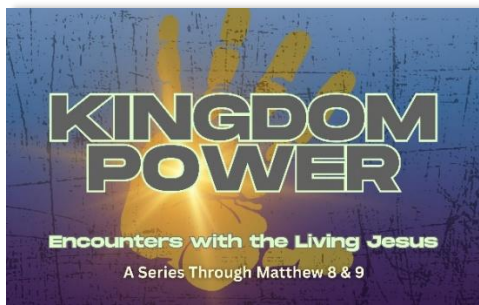




Sermon Notes: "Your Sins Are Forgiven"

Matthew 9:1-8

10.19.25

1. JESUS STARTS WITH A PROBLEM NOBODY CAME TO SOLVE.

- Jesus sees what we often don't see.
- Sin isn't measured by comparing yourself to other people. It's measured against God's holiness.

2. WITH JESUS, THERE IS NO MIDDLE GROUND.

- **Jewish Theology 101:** Only God can forgive sins against God.
- **C.S. Lewis's Famous Trilemma:**
Jesus is either:
 - Liar (knows he's not God, but claims to be)
 - Lunatic (thinks he's God, but isn't)
 - Lord (he *is* God -- with authority to forgive!)

3. THE MIRACLE SERVES THE MESSAGE.

- **Jesus' Strategy:** I'll do the visible thing (heal) to prove I can do the invisible yet harder thing (forgive sins).
- The proper fear of God is reverence that leads to worship, not terror that leads to rejection.

So What?

YOUR BIGGEST PROBLEM IS SIN -- NOT YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES.

Three Possible Responses:

1. Denial - "I don't have a sin problem that serious."
2. Deflection - "I just want Jesus to fix my circumstances."
3. Desperation - "I need forgiveness more than anything."

For Study, Reflection, Discussion:

Life Group ICEBREAKER: *Think about a time when you went to the doctor for one issue, but they discovered a completely different (and more serious) problem you didn't even know you had. How did you feel when they told you? Did you appreciate the diagnosis, or were you frustrated they weren't addressing what YOU came for?*

1. Review the sermon notes from Sunday. Was there a particular point that stuck with you? *What* was it and *why* did it resonate with you?

READ: Matthew 9:1-8

2. (verse 2) The friends brought a paralyzed man expecting physical healing, but Jesus immediately addressed his sin. Why do you think Jesus started with the "invisible problem" instead of the obvious physical need? What does this reveal about how Jesus sees us differently than we see ourselves? (See also Romans 3:23, Isaiah 59:2)
3. (verse 2) Darin said, "Sin isn't measured by comparing yourself to other people. It's measured against God's holiness." How does our culture typically measure sin? Why is comparing ourselves to others so tempting, and why is it ultimately unhelpful? (See also Romans 3:10-12, James 2:10)
4. (verses 3-6) Darin referenced C.S. Lewis's famous trilemma: Jesus is either Lord, Liar, or Lunatic - but He can't be just a "good moral teacher." Why does Jesus' claim to forgive sins eliminate the option of seeing Him as merely a good person or wise teacher? How does this passage force us to make a decision about who Jesus is?
5. (Personal application) Darin said, "Your biggest problem isn't your health issues, financial struggles, relational brokenness, or career disappointments. Your biggest problem is your sin." How does this statement challenge the way you typically pray or approach Jesus? Do you tend to bring Him your circumstances first, or your sin first?

Deploy:

This week's deployment: Identify one area where you've been bringing your "paralysis" to Jesus (circumstances, problems, struggles) but avoiding bringing your "sin" to Him (specific attitudes, patterns, rebellion). This week, have an honest reflection on whether you are in: *Denial*, *Deflection*, or *Desperation*. What would it look like to move toward "desperation" (in the best sense) this week?

Don't Forget:

- **Women's Night Out (WNO) this Thursday, Oct 23rd, 6:30 pm – Potluck**
- **Main Service new start time beginning Nov 2nd: 9:30 am**
- **Potluck after service – November 30th**
- **Candlelight service – December 23rd @ 6:15 pm**

Prayer:

Jesus, thank You that You don't just see our surface problems - You see our deepest need. Forgive us for the times we've compared ourselves to others instead of measuring ourselves against Your holiness. Help us recognize that our biggest problem isn't what's happening around us, but what's happening within us. Thank You that You have authority to forgive sins. Give us the faith to bring not just our physical needs, but our spiritual sickness. Heal us from the inside out. You alone can forgive. You alone can save. In Jesus' name, Amen.