

FAMILY GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 9:1-8

This Gospel message carries several important lessons for our journey to salvation. The first is that we must come to Christ to be healed of our spiritual sicknesses. Christ did not just heal the paralytic, but He also forgave his sins which is more important than physical health. A healthy body must be maintained with a Godly mind as the earthly body is mortal and temporary while the soul is eternal. Next, the paralytic needed people to help him seek healing and Christ recognizes that it is not only his faith but *their faith* that made him well. We need to remember that we are part of the Body of Christ and it is our responsibility to help one another and to humbly accept aid when needed. The final lesson of importance comes from the scribes. They accuse Jesus of blasphemy *with their thoughts*. Jesus understands their evil motives by seeing into their hearts. It is important to remember that we sin by actions, words, *and* thoughts. Our actions and words are apparent to others but God has the power to judge how we think.



For Consideration

- What is happening in this Gospel lesson?
- Why did Jesus say, “Why do you think evil in your hearts,” to the scribes? Why did Jesus heal the paralytic? Would it have been wrong for Jesus not to have healed the paralytic?
- What does this Gospel passage mean for our lives? How can we bring others to Christ? How can we be forgiven and healed by Jesus? What should we do if we feel “paralyzed” from some sin?

TO DO TOGETHER

Be of Good Cheer

What does it mean to be of good cheer? God tells the paralytic to be this because his sins are forgiven. Daily we are called to be full of joy. Draw pictures of what this looks like and the many blessing God bestows on us that give us reason to, “be of good cheer”!

Unity of the Gospels

Read the other accounts of the healing of the paralytic found in Mark 2:1-12 and Luke 5:17-26. Pay attention to the similarities and differences. Remember the Bible was written through divine inspiration and therefore each Gospel reveal something different while remaining in perfect unity with the others.

Pray for the Sick and Suffering

Make a list of those who are ill—physically and spiritually—and pray for them regularly. Ask your priest if there is anyone else you can add to your prayer list. You don’t have to limit your prayers to people who you know. As you follow the news, try to remember those who suffer in our country and world-wide. We are called to pray for the salvation of humanity—in addition to those close to us.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, physician of our souls and bodies, who have sent Your only-begotten Son and our Lord Jesus Christ to heal every sickness and infirmity, visit and heal also Your servant (name from all physical and spiritual ailments through the grace of Your Christ. Grant him/her patience in their sickness, strength of body and spirit, and recover of health. Lord, You have taught us through Your words to pray for each other that we may be healed. I pray that You heal Your servant (name) and grant to him/her the gift of complete health. For You are the source of healing and to You I give glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen

-Prayer for a Sick Person

FINAL THOUGHT

I want to go back a little over a year ago when I started to pray very seriously about healing. At that time I offered prayers to St. Nektarios for healing. I don’t know if you are familiar with these prayers but there exist some beautiful prayers where we ask St. Nektarios to intercede for us. The interesting thing about those prayers, however, is that most of it is prayer for healing of soul. There really is only a little about healing of body. As I started to pray these prayers, I realized that it was more important to be healed in soul than in body. Thus, I started to ask God to show me what it meant to be healed in soul. Over the last year, I have focused my attention much more on the healing of soul than on body. I think the healing of soul has come to me in different ways. I prayed to God to show me this, and he surely showed me areas that needed healing.

-from Lynette’s Hope

