

Mark 2:1 And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house.

**Our Subject Today-** Great grace shown in Capernaum - but great hardness of heart is in man.

Again, great grace is shown to Capernaum. In the Preaching of the Word and healing the sick. The Greatest preacher who ever lived Jesus Christ, Teaching Preaching How full of Life and instruction and hope, it must have been, But sadly so many made no use of this grace, so many ignored our Lords words. possibly no other city in Palestine had so much attention during His earthly ministry.

But when this great crowds had gathered **He PREACHED the WORD to them.** It was clear, never a man spoke like this, His preaching and teaching was with authority not like the scribes and pharisees. People were amazed, People astonished, people filled with wonder at His mighty works. They heard the master teaching, words so clear but sadly they did not respond- rather they stumbled they hesitated. Yes these are good words, but for others not us we are not sick we have no need. yes they marvelled and were astonished , but friend marvelling and being astonished never translated into *Genuine repentance.* **OH, NEVER BE LIKE them.** thinking that they did not need Jesus Christ. great truth was proclaimed to them but they did not believe, **Was there ever such a mighty preacher as Jesus Christ Himself,** Anointed with the Spirit without measure. How hard the heart of man is. how stubborn they were...

But that is not all - **Great miracles, mighty works were done in Capernaum.** What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? for with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him. and He heals all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people Even this paralysed man carried by four – healed in front of them. **You see some people say if I could only see a miracle I would believe....** Well this great multitude saw and yet they did not believe.... The Bible says - if what had been done there, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained to this day.

Yet sadly we see the people's hearts remained hard as a rock cold and unmoved. what a terrible curse was pronounced upon them for their hardness of heart. *Luke 10:15 And*

*you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades.* They heard faultless and perfect preaching, and saw it confirmed by the most genuine miracles, yet they stayed dead in their trespasses and sins. they thought they were on their way up to heaven, but they were crashing down to hell. Part of the problem was refusing what they heard.

The Gospel message has power to softens some hearts in the same way as heat softens and melts wax, but for some hearts they are not softened rather they are baked hard like clay. No I don't want my heart baked hard like clay! What can I do to avoid that? **Friends there is one main thing that always HARDENS THE HEART OF MAN more than anything else. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT IS? To hear the Gospel over and over again - and yet still choose a life of sin, it ignore it and then choose the pleasures of the world.**

Every time we hear the Gospel – every time our **conscience troubles us** and **we ignore it and silence it**, we get harder and harder, less and less caring. Understand this - When conviction comes it's a gift that must not be spurned, if it is ignored your heart gets harder and harder....

**The people of Capernaum were so favoured with the Lord visiting them over and over** – teaching and preaching to them, there were pharisees and doctors of the law present, which had come out of every town of **Galilee** in the North and and **Judea in the South** and **Jerusalem**. Sadly they did not receive any cure or healing of their hard hearts, when even when **the Power of the Lord was present to HEAL**. The Lord Jesus is not only there, to cure or heal, but also to make whole and to heal, spiritually, restore from a state of sin and condemnation. Some hardened their hearts and would not listen, But there was one - He heard and how glad he was....

**This is exactly what happened to this hopeless case the paralyzed man.** His sins were forgiven and He was cured and rose up and walked.

**The friends of this man went to great lengths, great pains and great trouble** to bring Him to the Lord Jesus to be cured, perhaps they didn't even realise that He had a much more serious problem than being sick with the Palsy. But even only seeing his paralyzed legs they made such effort to get Him to the Lord Jesus Christ. The building was packed full, even at the door there was no way to enter. What did they do? they went up on the roof top and dug through the roof, and they removed the tiles and let their friend down on ropes. Their efforts were rewarded and got their

friend a great healing, **but more than a cure it got them more than they ever dreamed possible** - When Jesus Saw this paralysed man He said "**Son, your sins are forgiven you.**" and also "**Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.**"

It was not by accident or by luck that they came there **They made every effort to seek Jesus Christ the Healer.** They planned they were diligent. Listen we all know that in life if you want to do well in our work or your business it requires diligence and effort. We even have a saying, *'No pain and no gain.'*

**It's the same for the wellness of our souls,** we could and we should learn a valuable lesson from this Paralysed man's friends. **they Sought Christ diligently they were very determined, they didn't allow difficulties or obstacles to stand in the way.** Why because they understood the severity of the problem- their friend couldn't walk and they must get Him to Jesus Christ. They had settled in their minds this thing must be done.

**But for us today** we need to see our sickness, the sickness of what Sin has done to us, our legs may walk; but we are paralyzed in our souls. This condition is so severe that it will separate us from God forever , Eternal Condemnation in darkness only and weeping and gnashing of teeth. How terrible.... How sad. **the Wages of Sin is Death** – sin will cause loss of all life in the Light of His Glory and condemnation forever in the misery of hell. We may not have seen our condition like *This Paralyzed man perhaps didn't see His real need till Jesus Christ Said those wonderful words to Him, 'Your sins are forgiven.'* Now He realised Just how much He had received, **Life Eternal life. the Gift of all gifts.** Maybe he thought to Himself - I'm so glad that I suffered with this affliction, yes I hated it but it is what brought me to Jesus Christ and **Now My sins are forgiven** for all eternity, I'm so thankful to God. I came because I couldn't walk, but In His love for me, and in His immeasurable grace He gave me the gift of God ETERNAL Life.

Let us seek the things above the things Eternal and of true value. Even if I am suffering hardship and difficulty if it drives me to Christ it will have been worth it, to receive eternal pardon.

How is it that we take such great care in seeking our business to prosper but we **don't give much thought to the prosperity and wellbeing of our souls.** We care for our bodies, always feeding them, always giving them water to quench thirst. **But our soul**

**we seem to neglect.** We must learn from these friends that carried the paralyzed man - they let no obstacle stop them. They sought the Lord - Nothing was going to stop them, they are seeking the good of their friend.

For us we **make up our mind nothing is going to stop me, - the health of my soul is at stake.** Just think how the world labours and pours energy into temporary things, things here today and gone tomorrow, should we not strive for a crown that never fades, Spiritual rewards that are forever and unfading.

**Why do so many make excuses when so much is at stake.** How is it possible that these same men are full of zeal about money, business, pleasure, or politics but take no care, and trouble about their soul? **You see their soul is paralysed,** they have no feeling at all, no care at all, **you see they are blinded by their spiritual sickness and feel no need for the Physician of souls.** They think they need no medicine they think they are not sick, oh they say there is no danger of eternal death, therefore there is no value in seeking God. **This is the darkness of the age that has blinded multitudes.**

But how blessed art those that hear the Gospel, those that discover their need, Happy are those who find the pearl of Great price. They sell and abandon all that they may have this pearl. Happy is the one that hears the master say **'son your sins are forgiven'**

The Scribes and Pharisees began to reason saying Who is this that speaks Blasphemies Who can forgive sins but God alone. How blinded they were. there were three great signs they saw. 1.They **heard Jesus Speak** like no man ever spoke - 2. **they saw the man walk** strength return and he arose from his bed - 3. **they saw that Jesus Christ knew their thoughts.** Luke 5:22 *But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts?* But self-righteousness had blinded them they thought they were already on their way to heaven- We have the law of Moses. we don't need anything else we are okay. Do you know there are many like these today they think they are Christians- maybe because they go to church- maybe because they were born into a Christian family, and not a family of another faith.

Let us think about this - *Jesus perceived their thoughts* - Nothing is secret *And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we*

*must give account. Hebrews 4:13. God sees and knows everything For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. Psalm 139:4*

**Knowing this we should search and examine our hearts**, should cause us to cry – soften my hard and stubborn heart. Christ sees everything, He knows us completely, He sees our deeds, He knows our thoughts, and every secret. Surely knowing this we should repent and turn from our sins and ask for pardon.

There is a story of a man wanting to steal a sheep. the story is he told His four sons to watch in each direction north south east and west. He instructed them if anyone is watching cry out and warn me. the Father was about to slaughter a sheep when the youngest cried out Daddy! He put the knife away - Is someone coming my son... no daddy, but I am watching here both there and there and there but daddy who is watching upward. even this child knows

**deep down we do know - God sees and knows all our secrets.** - and still The Power of the Lord is present to heal. My conscience pricks me I know I've done so much wrong – I know God sees - I know if my many sins were announced to men, I'd be so very ashamed. **What must I do?** How can I hear those words that that Paralyzed man heard. **"Son, your sins are forgiven you."** I want to be forgiven? I know I'm sick, I know my soul is paralysed and I need Jesus Christ the great Physician. Well, you can't hear if you are in a far away land; If you refuse to come, no arise and draw near, come to your heavenly father – say Father I've sinned against heaven and in your sight – Father I'm not worthy to be called your son. Jesus Christ said whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. **Do you believe Jesus Christ died on the Cross for you; do you believe He rose again from the grave and is seated at the right hand of the Father.** Then come to Him don't be like those pharisees in Capernaum. Believe the gospel, and repent of your sin and you shall be saved this day AMEN

Let's sing together the hymn number 250. Alas did my saviour bleed