

Getting Jesus' Attention

Mark 2:1-12

Pastor Andy MacFarlane

North Church Plant Update

As you know, we continue in the process of working on our north church plant. During the 9:30 hour we are meeting in what we call a SuperGroup to discuss the book, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*. We are excited about the people who have shown up. It's our chance to begin building community, a bond, and we are praying for launching several small groups in and around north Lincoln towards the end of October/early November. So if you are considering being a part of North Pointe, I'd like to invite you to join us during the 9:30 hour in D-103. If you are not, I would ask you to pray for us. We know we need God's favor, God's blessing, and if you would join us in praying for that end we would be very appreciative.

In March of 1999, Hope and I had to unexpectedly return to the United States after living in Chile. Because we had sold our car before we left for Latin America, one of the first things we needed to do was buy a car. As we began to gather information about the number of automobiles available in our price range that would meet our needs, we were staggered by the number of options. Because of that, my first inclination was: *I don't want to make a choice*. Well, that wouldn't work, because we needed a car. So the next option was the thought: *We'll just pick any old car*. However, I realized we just couldn't pick any old car. The stakes were too high here. This was a significant financial investment. Moreover, Hope was going to be driving around with our 6-month-old son in the late winter/early spring in Colorado. We couldn't just pick *any* car. So as we mulled over the data, the reliability, resale, etc., one model of car clearly separated itself from the others among our choices. We ended up buying that make and model of car.

I share that because sometimes our choice of trying to find a spiritual system or leader to follow can be a little bit like our car-buying process. There are so many options out there it can be overwhelming. A person can start to think, *I'm just not going to pick*. Or... *It's not that important—I'll just pick any old leader and follow him*. If, as a couple, Hope and I took the time to think through our options in buying a car, how much more important is it to think through our options in choosing a spiritual leader? The stakes are high. Our quality of life here on earth and our eternal destiny ride on the source. Just as there was one car that stood out among our options, I think there is one spiritual leader that stands out among all others for all time. As we look at the text, Mark 2:1-12, I want to ask the question: What sets Jesus apart among spiritual leaders?

Our text opens like this in verse 1:

When He [Jesus] had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home. 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.

(vs. 1-2, *NASB)

So here's the situation: Jesus comes back to Capernaum. Word gets out and folks start showing up. Not only is it standing room only, there is no more room; it's full. The only problem is, there are more people who still want in. Look at verse 3:

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

So you have four men, carrying a fifth man on a pallet. They want to get in to see Jesus. But the problem is, this is a full house. There's no way in. So what do they do? Go home? Come back another day? Try some other spiritual leader? Verse 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.

So we get the picture. Far from giving up, these guys finagle a way up to the roof, dig through the roof, and lower their friend down. Can you imagine Jesus' reaction? He's in the middle of giving the word and they hear some kind of commotion on the roof. Then maybe some particles start falling through, and then lo and behold, here comes this stretcher with a guy on it. That would be frustrating, don't you think? He's giving this message and He's got this distraction. How does Jesus respond? Verse 5:

And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

Far from being upset, Jesus makes an amazing statement. He says, "Your sins are forgiven." All of them? Every bad thought, every bad action, every rejection of God's rightful rule in his life, every unwillingness, every denial of his dependence on God...all of that's forgiven? Well, friends, we'd better figure out what he did, if all that's forgiven. Did he give a lot of money? Did he do some great act of service? What was it that caused Jesus to say, "Your sins—all of them—are forgiven"?

Here's what he did. He came to Jesus Christ in faith. He came in desperate dependence, and when Jesus saw that faith, He was moved to say, "Your sins [all of them] are forgiven." And friends, that's one of the things that sets Jesus Christ of Nazareth apart from every other spiritual leader of all time. Jesus proclaims salvation by *faith* in Him, not good works. If you look at any other religious system, any other religious leader, you've got to follow these rules, you've got to do this stuff. You've got to make sure your good works work out. But Jesus is saying, "None of that! Salvation is by faith in Me, not good works."

Initially that's a pretty hard message to process. The way this life works, if you do...you get. Here's what I remember from my high school days: the good students with the good grade points were the ones who made the honor roll. And the good athletes who performed on the field were the ones who were the starters on the volleyball or football or basketball team. And the way it works on the job is if you do well you get the promotion. You do...you get. And then Jesus says, "It's free." Free? By grace through faith? Come on!

But I think we need to step back and consider the holiness of God. And when we get a grasp on that, I think we'll understand there is really nothing we can do to cover our transgressions—to cover our wrong. Salvation by grace through faith really does make the most sense.

A couple years ago, I was reading a story about a chaplain's experience in a Chicago hospital. I couldn't find the article so I can't remember the name, but I'll never forget what was said. He was called to minister to a young 16-year-old girl who had been in an auto accident. Here's what had happened: She had just had her license for a few days and she went over to the house of her best friend. As she was backing the car, she hit a light post. And in a freak event, that light post came down right on the passenger's side of the car and tragically killed her friend instantly. So when the chaplain got to this young lady, physically she was fine, but emotionally she was in anguish. She was wondering, *How do I deal with the death of my friend?* More specifically, *What do I say to that family? I've just taken their daughter. I've just taken their sister. What do I say?*

As she began to process it with the chaplain she said, “Here’s what I’m going to do. I’m going to go to her mom and dad and I’m going to say, ‘I will be just like a daughter to you. I’ll be over at the house every day and I’m going to do the chores she did cheerfully.’ Every Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, birthday, I’ll send a card. I’m going to be just like a daughter to that family. I’m going to make it up to the family.”

The chaplain waited for her to finish speaking and then he said, “You can’t do that. Though your intentions are good, your attempt to replace that daughter, your attempt to make up the hurt through your works, will be an affront. It will be an offense. You can’t make up for the hurt. You can’t do enough to make up for the transgression. You really have only one option. Go to the family and express your sorrow and ask for forgiveness.”

Friends, that’s the way it is for us. Our sin, our rebellion against God’s rightful rule in our lives, has caused God unspeakable pain. God is so holy. Our offense is too great to think we could do good works...this and this and that...to try and cover for it. We only have one option. It’s to go to God Almighty and ask for the forgiveness of our sin—for our denial of our dependence on Him. And here’s the good news. Jesus Christ’ death on the cross and resurrection from the dead makes that possible. That message—salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, not by good works—sets Jesus apart from every other spiritual and religious leader and system in the history of our world.

Before we move on in our passage, I want us to think a little bit about verse 5. It says:

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

What did Jesus see? I think he saw five men desperately dependent on Him. Look, you don’t get on a roof, dig through and lower this pallet down, unless you believe Jesus has got the goods. If you think there’s some other option, some other place, you go there. But these guys knew there was only one place to go and that was Jesus Christ. So they make the effort, get the pallet up on the roof, dig through it, and lower the thing down.

Jesus’ response is interesting to me. I don’t know what He was talking about, what His subject was at the time. But whatever it was, it wasn’t that important, because He stops and turns His attention to these people and says, “Your sins are forgiven.” Their faith gets Jesus’ attention!

When you or I demonstrate faith in Jesus Christ, I think it gets His attention. Think with me on even just a human level about the special relationship, the bond, that exists between the one who trusts and the one who is being trusted in.

In his book, *Sabbatical Journeys*, Henri Nouwen tells about some friends of his who are trapeze artists, part of the group called the Flying Roudellas. One thing they told Nouwen is that there is a very special relationship between the trapeze flyer and the trapeze catcher. And here’s the way it works: The flyer gets going in his routine to the point where he has to let go. Once he lets go, he must remain completely still. He can’t lunge; he can’t look around; he can’t reach for the catcher. He must wait for the catcher to snatch him out of the air. And that catcher will catch him, but the flyer has to wait in absolute trust. Don’t you believe there’s a special bond between the flyer and the catcher? That catcher is going to move heaven and earth to make sure he gets the flyer.

Friends, so it is with us. Jesus calls us to let go. First He calls us to let go of anything we might be holding onto to secure our salvation—a religious system, our church going, our prayers, our Bible reading, our good works...whatever, whatever, whatever. He says, “Let it go. Trust completely in Me.” That restores our relationship with God. Then as we live the Christian life, we are to continually be letting go. Those things we hold onto, Jesus said, “Let go.” And as

we're falling, we wait in absolute trust. We can't lunge; we can't reach; we can't look around—knowing the Almighty catcher will get us. I think when we do that there's a bond that forms between the one who is trusting and the one who is being trusted in. We honor the one in whom we are trusting. I think our faith gets Jesus' attention. Our faith builds the relationship between us and Jesus. I think our faith captures the heart of Almighty God.

To this point, our passage is kind of a feel-good story. Four guys climb up on a roof; they let the paralytic down; there's healing and forgiveness of sin; Jesus turns His attention to people of faith...it's a good story. However, in verse 6 there is a transition coming. The first word we read is "but" so we know there is a change coming.

But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?" (vs. 6-7)

Now, before we're too hard on the scribes here, they are just reflecting on what they heard: "Did we hear that right? He offered to forgive sins?"... "Well, I think so."... "Who can do that? Only God can do that."

We'll find out in verse 8 that Jesus recognizes their reasoning. He knows what they're thinking. And He has a great chance to defuse the issue. It's one thing to be God's spokesperson; it's another thing to claim to be God. These guys are wondering, *Did I just hear right? I perceived He claimed to be God.* Jesus didn't go, "Hey, hey, hey, fellas, fellas, little misunderstanding here. I'm not God." He didn't do that. He embraces their perception. He affirms and confirms their perception: "You're right. I'm claiming to be God!"

Three weeks ago when Bryan introduced this series, he said there is a group of so-called scholars, the Jesus Seminar, who say the Gospels never claim that Jesus is God. Bryan pointed out in Mark 1, verse 2, that Mark uses "Yahweh" and "Elohim" to describe Jesus—which are titles of deity. Again, I don't know where they get their point. I don't know how they deal with what's going on here in verses 7 and 8 and following. These guys perceive Jesus to be making a claim to be God, and rather than defuse the situation, Jesus says, "You're right; I am God. I'm going to prove it to you." Jesus is making a case, so let's push forward and see what happens.

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? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'?" (vs. 8-9)

Friends, this is a rhetorical question, and here's the deal. For you and for me, mere humans, it's easier to say, "Your sins are forgiven." Do you know why? There's no way to verify that. We might think it's a little off, but there's no way to be absolutely sure. But if you say to the paralytic, "Take up your pallet and walk"...either he does or he doesn't. For any mere human being, it's easier to say, "Your sins are forgiven." But because Jesus is God, it's equally easy to say "Take up your pallet and walk" or "Your sins are forgiven".

So, in verses 10 and 11, Jesus says:

"But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" [Yes, I'm God and here, so you may know it]—He said to the paralytic, 'I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home.' "

Now, before we jump on to verse 12, let's realize what's going on here. This is time for Jesus to put up or shut up. He's being called out, and now He's got to come through.

If you follow athletics at all, there is a good bit of calling out that goes on. One team will say to another, "We're going to cream you." Or one athlete will say, "I'm going to dominate that." That happened about three months ago. The U.S. Olympics team came together for training and one of the players, Carmelo Anthony, blithely guaranteed a gold medal for the U.S. men's basketball team. *It's a lock; we're the best.* Well, if you followed the Olympics, you know that the U.S. men's team did get a medal, but it was the bronze medal. Since the Olympics, Carmelo Anthony has had a good bit to say. Now, I confess I haven't read the articles. But I wonder if he's had a lot to say because he feels foolish. He predicted one thing, and another thing came through, and he looks bad.

In any case, Jesus is predicting, "I can speak the word and this guy can pick up his pallet and walk out." And at the very least, Jesus risks looking foolish. Because if that paralytic does not get up and walk out, all credibility is gone. That's the best case if it doesn't work out. Worst case is that Jesus gets stoned for blasphemy, because He has claimed to be God and He's not. So the tension is high. When Jesus speaks the word, we need to know: What's going to happen?

Verse 11:

"I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home."

The result, verse 12:

And he [*the paralytic*] 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."

Jesus makes the claim to be God and then backs it up with a public display of supernatural power. That sets Him apart from every other religious leader and every other spiritual leader in the history of humankind. Jesus claims to be God and supports that claim with public miracles. *Jesus claims to be God and supports that claim with public miracles.*

We've got a list of folks who claim to be speaking for God. We've got another list of folks who claim to be God, but they have no evidence of public supernatural working. And then we've got this column of people who claim to be God and are God and back it up with supernatural miracles. There is just *one* in that column—Jesus Christ of Nazareth—and that sets Him apart.

In the September 25, 2000 issue of *Time* magazine, Matt Rees wrote an article entitled, "Miracle Makers." I would like to read an excerpt from that to make a contrast. He reports:

It is midnight in Israel and 33 worshippers gather and sing "Ya'ase shalom," which means "He will make peace"—words that refer to God, although the crowd thinks of another. Their song and their faith are directed to Rabbi Yaakov Ifragan. He is a holy man. As he shuffles through the crowd, the people touch him to receive a blessing. "I will clean people," he mutters and slings candles into a brazier until the flame rises 6 feet and the wax sizzles into the dusty ground. Rabbi Ifragan, 34, is the most prominent new leader in a wave of cabalistic mysticism sweeping Israel. After 4 hours into this ceremony, he turns to a row of followers confined to their wheelchairs, sweating near the fire. "Are you a believer?" the rabbi asks Gabriel Rafael, a young man of 22 who suffers from multiple sclerosis. People in the crowd raise him up by the arms. He takes a few steps scuffing his feet in the dirt, then collapses into his wheelchair. Those around him wait to hear that a miracle has taken place; what they hear instead is Gabriel say, "I do feel stronger."

Friends, for a holy man, for one anointed of God, that's not going to get it done for evidence. With all due respect, Rabbi, I need to see more. Do you understand, when Jesus said, "Take up your pallet and walk," the guy didn't lay there and think, *Well, I do feel stronger*. No, he picked up his pallet and he walked out! And the crowd was left wondering, *How do we explain it?* They were left dumbfounded. How does our passage change in verse 12 if the response is the guy lays there and says, "I do feel stronger"? I think Mark's Gospel goes out the window. But that's not what we've got. We have a supernatural display of God's power, and this sets Jesus apart. He is claiming to be God and supports that claim with public miracles.

When we step back and think about this passage, we see that Jesus is proclaiming salvation by faith in Him, not good works. That's the whole story of His death on the cross and resurrection from the dead. That's our atonement from sin. He makes it possible that we can come to Him and ask for forgiveness.

Folks, we are like the young lady dealing with the family of the deceased daughter. We can't do enough to cover our transgression and our hurt. We only have one option: to come to God, express our sorrow, and ask for forgiveness of sin. You know, we've got a crowd here in our passage, verse 12, that was amazed. It is not enough to be amazed by Jesus Christ. You and I must make a decision of the will to quit trusting our good works and quit trusting our religious system, and whatever else we're trusting in, and put our faith and trust completely in God for the forgiveness of our sin.

If you have never made that decision, you can make it in the quietness of your heart right now. You just call out to God in your heart and say, "I want to renounce everything else in which I'm trusting and place trust fully in You for the forgiveness of my sin." If you make that decision, Jesus will say the same thing He said to the paralytic: "Your sins are forgiven."

I realize this is a hard message, and some of you say, "Andy, I'm thinking it through." I say, "Good. I think that's great. I'm encouraged that you're thinking it through." I've got to tell you, my freshman year in college, there was a dorm Bible study on our floor and I was confronted with the grace of God. This was September of 1978. I had come from a religious system that told me you work and you go to church and you do this and that, and that gives you your salvation...maybe. It's your best shot. I was confronted with the grace of God, and I came back for six months, week after week, reading the Bible and comparing it to what my reality was...back and forth. I just couldn't pull the trigger.

Maybe you are in that process. I laud you for being in it. Let me suggest a couple of things that might help. At our Publications Center in the foyer there is a book called *The Case for Christ* by Lee Strobel. He will talk you through his process of how he came to know Jesus as his Savior and Lord and put his faith and trust in Him for forgiveness of his sin. It is available for \$5. If you are "in process," I ask you to invest \$5 in that book. I believe it will help you to think things through. Also, sometime around the first of the year we will offer a Faith Search class that will allow you to ask questions about the Christian faith. If you are in process, please be looking for that class. The decision you make about Jesus, or don't make, will have eternal consequences.

I realize that most people here have made the decision to trust completely in Jesus for the forgiveness of their sin. That's great. But I want to remind you of this: The idea of faith isn't something we did way back then to secure our salvation and now we're in control. That's the beginning of a life of faith—of complete dependence on God. So I think as followers of Jesus, we constantly need to be thinking through, like the flyer on the trapeze, *Where do we let go?*

What are the security things we're holding onto that are keeping us from trusting in Christ? And the possibilities are endless. Let me raise three areas that you might question before God.

One area is the area of **relationships**. You know, as parents of little kids, as our kids get older our relationship changes. As a parent I've got to back off controlling my kids and more and more entrust them to God. I need to let go. With junior highers and senior highers it works the other way, though. Your life is not your own. God is in control and He has put some people in place of authority, and you need to allow your parents and other people in authority a voice in your life. That doesn't end when we get to 18 or 20 and we move out. Even as adults, we need to let go of the idea that we control our lives and allow God to speak into our lives and allow others to speak, knowing that God will speak through them.

Some of you single adults, college age, senior highers, you may need to let go of a dating relationship. Some of you are in a relationship that is not good for your Christian faith. Some of you have close, intimate friends that are pulling you away from God. You like the security of the boyfriend or the girlfriend; you like the security of those friends. I think you need to let go if they're pulling you away from God. Relationships are one area where we may need to let go.

Another is the area of **time**. Everything I read says the most important resource for Americans is time. How are you using your time? Are you putting it all into your career? All into your job? Are you putting most of it into your job and then into your leisure? We need to think through our time and let go of it—that we might invest it in God's kingdom for God's glory.

One of *the* critical decisions I made in my life was about 18 months after I came to faith. During my junior year in college, Campus Crusade had this speaker Josh McDowell come in. After he spoke there was this whole process of follow-up, where we had to sort cards and get letters out. I was a studyaholic. I was a chemical engineering major, and I would get done with dinner at 5:30 or 6:00 and then I would study until 10:30 or 11:00. But I made the decision on two of those nights that I would invest two or three hours of my time for God's kingdom. That was huge, because it taught me my time is not my own. Your time is not your own. Maybe you need to let go. Would you wrestle with God about letting go of your time?

Another area is **finances**. I'll tell you, what keeps me from giving more is a lack of faith. For me it is never, *Boy, I don't want to give to God because I want that*. It's not about things. For me, it's about, *Boy, I want to have enough to cover my future. I want to have enough to cover this contingency*. Friends, that's a lack of faith. Maybe you, too, need to wrestle in your finances. Are you holding back because of a lack of faith? Do you need to let go of your finances? But please hear me, I don't share this to preach. I share this as someone who is in process with you. For me to let go, it is always a choice.

One of those choices was presented to me about a year ago. Bryan Clark came to me and talked about being a part of the north church plant. And on one level, I thought about it—my gifting, who I was—and I thought, *Well, it's a pretty good fit*. But I thought it was even more important for me personally that I step out. Because, you see, I had to let go. There are a lot of things I don't have control of, and it has forced me to Jesus Christ every day. I've started journaling again, just writing out my needs. I've got to tell you, it's doing great things for my walk with Jesus Christ. I believe it has strengthened the bond between me and Him. I just say that to encourage you that we need to be constantly thinking, *Where do we need to let go?* Because our life is to be one of desperate dependence, just like the paralytic.

Finally, I'd like to speak to those of you who are living full on and full out for God. You are living a life of faith; you have bet the farm on Jesus Christ. I hope this passage encourages you,

because I want to remind you that Jesus spoke the word and a paralyzed man picked up his pallet and walked out and left the crowd dumbfounded. If you are living a life of faith, I want to tell you that Jesus can speak that word and He can uphold you in your step of faith. I want to remind you here that this demonstration of faith got Jesus' attention. If you're living the life of faith, I believe you have got Jesus' attention. Jesus glorified Himself. He made His name known through this step of faith by the paralytic. I believe Jesus wants to make His name known—He wants to glorify Himself through *your* step of faith. If you are living that kind of life, would you continue doing it? I think you've got Jesus Christ's attention and I think He wants to make His name known through you.

Over the past two years I have begun to dabble a little bit in reading history, particularly American history. Among the historians I've read, it seems to be that most think the critical event in the life of our nation was the Civil War. We were about to come apart as a country. We were going to decide at least two issues. Would we continue as one or two countries? And would slavery continue in our land or not? As most historians agree that the Civil War was the turning event, they also agree that our greatest president was Abraham Lincoln. The thought was that we needed Lincoln to lead us through this tumultuous time. Paul Johnson is a British historian, and I'm always curious what an outsider thinks. He said this about Lincoln: "Lincoln is the case of American exceptionalism because he was a kind of moral genius such as is seldom seen in life and hardly ever in politics." Lincoln's great intellect and his sterling character set him apart among our U.S. presidents. During that critical time, *any* leader would not do. A pretty good leader would not do. We needed the best our history had to offer. We needed *the* case of American exceptionalism.

In the same way, as part of the human race, as part of humankind, it's my belief that the issue is: How are we going to restore our relationship with God? You don't have to read the newspaper for long, you don't have to look at the news that long, to realize we've made a mess of things. And I look at some of these issues and I think, *How is this going to work itself out?*

Friends, we need somebody who can lead us back to God. And any spiritual leader won't do. A pretty good leader won't do. We need the case of human exceptionalism. And I think because He's fully God and fully man, Jesus Christ of Nazareth is the case of human exceptionalism. He is the leader we need to lead us back to God.

So, one more time, let me ask and answer our question: What sets Jesus apart among spiritual leaders? Jesus proclaimed salvation by faith in Him, not by good works. And Jesus claimed to be God and supported that claim with public miracles. ***Jesus proclaimed salvation by faith in Him, not by good works. Jesus claimed to be God and supported that claim with public miracles.***

Our God in heaven, we stand in awe of Jesus Christ. I think of that song, "Only a God Like You"—how true it is. We recognize Jesus as the One who was able to speak the word and a paralytic got up and walked. So, God, we come in faith. We come in desperate dependence. Individually and as a people, we say, "We have nowhere else to turn but You." Father, would You take our feeble faith and multiply it? Would You glorify Yourself in and through us? For the sake of Your kingdom, we ask it in Christ's name, Amen.

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Study Questions
The Good News About Jesus According to Mark
Getting Jesus' Attention
Mark 2:1-12
Pastor Andy MacFarlane

Opening Discussion

1. Have you spent much time studying and considering the claims and teachings of other spiritual leaders? If so, what conclusions have you drawn from your study?
2. Why have you chosen to follow Jesus instead of some other spiritual leader?

Bible Study

1. If you had been the paralytic, what do you think you would have done when you were unable to get to Jesus because of the crowd? Why?

What would you have done if you had been one of the four men carrying the paralytic? Why?

2. Why do you think these men decided to dig through the roof? Do you think anyone tried to stop them or dissuade them?

Has there been a time in your life when you were particularly desperate to get to Jesus? What were the circumstances and what did you do to get to Jesus?

3. Why do you think the actions of these men captured Jesus' attention?

What do you think it is about faith that captures Jesus' attention?

4. Do you find it easy to live by faith? Why or why not?

Why is salvation by grace through faith so hard for some people to grasp and/or accept?

5. What is your attitude toward the scribes and their concern (vs. 6-7) that in forgiving sins, Jesus is claiming to be God? Do you fault them for their concerns? Why or why not?

What is the point of Jesus' question in verse 9? For every *other* person, why is it easier to say, "Your sins are forgiven"?

6. Why do you think Mark gives so many examples of Jesus' public miracles?

7. Honestly, how do you think you would have responded if you had witnessed the healing of the paralytic?

How is it that people can be amazed by Jesus' works but not believe in Him?

Application

1. Have you placed your faith in Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins? Are you ever tempted to rely on works to maintain your relationship with God? If so, when are you most likely to fall into that trap?
2. What is it in your life right now that is demanding faith on your part? In what areas of your life do you need to let go?
3. Does this passage motivate you to live by faith? If so, how?