

MIRACLES HAPPEN WHEN PEOPLE MOVE

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Luke 5:17-26

In the gospel of Luke, a move comprises the development of a need or lack through the effort to overcome that need or lack and the move ends when that effort terminates. When someone has a need or a lack, it is overcome when movement takes place. In Chapter 5, a man with leprosy came to Jesus. In Chapter 6, the man with the withered hand had to move from where he was standing to go towards Jesus to be healed. In Chapter 7, the Centurion sent elders of the Jews to ask Jesus to come and heal his slaves. Luke is convinced that miracles happen when people move. It is not just God seeing the needs of people. People have to participate in their own deliverance and their own healing. You cannot just come to church and not move towards the Master but have your miracles manifested in your midst. If you are chronically sick, you cannot just stay at home in the bed. You have to get up and move towards someone that can help you. You have to move. You cannot stay where you are and get healed.

In the text, when a paralyzed man was moved towards the Master by some men, a miracle took place. Jesus had all power but there were particular times when the power of the Lord was upon him to heal. Whenever that power was upon him, he healed just about everybody that came to him for healing. As a believer you have to discern the purpose of a particular manifestation of the power of the Lord. Sometimes the power of the Lord is upon us to worship and we can sing in some extraordinary ways. Sometimes the power of the Lord comes upon us for evangelism and we can see the sinner and call him/her to repentance because the power of the Lord is upon us for that particular reason. In the text, the power of the Lord was upon Jesus to heal hence the people were moving towards him. You have to discern the purpose of the manifestation of the power of the Lord because whenever the power of the Lord comes upon us it is because God has something in His mind that He wants to accomplish.

The men went to the extreme to get the sick man to Jesus. They went as far as to cut a hole in the roof to lower him down. They were convinced that if they were able to just move him a little closer to Jesus, Jesus could help him. The church can be a movement of the miraculous when believers start really being convinced that if you move closer to Jesus everything will be all right. If you can get your drug-addicted child to Jesus, everything will be all right. If you can get your crippled husband to Jesus, everything will be all right. They moved on their conviction that everything would be all right if they could just get him in the presence of God.

So many details are left out of this story. Maybe Luke is trying to convey to us that the details of a person's paralysis should not deter us from moving him/her closer to Jesus. We get into trying to find out how he/she got that way. If you knew how that person got that way, you still wouldn't understand why he/she don't just get better. If they could do better, they would do better.

Though there are some things left out in the story, Luke does clarify some things. The text said the man was paralyzed. If it weren't for the movement of the other men in the story, the sick man's paralysis would have

rendered him paralyzed for the rest of his life. The movement of the men is juxtaposed with the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law sitting down. The religious right is sitting while the radical liberals are moving the man just a little closer to Jesus. The people who knew the Bible were not moving this man closer to Jesus. The people who knew the hymns of the church, when to pray, and when to clap weren't moving this man closer to Jesus. Somehow people believe that only persons credentialed by the church have the authority to bring people to Jesus and have them healed. Somehow the religious right has made it so that you have to believe exactly what they believe in order for you to see the manifestation of the power of God. However, you don't even have to have a name to move someone closer to God. You don't even have to have a position but you do have to have the conviction that if you move God is going to move.

Jesus is trying to show you that a lot of us are paralyzed but we just can't come to grips with our paralysis. In the general, paralysis occurs when there is a disruption in communication between the brain and the spinal cord. Paralysis is more prevalent among us than we care to admit. Your brain is where you get all of your information. Your spinal cord is where you get all of your mobility. In other words, paralysis occurs when you have enough brain to know what to do but not enough spine to do it. You know better but you lack the will to do better. You have the right information but you can't consistently do right. When in your brain you are made aware of what you need to do better, get better, or get ahead and you fail to act on it you are suffering from an acute case of paralysis. When you keep analyzing with your brain the details of your circumstances but you fail to act on it you are suffering from a severe case of paralysis of analysis. There is nothing worse than a leader suffering from paralysis.

Upon seeing the faith of the men who brought the sick man, Jesus forgave the man's sins. It's like you coming to church for benevolent assistance but the church tells you your sins are forgiven. It is clear from Jesus' word that the man's healing was in the forgiveness of his sins. Jesus means what he says and says what he means. The only reason why he told him to take up his bed and walk was so that they could see he had the power to do it. To be released from your sins can be the beginning of your deliverance. Sin is what causes the disruption in the communication from your brain to your spinal cord. Therefore, Jesus is addressing the cause of your paralysis and not the external manifestation of your paralysis. When you feel a release from your sins you can move as if God created a miracle in your life. Sin will zap your energy, leave you bedridden, and/or cause you to be broke. Your sin is a reference to the collective weight, depth, and impact that sin has had on your life. The Pharisees had a problem with Jesus forgiving ALL the man's sins because they felt that God should only have that power. You cannot use your sin issue as the reason you have not accomplished what God told you to do. It doesn't matter what has transpired in your past. What matters is that if you keep moving toward the Master He will create a miracle in your life. The Word of God said He will wipe your slate clean and let you be able to move again. That's the thing that has most of us paralyzed. We don't know what to do with the sin and the paralysis it causes.

Forgiveness of sin is the key to our miracle. Sin will always be in our lives, but we need to know what to do with it. Don't let it paralyze you. Your job is to keep moving towards your miracle. Jesus healed the sick man when he forgave him of his sins. He told him to rise, take up his bed, and walk. Rise means do something you haven't done in a long time. Rise means do something you know you were created to do. Take up your bed means to clean up your mess. Don't justify your wrong or call your wrong right. Clean it up. Walk means to go home. Home knows your paralysis because you put on a different air in public. You praise God in public but cuss like a sailor at home. Notice Jesus didn't send the man out to preach. He told him to go home. There is something that has you paralyzed today. Get up and make up in your mind to clean up your mess.

Peace.

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