longer will their faces grow pale. 23 When they see among them their children, the work of my hands, they will keep my name holy; they will acknowledge the holiness of the Holy One of Jacob, and will stand in awe of the God of Israel. 24 Those who are wayward in spirit will gain understanding; those who complain will accept instruction."

Mark 2:1-12 1 A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. 2 So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. 4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "**Son, your sins are forgiven.**" 6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7 "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? **9 Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'?**" 10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." He said to the paralytic, 11 "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." 12 He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all.

This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

INTRO - Did you ever think life isn't fair? Kids say that all the time, and to some extent they are right. So what do we tell them? "That's life." But how about adults? Do you ever feel God blew it in your life? Do you ever get angry and grumble at him when bad things happen you don't think you deserve? Why do bad things happen to good people?

I. Maybe the paralyzed man in our lesson felt that way.

A. We don't actually know much about the paralytic man in this lesson.

1. We know he was paralyzed, but not if he had always been that way, or become injured.
2. We know he had good friends.
3. But, today we have the ADA, Americans with Disabilities Act. I've been to Israel, those buildings are not handicapped accessible. Life had to be tough and bitter for this man.

B. So, if you can get over the surprise with me of friends tearing up someone's roof to drop a man before Jesus, perhaps you share my surprise at Jesus' first actions for the paralyzed man.

1. Why did Jesus say, "**Son, your sins are forgiven.**" ?
2. Jesus had been healing everyone. This man obviously needed healing. And Jesus tells him, "**Son, your sins are forgiven.**" ????

C. Perhaps Jesus, being God, also knew the man's heart.

1. Perhaps this man was burning with resentment and anger at God for his handicap.
2. Jesus knew that a healed body was not the most important thing. So for a man whose outward handicap was his most obvious problem, Jesus works to heal his most pressing problem, his heart.
3. "**Son, your sins are forgiven.**"

II. The playwright Archibald MacLeish wrote a play called JB, about Job. In this play JB / Job says the following, "If God is good, he is not God . . . If God is God, he is not good. . . In other words, why did evil happen to me.

A. Do you have something that is so bitter that you are angry with God? Have you grumbled and complained? Is resentment eating at you?

B. At this point it is important to get a dose of reality, even though it is uncomfortable to speak these words to hurting people, and even though it is uncomfortable to hear these words.

1. God did not bring sin into the world. He created the world good, people strong and healthy. There was not even death.
2. Death and pain and injustice came into the world through sin.
3. While we weren't the first to sin, we have kept up the tradition. We are responsible.

C. No, in human thinking we don't deserve much of what comes our way. But in ultimate terms our sin is part of the cause of our troubles.

III. Let's look back at one other phrase Jesus said in tonight's forgiveness story. In verse 9 Jesus says, **9 Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'?**

A. The obvious immediate answer is that it is easier to forgive sins than to raise someone. But is it?

1. For Jesus to forgive he had to face injustice, real injustice.
2. You and I are sinners. To a certain extent we know the real question is "Why do good things happen to bad people?"
3. But Jesus never sinned. He always lived in love, in faith, in obedience . . . even when tested and tempted.
4. So when Jesus was persecuted for teaching the truth, when he was arrested unjustly in secret, when he was beaten, and whipped, and a crown was placed on His head, when nails went through his hands and feet and he hung on a cross painfully suffocating, it really wasn't fair.

B. Jesus is "God with us." The Bible says He is our help and strength.

1. So, the love that caused Jesus to die for us is with us when life is not fair.
2. When we are so angry at God, He knows that, and wants us to talk to Him.
3. But He wants us to listen to his love, His compassion, His sacrifice, His forgiveness, and His salvation, and to believe this is true for us.

C. When life is unfair, and we believe that "God is our refuge and strength, and *ever present help in trouble.*" it gives us a new start.

1. We can face life, unfair as it is, with hope and faith because Jesus is with us.
2. In the midst of our trials, we can praise Him. What a breath of life. What a witness.

CONCLUSION - Why do good things happen to sinners like us, because bad things happened to the perfect and holy Son of God.

Jill: Hi Trey.

Trey: Hi, Jill.

Jill: How are you doing, today?

Trey: Jill, why do you keep asking that? I'm still paralyzed aren't I?

Jill: Are you still mad at God?

Trey: Is there any reason not to be?

Jill: I've been thinking, Trey. Your accident wasn't your fault. But you and I are sinners and we live in a sinful world and we know bad things happen because of the horrors of sin. But, there is someone who faced more injustice than you.

Trey: Who?

Jill: Well, Trey, you know who? We are sinners, but Jesus wasn't. But the religious leaders persecuted him. He was arrested unfairly. He suffered and died, not because He sinned or deserved it, but because we sinned. But, He did that so we can be forgiven and saved, even when we don't deserve it.

Trey: Jill, what a fool I've been, wallowing in self-pity. What a sinner I am. I've been grumbling against God, I wonder if He can forgive me now.

Jill: He already did, Trey. When Jesus died God forgave my sins, and your sins. He already did.

Trey: Well, maybe I can live in that forgiveness instead of my resentment. Did you say there was a high school basketball game tonight. Can you drive my wheelchair van?