

Moving Forward in Faith



Matthew Allen

Mark's gospel records a touching story of the healing of a paralytic man early in Jesus' ministry. Jesus had just returned home to Capernaum, Mark 2.1-2 and was preaching to people who had come to his house. The crowd was so large that it completely filled up the room - no one could come in or out. Jesus' fame had spread across all of Israel. News of his ability to heal people of their sickness and infirmities had gone far

and wide. Four men brought a paralyzed man to be healed by Jesus. When they reached his house and found that they could not enter, they became very resourceful in getting their paralyzed friend to Jesus. Carrying the man onto the roof of the house, the four men cut a hole large enough to lower their friend down to Jesus. Jesus was impressed by their faith and said, "Son, your sins are forgiven," 2.5. A few verses later, we read that Jesus told this man to get up, pick up his bed, and go home, 2.11. The faith of the individuals in this story is impressive and presents a wonderful collection of information to help us in our spiritual lives today.

The four men who brought the paralyzed man to Jesus acted with boldness. They were willing to go to great lengths to accomplish their objective - so far that most people would and may have questioned them about it. That day, these four men trusted that people were more important to Jesus than the roof they were about to tear apart. Would we have done the same? To what lengths are we willing to go? Is there anything bold about our faith?

The four men really cared. They didn't just say they cared, their actions demonstrated it. It is not about what we profess, it is about what we do. James spoke of this: "What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?", James 2.14-16. We must be a people who care. Paul wrote, "Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep," Romans 12.15. Caring about others only has meaning when we do something.

The four men persevered refusing to give up. There was not enough room to get their paralyzed friend through the door. Their faith refused to die, even in the face of obstacles. They were going to get their friend to Jesus - no matter the cost. Perseverance is a necessary quality of spiritual life. Paul urged New Testament Christians to "keep alert with all perseverance," Ephesians 6.18. This kind of faith is what keeps the Christian going. Too often, our failures result, not from obstacles or problems themselves, but from a lack of faith in dealing with these problems. We've already decided what is not going to work, or what can't be done. If we go forward with this attitude, defeat is certain!

So much can be accomplished when we realize the power of God and move forward in faith. Don't let obstacles stop you. Don't let a problem thwart your spiritual progress. The Christians at Kettering Church of Christ can help you in beginning your walk with Christ or in sharpening your spiritual priorities. Our mission is to share Christ by serving others.

KETTERING CHURCH OF CHRIST
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The Public Is Welcome At All Services

SERVICES:

Sunday: Bible Study 9:30 A.M. Worship 10:30 A.M. & 2:00 P.M.

Wednesday: Bible Study 7:30 P.M.

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