

## PP 'The Proof of the Pudding is in the Eating!'

Mark 2: 1 – 12 (Luke 5: 17 – 26 )

プディングの証拠は食べることです - 「論より証拠」  
プリンは食べてこそ証明できる

布丁的证明是在吃(Simplified) - 实践出真知

布丁的證明是在吃 (Traditional)

### Introduction

Often a parent will tell a child that the food on the plate is very good and tasty, but the child refuses to even taste the food. Without even tasting it, they have decided that they do not like the food, and therefore will not eat it.

Even if the parent eats the food in front of them, and tells them how good it is, they still refuse to eat it. As a parent this behaviour can be quite frustrating!!

**PP** No doubt this is the reason **Dr Seuss of 'Cat in the Hat'** fame wrote the book 'Green Eggs and Ham'. He wanted to teach children, in a fun way, that they do not know what something tastes like without trying it! Without eating it!

However, when they are older, when they actually **DO** eat the food, they realise they do like it, and may ask for more!

Today's story from the life of Jesus is similar.

Words were not enough people had to see the power of God at work, to even begin to understand who Jesus was.

Let us look at this story in more detail and together enjoy the wonder of **WHO Jesus is and WHY he came to this earth.**

### 1. PP Problem of Popularity v 1-2a

We see from verse 1 and from **chapter 1: 45** (Read)  
Jesus was so popular, that he could not have a normal life.  
Everyone wanted to hear him speak.

Jesus was in his home town when today's story happened.  
From **Mark 1:29 - 31**(read) we can most likely assume he was in the home of Simon and Andrew where he had previously healed Simon's mother-in-law.

#### Why was Jesus so popular?

**Chapter 1:34, 39 and 45** (read) gives us the answer.

'The proof of the pudding is in the eating!'

People could see that Jesus actions and life style were backed up by his teaching. People said about Jesus, that they had never heard anyone who spoke with such authority.

### 2. PP Privilege of Preaching v 2b

Verse 2b tells us that Jesus preached God's Word to them.

This was the general pattern for Jesus; preaching and works of power. Remember Jesus later said to those who found it difficult to believe, and could not believe because of his words, that they should then look at his works of power and believe.

So, in our story today Jesus is preaching to the crowd.

We do not know exactly what he said that day but we can get a clue from **Mark 1: 14 -15** (Read)

Three common themes:

- The Kingdom of God,
- Repentance from sin and
- Belief in the Good News.

### 3. PP Providing a Solution v 3-5a

Three weeks ago a family member was having their house renovated. Suddenly the whole kitchen ceiling collapsed, and the room filled with insulation and dust. The electrician was in the roof moving wires, when he stepped in the wrong place, and the whole ceiling collapsed!

I preached my first short sermon at the age of 14, and in Japan and NZ preached most Sundays for over 40 years, but not once did the roof above me open up. But once there was an earthquake when I was speaking at a conference in Japan.

Many people have come asking for prayer, but not once have they come through the roof!

**V 3** Four men arrived carrying a paralyzed man on a mat.

In my home church at Nelson Baptist there was a group in the Sunday school called, 'Rope Holders'. It was a group of children and leaders who were committed to support missionaries serving overseas. They held the ropes and supported missionaries in prayer before God and in other ways.

Full of faith, they believed that God would answer the desires of the missionaries to see people saved. OMF prayer groups around the world have done the same thing for 150 years now. That's why we pray for people in our church.

These four men were rope holders for their paralyzed friend as they lowered him in front of Jesus.

**v4 The four men showed determination and creativity.** They went up the stairs at the side of the house and according to Luke's record of this story they removed some tiles of the roof. **(Luke 5:19)**

We know how houses were constructed in those days and obviously there was no ceiling so when the tiles were removed you could see right down on Jesus and the crowd. They must have worked out which tiles to remove, because we read that tells they lowered the man **right down in front of Jesus.**

These men were **TRUE friends.** They knew there was only one person that could help their friend. They must have discussed together and worked out a plan to get that help for their friend. Together they worked, and their friend was helped in the best way possible.

Hope is to the soul as oxygen is to the body. Hope gives us joy and strength.

When we have a friend, who we know needs to meet Jesus, do we show the same passion, creativity, and faith as these men?

In this case the paralyzed man could not run away!

We realise from **v 5a** (read) that the paralyzed man was also included in those who had faith.

**PP In the Paralympics** the tandem cycling teaches us the same thing. The blind cyclist sits at the back and the sighted at the front. If they achieve Gold, Silver or bronze both riders get a medal. The blind rider is the handicapped person but both are rewarded. If you want to go slow go alone, but if you want to go far go with others.(African Proverb)

As we have studied before, **true faith requires action.** When Jesus said he saw their faith, He saw it through their actions. Jesus healed the paralysed man and what joy he gave to the four who had lowered him in front of Jesus!

You and I don't know exactly what God will do, but it is our responsibility to obey God and help others as best we know how.

Some years back a young lady came to me for prayer. When I saw her I noticed the large birth scar on her face. My first thought was, is she coming for the healing of that birth deformity on her face? I was really challenged.

The next time I met her she told me: 'when you prayed for me, God did not heal my facial disfiguration, but healed my struggle of accepting the scar. He gave me self-respect and helped me fully accept my condition as a loved child of God'.

God did not heal her body, but her spirit and feelings about herself. She became beautiful on the inside as she was on the outside.

A survey was taken that asked people the question: 'When did you grow most spiritually?'

Most answered when they were suffering or had difficulties in life.  
There is a saying that goes like this: 'Never cut a tree down in winter, it may not be dead'. In other words – never stop living by faith, when times are difficult.

#### 4. PP Proclamation of Forgiveness v5

What would it be like, if while you were preaching suddenly someone interrupted the whole meeting by rushing up and asking for help?

How would you feel and react?

You may say – wait, or ask someone else to help.

I think I would be a little upset that this person interrupted my carefully prepared sermon!

This man was paralyzed, and could not move. The first thing that Jesus says to him is **“My child (or My son), your sins are forgiven” v5b.**

There are three simple things that we can learn from this statement.

- **Firstly, Jesus speaks kindly to those in need.**  
' My Child' or 'My Son' is in the Greek is a term of affection. “Teknon”. A word used for a man or woman who had a relationship with you, even at the level of just being a human being.  
However, in the Bible it is used a lot when there is feeling between two people. Paul called Timothy, his son (same word).
- **Secondly, Jesus knew this man had a problem with sin in his life.** Jesus never taught that all sickness was the result of sin. But, that was what the Jews believed.

We do not know why this man was paralyzed. Maybe it was the result of an accident and there is no mention of him being like that from birth. Also, it does not say how long he had it, like in other stories of Jesus healing of paralyzed people.

If it was an accident that paralyzed him, maybe he was doing something wrong and had a fall. Maybe he was a thief that had an accident? Who knows?

- **Thirdly, we do know from what Jesus said that He is the one who forgives sin.** No matter what you have done in life and what guilt or pain you live with – Jesus can and will forgive you. You will never be the same after Jesus speaks over your life and heals whatever your need is - emotional, spiritual or physical.

#### 5. PP Preconceived Ideas v 6-8

Another evidence of who Jesus was, comes from his knowledge of the thoughts of people. Nothing is hidden from our God **V6 and V8**

These religious teachers knew that only God could forgive sin. But they were wrong to assume Jesus was a blasphemer. **Luke 5:17** tells us that these curious religious leaders came from every village in Galilee and Judea as well as Jerusalem.

**Jesus was God** but they could not understand it! Their religious preconceived ideas blinded them to not only **who** Jesus was, but the thrill of fully understanding what it meant to hear him pronounce forgiveness of sin.

Sadly the same thing even happens today.

**(Christian World News 12 September 2016)** Story of Pakistani lady on a farm accused of blasphemy in 2009 for drinking water from the same cup as other Muslim farm ladies and then talking about Jesus. Her trial for blasphemy is at long last due to be held this year at the highest court in Pakistan!

#### 6. PP Proof of Power v 9 – 12

Remember our sermon title **'The Proof of the Pudding is in the Eating!'**

I really do not need to say anything more about the remainder of this story.

It speaks for itself so let me read it to you.

Take it in, enjoy it, and praise God for His wonderful works!

Never forget that no matter what your need is, a meeting with Jesus will be your best day.

## Read verse 6 – 12

Here we witness the authority of our creator God.

- **Authority to forgive sin.**
- **Authority to heal**

### **We are saved, healed and forgiven by Jesus to live a new life.**

The forgiven man was enabled to jump up and go home.

Divine forgiveness is always accompanied by the power to begin a new life.

When Jesus healed the woman caught in adultery, what did he say to her? “Go and sin no more”. I know what you did, but I forgive you. Now walk a new path.

A meeting with Jesus is not just for short-term healing and forgiveness but a new start for the rest of life. In many countries people go to the temple or shrine for help, and then as soon as they leave the temple grounds they forget about it, and life goes back to normal.

There is a Japanese proverb: ‘Calling on the god’s in times of trouble’.

This is not the Christian way. God changes us, and we now live with a new purpose and strength.

You are never alone as a Christian.

**V11** Jesus commanded the healed man to - “Go home”

**V12** The man jumped up!

Can you imagine the joy of the four friends, the healed man’s family and many others?

**V10** Who is Jesus? The one with authority on earth to forgive sins and heal whatever needs healing in our lives.

When people are touched by Jesus they can’t keep it to themselves, but go out with joy, tell others and put right whatever needs to be corrected.

A friend’s story who was an overseas student in NZ.

‘When I was hosted by a Christian couple it was my first time to get to know people who say that they really believe in God and live their life with that Faith. One night, my host father asked me if I wanted to go to the church Youth Group. Many of my high school friends were going to that youth group. At the youth group I saw many young people freely enjoying fellowship, everyone was so different and I sensed freedom, joy, unity and love among these young people. It was different from any kind of social gathering I’ve ever known and I was very attracted to that place. When I began to understand their Bible study, the words of God started to shake my life and my view of the world. I thought I had no value and no reason to continue living, but at the same time was desperately seeking the “truth”.

I was longing for a stronger voice which would destroy my dark thoughts. So I naturally started to seek whether the Christian God was real or just an uncertain illusion like the many other spiritual teachings I had come across before. However the authority and power I felt from the words of God was nothing like any other I had ever known I struggled to believe that God did actually ‘care’ about me and ‘love’ me when He let me go through many hardships and hopeless feelings. However I also realised that I can’t save myself anymore. I realised if there is anyone who can save me from my hopelessness, it would only be Jesus.

At the beginning of my second year in New Zealand I invited Christ into my life. It was my turning point as I began to find my hope in Jesus.’

Years later she has completed 4 years study at Laidlaw Bible College, Auckland and next week will marry a fine Christian young man.

**PP** How did your life change when you met Jesus? How will your life change from today?

Come to Jesus, experience His love and power and go out and change your world.