



"Never let go of the Rope"



March 26, 2005, Coulter's Community Church of God (Seventh Day)

And even when I am old and gray, O God, do not forsake me, Until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to all who are to come. [PSALM 71:18] [NAS]

Paul tells us in Romans that *....faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.* [ROMANS 10:17] [NAS] Today I want to think about The Word, the Bible, The Word of Jesus. The Word is the only place that we can get Truth, non-conditional Truth. His Word is Truth.

What did the apostle John, which was an eye witness and disciple of Jesus Christ say Jesus said in John 17:17; *"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.* [NKJ] When you get The Word straight from Jesus it is not watered down. It is clear and the plain truth. When we try to interpret the Word of Jesus without the Holy Spirit then we are watering down the Gospel and we may be leading many astray. That is the reason that everyone should verify every word that someone teaches or tells them about the Holy Word of God. Go straight to The Source. Jesus preached His Word and He let the chips fall where they may. He didn't preach what the people wanted to hear, He preached the Gospel to them, The Truth. The Gospel of John says, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* [JOHN 1:1] [NAS] You see, the Word has always been here.

Mark 1:38-2:13;

Open your Bibles to Mark, chapter two.

~Background~



As you may know the Gospel of Mark starts off with introducing "John the Baptist" as the one that is preparing the way for Jesus. John the Baptist came preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The chapter also has the baptism of Jesus and the calling of the first disciples. After John was put

in prison Jesus went into Galilee proclaiming the good news. In Mark 1:15 Jesus said,*"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*

Jesus was preaching the gospel, healing many and casting out demons while traveling from town to town. And now let us pick it up in Mark chapter 1 and verse 38.

~The Leper Healed~

38 *He said to them, "Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; for that is what I came for."*

Here we have what Jesus came to earth for. What did Jesus say? "That I may preach."

39 *And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons.*

40 *And a leper came to Jesus, beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him, and saying, "If You are willing, You can make me clean."*



41 *Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed."*

42 *Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.*

43 *And He sternly warned him and immediately sent him away,*

44 *and He said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."*

45 *But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the news around, to such an extent that Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in unpopulated areas; and they were coming to Him from everywhere.*

Why do you think Jesus sent the healed man away and told him not to tell anyone? I think the first thing was, Jesus didn't want healing to be the main focus of His Ministry. It was the salvation of souls and the preaching of the Gospel that was important. And secondary he knew that when people seen the miracles He performed, they would dwell on them and not the message of the Gospel.

Jesus didn't come to do miracles and healing wonders, that was secondary. He came to preach the Word, to live the perfect example for us and to die on the cross for our sins. It

seems we are always looking for signs and wonders; something we can see, without faith. Jesus even spoke of it in Luke, *“As the crowds were increasing, He began to say, **“This generation is a wicked generation; it seeks for a sign, and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah.”*** [LUKE 11:29] [NAS]

Let’s continue in Mark 2:1

~The Paralytic Healed~

MARK 2:1 *When He had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home.*

2 *And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, not even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them.*

3 *And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men.*



4 *Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying.*

5 *And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, **“Son, your sins are forgiven.”***

6 *But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts,*

7 *“Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?”*

8 *Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, **“Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts?***

9 ***“Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven’; or to say, ‘Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk’?”***

10 ***“But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” – He said to the paralytic,***

11 ***“I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home.”***

12 *And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, **“We have never seen anything like this.”***

13 *And He went out again by the seashore; and all the people were coming to Him, and He was teaching them.*



Can you imagine the commotion that cutting a hole in the roof of the house made? They did what they had to do to get to Jesus. There is no mention of it disturbing the preaching of Jesus. It's possible, the way the Bible reads that this house may have been Simon Peter's. As bold and with the personality of Peter we would all wonder why he didn't stop the men from tearing a hole in the roof. Everyone was probably so engrossed with the preaching of Jesus that they may not have noticed. Jesus certainly didn't stop them.

What did Jesus do first as recorded in verse 5; He said *"Son, your sins are forgiven."* Jesus was first interested in the man's soul. He forgave him of his sins. He looked beyond the sickness and straight into the heart. Jesus knew that the physical body would wear out and die; dust to dust. But to live with Jesus for eternity, man must be forgiven by God. Wherever Jesus went He preached the "Good News." Let's look back again at Mark, chapter 1 and verse 38; *He said to them, "Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; for that is what I came for."* Look at what Jesus said; let us go somewhere else so that I may preach the Word. It reminds me of Luke 2:49 when at the young age of twelve He knew what He had come for. This is one of my favorite verses in the Bible. *And He said to them, "Why is it that you sought Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"* [LUKE 2:49] [NKJ] And then in Mark 2:2 what happened? Mark tells us; *Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.* [MARK 2:2] [NKJ] Jesus was preaching The Word. No loud speakers, no TV screens, just to those gathered around Him in this small house. This should be an example for us, speak and preach the Words of Jesus to everyone all the time. You know! There is no preacher like Jesus!

~Four Christian Men and a Sinner~

We could maybe call this story "Four Christian Men and a Sinner," a sinner seeking repentance carried by four followers of Jesus. It doesn't say anything about the spiritual condition of the four men carrying the paralytic man, but they must have been four men with

a very compassionate heart for Jesus and for the soul of one paralytic individual. The one important thing here and always will be; that Jesus brings out the best in people.

When have we done sure a thing as destroying a roof of a house to get someone to Jesus to get their sins forgiven? What would happen, with the help of the Holy Spirit that the Church was so filled with people that they were in the aisles, standing outside the door and all of a sudden the roof started being torn open to get someone inside the Church to get saved?

If you remember, Jesus only forgave the sins of the paralytic man, until he was questioned by some of the scribes. Then He healed him physically.

This is a classic example of our responsibility to bring people to Jesus, the example of the four faithful men that brought one man to Christ. Are we that concerned with bringing our unconverted friends to Jesus?

~The Roof~

How did the paralytic man get on the roof? In those days in Palestine most houses had a flat roof. The roof could be used in the cool of the day or the hot summer nights. Since they



were flat and used by the homeowner, they had outside stairs to the top of the roof. Often the roof was made of slabs of burnt or dried clay and placed on supporting beams. These men had to cut away or take away

the clay and then let the paralytic down through the hole. Can you vision this happening and all of a sudden this man was there, next to Jesus. Can you imagine what would have happened if one of the four had dropped his side of the rope?

~Jewish Beliefs~

Many Jews in those times believed that your sickness and diseases were a direct result of your sins. This paralytic may have believed that also. (John 9:2-3) Anyway, Jesus told him in Mark 2:5 “*And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”*” If this paralytic man believed that his sickness was due to sin, then his mind was now set at ease, for his sins was forgiven by Jesus Christ, the son of God. Just as Jesus spoke the Word and created the world, he spoke the Word and the paralytic was forgiven of his sins and was healed.

~Faith and Works~

The faith of the five men was shown to Jesus. Faith glories God, and faith is evidenced by works according to James. *“Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”* [JAMES 2:17] [NKJ] The second chapter of James tells us three times that faith without works is dead. [James 2:17, 20, 26] These five men had faith and it was backed by their actions. If you will notice in Mark 2:5 what it says; “And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, **"Son, your sins are forgiven."** [MAR 2:5] [NAS] Jesus said their faith, t-h-e-i-r, it was a team effort. They had one goal in mind, getting this man to Jesus, so his sins and body would be healed.

~Are we taking anyone?~

As that great hymn is sung, “When we all get to heaven, what a day that will be”. That will be a great day for everyone that is ready. But, let me add a new verse, “are we going to take everyone possible with us.” At least give them the opportunity to make a choice to go with us. God tells us in Isaiah; *“So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”* [ISAIAH 55:11] [NKJ] The ministry of Jesus Christ was and is to preach the Word. When he was here He preached the TRUE WORD and today we are to preach the TRUE WORD. It will not come back void. We are His hands and voices here on earth.

I think it was Martin Luther who said, “Preach the word, and sometimes use words.” How true this is, others are looking at us as professing Christians, we are their example. We may be the only Christian they ever come in contact with. We don’t know! We don’t have to say a word, they will know us by our actions. But if you get a chance, then preach the word of God. Tell them about the Good News of the Gospel. Jesus works through people. We are his hands here on earth.

~The Healing at Bethesda~

Let look at John chapter 5 in the Bible, starting with verse 2-9.

JOHN 5:2 *Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches.*

3 *In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water.*



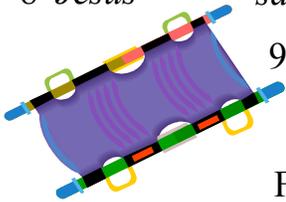
4 *For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had.*

5 *Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years.*

6 *When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "**Do you want to be made well?**"*

7 *The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me."*

8 *Jesus said to him, "**Rise, take up your bed and walk.**"*



9 *And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath.*

For thirty-eight years this man sat at the pool, but no one would put him in the pool when waters were stirred. If someone had put him in the water, he may have been healed thirty-eight years earlier. But I believe that day, that Jesus healed both his body and soul. Look at verse 14 Jesus said; "**See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.**" As we read we Isaiah "our righteousnesses are like filthy rags," we are unworthy of being saved. Only through the Grace of God are we saved! *But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; we all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.* [ISAIAH 64:6] [NKJ]

~The Church Today~



What is wrong with the Church today? As one writer put it, "We have lost our vision of the reality of the terribleness of the conditions of lost man. Sin is real! Hell is real! The danger is real! Yet too often we are more concerned about the roof over our heads than the foundation under our feet, which is Jesus Christ." We need to get our priorities in order, Jesus Christ; it's about Him and Him only. Amen.

~The Rope - The Lifeline~

Just as the four men carried the pallet with the paralytic man to Jesus for healing they knew that if they could just get to Him, the paralytic would be healed. These five men had faith and then put that faith in action, the four that carried him and the paralytic. No names given. The names weren't important, only the lesson is important. Get to Jesus and hear the Word and you can be forgiven of your sins. I can see the four men, each having a rope to hold for each of the four sides of the pallet. If just one let go of the rope, the paralytic would have fallen to the ground; maybe on the top of others. Each of these men was strong and had to hold onto that rope. Just as we are to be strong and hold on to our rope to Jesus! Whatever you do don't let go of the rope to Jesus. When the going gets tough and rough, just hang on



tighter, but don't let go. If you have to renew your hold on the rope with a new knot in it, that okay, just hold on to Jesus?

As the saying goes, 'when the going get tough, the tough get going.' That's where Jesus comes to us more important than ever, when we get to the end of that rope we only have Jesus, nothing more and we don't need anything else.

There is a Christian singer that sings a song, some of the words are, "Give me Jesus, you can have all this world, Give me Jesus." That should be for each of us, our cry, "give me Jesus, you can have all this world."

~Turning loose of the Rope~

Some have already turned loose of the rope to Jesus. You probably know of or have seen them before. It has to be a miserable life, a life without Christ, especially when at one time you knew Him.



I have a Christian brother in Christ Jesus that told me that his pastor had taken off with another woman just a few months ago, he let go of the rope. To make matters worse, this was the second time that he had done this sinful act. A preacher, a co-called man of God, twice had taken off with another married woman in the church. Each time he did this sinful act, he wrecked the Church he was in by letting Satan in the door. He let go of the rope. It can happen to anyone, so friends be careful and keep firmly grounded in the Word of God.

~Don't turn loose of the Rope~

The world is counting on us not to let go of the rope. The world needs this rope, this lifeline to Jesus. Throw this lifeline to them. You have this lifeline to Jesus. It may be the only lifeline they will ever have. Don't miss the opportunity to help save a soul. We need to invite someone to get a hold of that rope to Jesus as the four men did with the paralytic. Invite them to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Let them get a hold of that rope, that lifeline to Jesus.

Amen, Amen.



I have gotten information for this article from a number of different sources; internet, Bibles, dictionaries, and study materials from several different authors, etc. I do not take credit for these writings since there are many. In many cases, I did not keep up with this information in order to give proper credit. My comments and rewriting of the sources are in this article. I therefore cannot take full credit for this study. The full credit would have to go to Jesus Christ, the creator of all things. This is my own opinions based on my understanding of Scripture as the Word of God.

Dewey E. Fox, Servant of our Lord Jesus Christ



(Gk. from Aram. *Beth hesd*, "house of grace"). A spring-fed pool with five porches where invalids waited their turn to step into the mysteriously troubled waters that were supposed to possess healing virtue (John 5:2-4). The last part of John 5:3 and all of John 5:4, which mention a periodic disturbance of the water by an angel, are placed in brackets in the NASB because there is not sufficient attestation by early texts. Here Jesus healed the man who was lame for thirty-eight years (John 5:5-9). The place is now thought to be the pool found during the repairs in 1888 near St. Anne's Church in the Bezetha quarter of Jerusalem not far from the Sheep's Gate and Tower of Antonia. It is below the crypt of the ruined fourth-century church and has a five-arch portico with faded frescoes of the miracle of Christ's healing. M.F.U.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: J. M. Thompson, *The Land and the Book* (1886), 3:387; J. Finegan, *Archaeology of the New Testament* (1969), pp. 143-44, 147.

The remains of a Byzantine church at the site of the Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem, where Jesus healed a lame man (John 5:1-9)