

Authority to Forgive

Mt 9:1-13

INTRODUCTION

- A. Jesus claimed to have all authority (Mt 28:18).
- B. Jesus has, therefore, the authority to forgive sins.
- C. We need to examine this authority.
 - 1. We need Jesus to exercise this authority.
 - 2. We are all sinners.
 - a. 1 Ki 8:46.
 - b. 1 Jn 1:8.
 - 3. Sin brings judgment.
 - a. Mt 25:46.
 - b. Rom 6:23

DEPENDENT AUTHORITY, vv 1-2

- A. “When Jesus saw their faith”—v 2.
 - 1. “Their faith” refers to the faith of the men who brought this man to Jesus.
 - 2. They had exercised great faith.
 - a. They had carried this man, but could not get to Jesus because of the crowd.
 - b. So they dug out the roof over Jesus & lowered their friend down to Jesus.
 - 3. This is a testimony of what faith can do.
 - a. This man would never have had his sins forgiven were it not for these friends.
 - b. This man would never have walked had it not been for these friends.
- B. The paralytic also had faith.
 - 1. When Jesus told him to do so, the paralytic took his mat & went home.
 - 2. That would have taken quite a bit of faith for a man who had not walked in years!
- C. Jesus’ authority to forgive is dependent upon our faith.
 - 1. Heb 11:6.
 - 2. Jn 3:16.

DIVINE AUTHORITY, v 3

- A. When those watching heard Jesus forgive this man, they said, “This man is blaspheming,” v 3.
 - 1. They equated the right to forgive with deity.
 - 2. They even said, “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (Mk 2:7).
- B. In offering forgiveness, Jesus claimed to be God.
- C. Jesus is God.
 - 1. he was not just a good man.
 - 2. He was not an angel.
 - 3. He was not just a religious guru.
 - 4. He is divine. And because he is divine, he can forgive sins.
- D. Jesus proved his deity.
 - 1. “Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk?’” (v 5).
 - a. It would have been easier to say, “Your sins are forgiven.”
 - b. There would be no way to test that.

2. “But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” –he said to the paralytic—“Rise, take up your bed and go home” (v 6). And the paralytic did so (v 7).

DIFFERENT AUTHORITY, v 8

- A. “When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men” (v 8).
- B. Their reaction is to be expected.
 1. It wasn’t every day that someone went up against the scribes & won.
 2. It wasn’t every day that a paralyzed man walked.
 3. It wasn’t every day that God walked among them.
- C. This authority belongs exclusively to Jesus.
 1. It doesn’t belong to any other (Acts 4:12).
 2. It doesn’t belong to the church.

DESPERATE AUTHORITY, i.e., AN AUTHORITY FOR DESPERATE PEOPLE, vv 9–13

- A. Matthew was not the usual candidate for discipleship.
 1. Tax collectors were a hated people.
 2. The Roman Empire would auction off sections of the Empire to collectors.
 3. The Empire required a certain amount of taxes from each district. anything collected over that amount the tax collector could keep for himself.
- B. Jesus could see what Matthew could become.
- C. Jesus even attended a feast with tax collectors & sinners (i.e., people who were openly sinners).
 1. The scribes & the Pharisees would have no social contact with those who did not tightly keep the Law.
 2. The Pharisees murmured about it, and Jesus said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”
 3. Jesus cannot help those who think they don’t need to be helped.
 4. Jesus did not come to encourage people to be self-righteous, but he came to encourage them to turn to him.
- D. If you turn to Jesus, he will save you.