

JESUS: THE SERVANT AT WORK

VOLUME ONE

STUDY SEVEN

The Day a Paraplegic Walked Home

Mark 2:1–12

Hoping for healing is a human and very natural thing. Experiencing a healing that is immediate is the God thing. It's supernatural.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

WE all hope for a miracle when we are sick or when a loved one is sick. We long for the disease to disappear in the blink of an eye. We yearn for the moment when the pain that tortured our sleep, the virus that took over our nervous system, the genetic mutations that drove the uncontrollable cell growth, or the weakness that hijacked our limbs—all vanish instantly. No lingering symptoms. No scientific explanations. Only a supernatural intervention, and we are healed!

Miracles are rare, but when they happen, they leave us speechless. A man born blind beholds the sunrise for the very first time. A mother sees that the hole in the lower back of her baby girl is gone. A paraplegic stands up and walks. Such miracles consume us with wonder. In His sovereign plan for His glorious purpose, God has chosen to bestow upon a life His healing touch, and we lift our hearts to Him in praise.

During Jesus' early ministry, miracles served as divine authentication that He is God's "beloved Son" with whom God is well pleased (Mark 1:11 NASB). By doing the things that only God could do, Jesus validated His heavenly commission and divine nature.

In our previous *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, we witnessed Jesus' compassion and power at work as He healed a man afflicted with leprosy. We learned that in our shame and hopelessness, our living God offers relief. In the passage for this Bible study, we'll marvel at Jesus' miracle-working power *as well as* His sin-forgiving authority when a paraplegic man stands and walks home—with a healed body and a cleansed soul.



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SEARCHING
THE
SCRIPTURES
BIBLE STUDIES

The Day a Paraplegic Walked Home

Mark 2:1–12



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Reflect on the lyrics of this hymn as you sing or hum it:

O God, our Help in ages past,
Our Hope for years to come,
Our Shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal Home!¹

Place yourself before God anew as if for the first time. Ponder the remarkable ways He has met your needs. Express your confidence in His faithfulness to be your shelter no matter the season.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

On the north shore of the Sea of Galilee is a little town still in existence called Capernaum, which translates from the Hebrew, “village of Nahum.” This was the home port of the four fishermen—Simon, Andrew, James, and John—and the place where Jesus healed Simon Peter’s mother-in-law (Mark 1:30).

Because He attracted such large crowds, Jesus “couldn’t publicly enter a town anywhere,” so “He had to stay out in the secluded places” (1:45). When He finally came back to Capernaum, it wasn’t long before the news spread, and people flocked to see Him.



Observation: Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

As you observe the text, picture yourself in the crowd rushing to the home where Jesus was staying.² The house was likely a one-room structure with a flat roof that could be accessed via an outside stairway.³ The place was packed with people. Some came out of curiosity; some, to hear Him teach; some, to see a miracle; and some, to find fault.

Use your senses as you read [Mark 2:1–12](#), imagining the first-century house tightly packed with people, as well as the hot, dusty conditions outside the house as people pressed against each other to see through a window and hear what Jesus was saying. Enter the scene and feel the electricity in the air.

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The Geographical Setting—Mark 2:1–2

Observe that Mark opened the scene by establishing the setting. What specific details did Mark 2:1–2 provide about where Jesus was, the people in attendance, and what He was doing?

He always is teaching and preaching and proclaiming the truth to equip His disciples and to prepare people for the kingdom that He is declaring.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

An Unusual Interruption—Mark 2:3–5

As Jesus spoke, can you hear rustling on the roof as some people dug through the timbers, reeds, and dirt used to cover these ancient homes? Imagine the debris falling on those in the house! Describe the scene in Mark 2:3–5, the determination of the people, and Jesus' unexpected response.

A Crucial Dialogue—Mark 2:6–12

In Mark 2:6–12, how did Mark describe the thoughts in the hearts of the scribes when they heard Jesus' response? How did Jesus expose their critical spirits? What did He say to the paralytic and what happened next?

Isn't that great? I would love it if Mark had added what the skeptics thought right about now. I mean, their chins are just banging on their chests. This is a remarkable event. They've hung themselves with their own accusation, "You think He's God? Only God can forgive sins." —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Mark 2:1–12



Interpretation: Jesus Does What Only God Can Do!

Reread [Mark 2:1–12](#) in the Amplified and NET translations. See how Jesus prioritized God’s Word in His ministry—“he preached the word to them” (Mark 2:2 NET). What message was Jesus communicating about the Scriptures and His identity?

Jesus was speaking ex cathedra, for He, in fact, knew God’s Word. He was engaged in the writing of God’s Word supernaturally. He is the Word in manifest form. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Jesus’ unexpected response to the faith of those who carried the paralytic was “My child, your sins are forgiven” (2:5). What is the meaning and significance of Jesus’ response? Why do you think He forgave the man’s sins instead of healing him, since healing was the reason his friends brought him?

*He doesn’t see the man’s body first. He sees his heart condition.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

Jesus addressed the thoughts in the hearts of the scribes, emphasizing that He has divine authority, even to forgive sins. Look up 2:6–9 in [Constable’s Notes](#) at netbible.org to find out why the scribes were shocked when Jesus forgave sins. What are the reasons they considered such an act blasphemous?

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Summarize how Jesus communicated clearly in this passage that He is God.

There's no waiting period. There's no lingering doubt. There's no question regarding who is the authoritative One. And there's no calling attention to Himself. He simply says, "Get up and fold up your pallet and go home." And the man rolls up his pallet and works his way out of the house. They're all amazed. This is how God does His best work. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: God's Sovereignty, God's Power, and Healing Miracles

From His first command in Scripture, “‘Let there be light,’ and there was light” (Genesis 1:3), God reveals Himself as the only One who has power and might to do all that He wills (1:3; Job 42:2; Jeremiah 32:27; Ephesians 3:20). What does [Matthew 28:18](#) say about Jesus when you see His power and authority?

The healings that Jesus performed, and they were many, were designed to corroborate His authenticity. They validated His authority as having come from God. As being, in fact, God. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Throughout His ministry, Jesus often warned His disciples of the critical spirit of the scribes ([Matthew 23:13–28](#)). How do passages such as [Proverbs 4:23](#) and [Luke 6:45](#) help us as believers overcome a critical spirit?

The heart is not what pumps blood in this case; it's the inner person. Guard your attitude. Guard your spirit. Guard your thoughts. For out of these invisible, unseen, unspoken, hidden areas are the things that characterize life. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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God is sovereign. He has a plan. Note how His grace provides the strength we need when disease afflicts our bodies and we aren't healed—as when God denied Paul's request for healing. When we are stung by the thistles and thorns of our fallen humanity or when our fragile clay jars begin to break, how do the truths in [2 Corinthians 4:7–18](#) and [12:1–10](#) give you wisdom, discernment, and encouragement?

As hard as it is for you to hear this, it is not always God's will that we be healed. If it were, He would do it every time. Paul would have never prayed for that thorn in the flesh to leave him, only to hear, "No, no, no." And finally learn to live with the thorn, and, from it, learn that God's grace is sufficient.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: Gain Some Timeless Insights

Applying scriptural truths is essential to our spiritual growth. Pastor Chuck Swindoll offers three personal insights that transcend the ages.

First, we learn from the paraplegic that *the deepest needs of our lives are not physical but invisible and spiritual*. How has the Holy Spirit used this passage to help you prioritize the spiritual?

Second, we learn from the scribes that *the earliest signs of a critical spirit are not visible but unspoken and hidden*. How can you etch this truth in your heart?

When you are around criticism, call it what it is. When you sense it growing in your own spirit, take care of that. I've never known a skeptic to grow spiritually. We grow when we say yes to God deep within and when our relationships with others are kept in good repair. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Third, we can gain the insight from Jesus that *the greatest proofs of real miracles are not verbal but actual and immediate*. Why not ask God for discernment and request His guidance and help for your present illness as you thank Him for His faithfulness in the past?

Every one of us faces the reality that such a miraculous event is rare. And because of its rarity, we are forced to turn and trust “God, our help in ages past.” When we look back, we realize how often God did help us, and how frequently He did meet our need—not as we expected but as He sovereignly chose to do. And we learned from the past of His faithfulness. “Thank You, Father, for the past.” —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



A FINAL PRAYER

Holy Father, my help in ages past and my hope for years to come. I look forward to the future with great delight, not fear. I know that the God of the past who has met my needs in such remarkable ways will be there for me, never leaving, never forsaking. I find great joy knowing that You are good, sovereign, merciful, and loving. Anchor my faith in You. In Jesus’ name, I pray. Amen.

ENDNOTES

1. Isaac Watts, “O God, Our Help in Ages Past,” in *The Celebration Hymnal: Songs and Hymns for Worship* (n.p.: Word Music/Integrity Music, 1997), hymn 686.
2. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll’s *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page “[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)” at [insight.org](#).
3. Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Mark,” 2026 ed., *Constable’s Notes*, [soniclight.com/tcon/notes/html/mark/mark.htm](#), note 2:1–3:6.

For the 2026 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Mirlenda Noëlliste in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll’s messages. Copyright © 2010, 2026 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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