

SEEN FAITH

BIG FAMILY SUNDAY — VISION SUNDAY

Mark 2:1-12

BIG IDEA

Your brokenness has to get healed in community, and your faith has to become active. We do not move to the next level of what God has for us without both.

THE VISION

Today is a marker in the road for us as a church. Here is what Motivation believes, and it is the vision we are building on from this Sunday forward: your brokenness has to get healed in community, and your faith has to become active. Not one or the other. Both.

If your brokenness never gets healed in community, if you keep trying to carry your pain alone, you do not grow up. You stay stuck. Immature. Paralyzed. Still on the same mat year after year, and calling it normal.

If your faith never becomes active, if it stays a private feeling instead of something you put your hands on, then we do not become a church. We become a social club. A group of nice people who feel something for an hour and go home unchanged, and nothing changes around us either.

That tension sits inside Mark 2. A paralyzed man who cannot heal himself. And four friends whose faith did not stay in their hearts, it moved their feet, dug through a roof, and put actual weight on their backs.

Question underneath everything today: Is your brokenness being healed in community? And is your faith actually active?

THE TEXT

Jesus is in a house in Capernaum. Word gets out. The place is packed, wall to wall, door blocked. Four men show up carrying their paralyzed friend on a mat. They cannot get in, so they climb the roof, tear it open, and lower the man down in front of Jesus.

Mark 2:5 — "When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, 'Son, your sins are forgiven.'"

Not when Jesus heard about their faith. Not when Jesus was told they believed. When he saw it. Jesus does not only want to hear your faith. He wants to see it.

POINT ONE: Your Faith Was Never Meant to Stay Invisible

We have turned faith into something private, a feeling we defend when convenient and hide when it costs us something. But Jesus did not respond to a confession of faith here. Nobody said a word. He responded to a demonstration of it, in the sweat on their backs and the hole in somebody's roof.

Faith that stays in your heart never gets anyone through a roof. If your faith has never cost you a roof tile, a friendship, a Saturday, an awkward conversation, ask whether it is faith or just an opinion you are comfortable holding.

POINT TWO: The Broken Part of You Needs Carriers, Not Just Comfort

Every verb of motion in this passage belongs to somebody else. The man is carried, lowered, brought. Left alone, he stays exactly where he is. Healing here is not a private project, it is inseparable from four friends

who refused to leave him where he was.

If you are paralyzed right now, spiritually numb, mentally exhausted, emotionally shut down, you were never designed to dig yourself out alone. Community is not a program at this church. It is a stretcher.

POINT THREE: The Strong Part of You Was Built to Carry Weight

Scripture never names the four men. It only cares what they did. They carried weight, dug through mud and rooftop, and carried an actual human being to Jesus, not just a prayer request.

Real faith always shows up carrying something, a person, a burden, a weight that is not yours, but you pick it up anyway. Some of you have faith that has never carried anything heavier than your own comfort.

THE TURN

Jesus forgives the man's sins before he heals his body. The friends came for a physical miracle. Jesus goes straight for the soul. You may be praying for him to fix your circumstances. He is more interested in what is under the paralysis.

WHAT MAKES A PERSON PARALYZED

Mark never explains how the man became paralyzed. The text is not interested in the diagnosis, only the condition: he could not move himself toward Jesus. Every verb of motion belongs to somebody else.

- Shame that convinces you to hide instead of move. It tells you the safest move is no move at all.
- Unprocessed pain that never got carried anywhere. Left alone, it calcifies into the floor you build your life on.
- Comfort with the mat. Being carried and checked on for so long that being stuck starts paying emotional dividends.
- Isolation you chose because trust feels riskier than staying stuck. You would rather stay paralyzed alone than risk being dropped.
- Fear disguised as patience. "I'm waiting on God" can be true faith, or it can be lying still and calling it trust.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A PARALYZED CHURCH

- Feels everything, moves nothing. Emotion on Sunday, no action Monday through Saturday.
- Talks about breakthrough but stays on the mat. Same testimonies, same struggles, year after year.
- Waits to be prayed for instead of praying for others. Everyone wants to be carried, nobody volunteers to carry.
- Mistakes attendance for participation. Full seats, empty hands.
- Keeps its brokenness hidden instead of brought into the room. Protects image over people.
- Has no scars from digging. No one has ever been inconvenienced by someone else's healing.
- Confuses information with faith. Knows the sermon series, cannot name one person being carried.
- Grows numb to the mat next to them. Proximity without presence.
- Waits for a professional to do the carrying instead of the whole body doing the lifting.
- Calls stagnation stability. Nothing falling apart, but nothing moving either.

ILLUSTRATION: THE SPOTTER

Serious lifters live by a rule: never max out on a heavy lift without a spotter. The spotter is not there for the easy reps, anybody can lift alone when the weight is light. The spotter exists for the moment the bar starts shaking and the weight is about to come down.

A good spotter does not stand back with arms crossed offering encouragement from a safe distance. A good spotter has their hands underneath that bar before it is ever called for, close enough to feel the weight shift the second it happens.

That is the picture of the four men in Mark 2. They were not cheering their friend on from across the room. They were under the weight with him. Active faith does not shout encouragement from across the gym, it gets close enough to feel somebody else's weight shifting, and gets its hands under the bar before they ask.

APPLICATION: MONDAY MORNING

If you are on the mat: stop trying to heal in isolation. Name one person this week and let them carry weight for you. Say the thing you have never said out loud.

If you are a carrier: find your mat. Somebody in your life is paralyzed and has not asked for help because nobody has offered to dig. Show up, do not just pray from a distance, carry them to Jesus with your actual time and your actual hands.

THE LANDING

Jesus did not say when he heard about their faith. He said when he saw their faith. If Jesus looked at your life this week, would he see anything at all? Today, on Big Family Sunday, we are not just a church. We are the roof getting torn open so somebody we love can get to Jesus.

Let's be a church whose faith can be seen.