

REFORMED CHURCH BELLVILLE: SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER 2009: MORNING SERVICE

Opening reading:

"Thus says the Lord: 'Stand in the court of the Lord's house, and speak to all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the Lord's house, all the words that I command you to speak to them. Do not diminish a word. (Jeremiah 26:2)

Sing before: Psalm 19:2

Let us commence this meeting with God by declaring openly to one another and to God:

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Beloved grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, through the mighty working of God the Holy Spirit.

Amen

Psalm of praise: Psalm 33:2

Confession of faith: Nicene

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who, for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was Incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.

And we believe one holy catholic* and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

After the reading of the Law we confess our guilt and pray for forgiveness and a new life before God with Psalm 86:1

Law

Psalm: 86:1

Prayer:

- **Doxology**
- **Worship**
- **Confession of sins**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Gratitude**
- **Prayer for the need of the congregation for the church, the authorities and the sinful world and appeal to God's promises.**
- **General prayer**
- **Enlightenment from the Holy Spirit for the sake of the ministry of the Word.**

Amen

Scripture Versification 2-2:1 [Isaiah 45: 5-11]

Scripture reading: Matthew 9

Scripture text: Matthew 9:2c

Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you."

(Matthew 9:2)

"Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you..."

This event was recorded and took place in order to reveal to us the purpose of Jesus Christ's death on the cross.

During this sermon the following matters will receive attention:

- 1. The background.**
- 2. The Lord Jesus Christ revealing His Godly Omnipotence.**
- 3. Gods' Omnipotence over us as well.**

1. The background

When, together with this passage, we read the gospels of Mark and Luke we find that four other men carried this paralysed man to the Lord.

- Because the people surrounded Him, they were not able to reach the Lord.
- They climbed on the roof of the house and removed some of the roof tiles lowering the paralytic through the roof to the Lord.

The full description of this attempt by the paralytic and his friends to reach the Lord is given here only to show the extent of their faith.

- They believed so staunchly that the Lord will cure the paralytic that, in order to approach the Lord for help, they even broke open the roof.
- Here the Lord revealed that He sees more in man than can be seen by the human eye.

Indeed therefore verse two starts with an exclamation: **Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed.**

The further importance of this full description of how the man managed to reach the Lord lies in showing the massive concern existing with the paralytic and his friends.

- They did not laughingly broke open the roof just because people cluttered the door.
- They were driven by force of faith.
- Possibly the other people were dumbfounded by the determined breaking open of the roof during Jesus' sermon.

Therefore the words of the Lord: **"Son, be of good cheer;**

- Literally it reads: Child, be of good cheer.
- This word was only a way of addressing anybody.
- It was an informal form of address.

Thereafter the Lord told the man to be of good cheer, his sins were forgiven.

- Literally: *your sins are taken away*.

This does not mean that mankind's diseases are caused by his sin and that you, at any rate, first have to obtain forgiveness for sin before you could be healed.

- Undoubtedly all people also carry the punishment of sin in their bodies but it definitely does not mean that every illness is the direct result of your sin. (John 9:3)
- Some scripture explainers are of the opinion that this paralytic we read about think that his illness was caused by his sins, and that was why the Lord firstly told him that his sins were removed.

At any rate we do not know this to be factual.

2. The Lord Jesus Christ revealing His Godly Omnipotence.

We must keep in mind that this event was recorded for the purpose of revealing the Omnipotence of God.

- To show how, in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus, it becomes apparent.
- Not only does Jesus grant cure to the body – He also grants clemency of sin.
- To underline this, the matter of redemption is put firstly.

The bodily cure is indicative of healing through the forgiving of sins.

The rest of the event now underlines the power of the Lord Jesus to forgive sin – thus to create reconciliation between man and God.

- The scribes and the Pharisees noted that Jesus spoke with the authority of God.
- He forgives sins which only God alone can do.
- Immediately they judged Jesus to be blaspheming.

Then Jesus further revealed his Godly power to them by saying:

"Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk'?
(Luke 5:23)

Take note: God can, with the same ease, say both.

- Healing a person by a word of power is just as impossible for man to absolve sin.

- But both of this is fully within the power of God.

Also the Lord is not in a hurry to perform the forgiving of sin or curing of the man immediately following each other or doing both together at the same time.

- It is as if the Lord first uses the situation to ripen the people to what is happening so that the omnipotence of God in this event can sink through to them.

There was another time when something similar took place.

- That was when the message of Lazarus' illness was brought to Jesus. (We read about this in John 11)
- After the Lord received the message He first remained another two days.
- He wanted to be sure that upon His arrival Lazarus would be dead.

Therefore the Lord told the messengers: This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.

- Lazarus passed away but the Lord resurrected him.
- Why in this way?

Jesus' own words are:

"And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." (John 11:42)

The Lord Jesus confirmed through this act with Lazarus and the paralytic that He has the ability to:

- Forgive sin,
- to heal and
- resurrect the dead.

"But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"-then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." (Matthew 9:6)

Something about the resurrection is encompassed in all these healings: they are preliminaries of our last healing when the same Jesus arrives in the clouds!

By this the Lord revealed Himself as the Messiah sent by God and who from the hand of God received the absolute authority to forgive sins.

- This authority is so far reaching that all forces in heaven and on earth are obedient to Him.
- Therefore they can see for themselves that He can forgive sins on earth.

3. God's Omnipotence over us as well.

This whole matter does not only concern the hereafter.

- It also concerns our lives here.
- How often do believers sometimes feel that they are praying in vain?
- It is as if acceptance cannot be reached that the Lord can forgive, or has forgiven, our past sins.

Therefore all these matters are addressed in the Word of God!

- You can, without a doubt, know that Jesus Christ gave His life so that you may receive forgiveness for your sins.
- He died so that clemency of sins upon His arrival will coincide with re-creation.
- Re-creation means that your body will be renewed and glorified and that you will be perfect.
- Diseases will not exist.

But then we also have to believe it.

- The four men who brought their paralysed friend are indicative of how strong our faith should be.
- True faith has an unstoppable force behind it – the people climbed the wall and opened the roof because, in their faith, they knew that the Lord could heal their friend.

Often, because we cannot get going, our faith displays signs of paralyses.

- If we struggle with matters like church attendance and things daily occurring in our worship, how will we be able to have real power of faith?
- This is where our problems are born: we ourselves are negligent and when doubt overtakes us, we complain.

Know that the Lord lives.

Know that living He rules over all power.

Know that He, for the forgiving of all the sins you commit, and also for your resurrection to eternal life, died.

Amen.

Closing prayer.

Closing Psalm: Psalm 116: 3,5

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

Amen

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 Scripture Modern King James Version