

Luke 5:17-26 (NIV), Jesus' Power

¹⁷ One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick. ¹⁸ Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. ¹⁹ When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. ²⁰ When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven." ²¹ The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" ²² Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? ²³ Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? ²⁴ But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." ²⁵ Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. ²⁶ Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."

Notes:

- This is not just a random list of miracles where Jesus heals the sick. Its in context with Luke 4:1-13, proving Jesus is fulfilling the promise of Isaiah 61.
- The "power of the Lord" communicates two things in the context of Luke's Gospel. Jesus is 1) operating with God's power and 2) by the power of the Holy Spirit. The power comes from the Father, through the Son, and by the Spirit.
- v. 20, Faith is the means by which we receive God's forgiveness. Ultimately, it is the object of our faith that saves, Jesus, not the quantity of our faith. The men went to great lengths that proved they believed *Jesus* could heal. Be careful with how people understand faith. Don't assume you mean the same thing.

Questions

1. How is this passage related to the broader context of Luke, particularly 4:1-13?
2. What does it mean that "the power of the Lord was with Jesus..."? What else have you learned that may shed light on what the Father, Son, and Spirit are doing here?
3. Why is it a problem that Jesus can forgive sins? How is Jesus' declaration of forgiveness different from ordinary forgiveness between two people?
4. Why is God's forgiveness so important? How does it help us be able to forgive others?
5. Do you tend to extend forgiveness too easily thus brushing the offense under the rug, or withhold forgiveness until they come clean? How might Christ be challenging you in this text?