



WEEKLY STUDY

WEEK 3

In Luke 5, Jesus responded to the desperate need of a paralyzed man who was lowered into his presence by a group of friends. It was literally a messy scene as pieces of ceiling came floating down into the room. There are certain obstacles that we can overcome under our own strength, but that will only lead to a transformed life if we find ourselves and our friends at the feet of Jesus. He is the one who can forgive our sins and heal us. May you find yourself in the presence of Jesus this week as you sit in the Scripture passages. Listen for your own forgiveness and healing.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: LUKE 5.17-26 (ESV)

On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal¹⁸ And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus,¹⁹ but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus.²⁰ And when he saw their faith, he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."²¹ And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"²² When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, "Why do you question in your hearts?²³ Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'?²⁴ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the man who was paralyzed—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home."²⁵ And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God.²⁶ And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."

- By the end of the story, the paralyzed man is healed and instructed to pick up his mat and walk. However, Jesus seems to be saying that physical healing was not the whole picture. In fact, the physical healing only pointed to Jesus' authority to forgive sins. The fullness of his healing and forgiveness led the man to glorify God all the way home. **What extraordinary things have you seen God do recently? How does the forgiveness of sins correspond with physical healing?**
- *Jesus, cleanse me of my bent towards sin. Forgive me and make me new. See my physical need. Restore me and make me whole, I pray. Amen.*

TUESDAY: JOHN 16.32-33 (NIV)

"Do you now believe?" Jesus replied. ³²"A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

³³*"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

- There are times in every person's life that feel like too much trouble. We wonder how we could possibly get beyond the current crisis. But Jesus has overcome the messiness of this world. He gives us hope when we are in trouble. **Do you find it difficult to find peace in times of trouble? What does it mean that Jesus has already overcome the world? How do you reconcile that with the state of the world today?**
- *Jesus, in you I find peace. Thank you for taking on the trouble of this world and making a way for me to overcome it. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: GENESIS 1.1-3 (NIV)

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

³*And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.*

- God didn't start the mess-fixing with Jesus. In the first acts of creation, God took chaos and brought order. The raging waters, the empty darkness were out of control. God brought control by establishing a good order of creation. That's what Jesus does for us—brings good order to our out of control messes. **What scenes of chaos are you lifting up to God today?**
- *God, Your Word brings order out of chaos. See the chaos that sometimes stirs within me and bring your peace. Amen.*

THURSDAY: DEUTERONOMY 31.7-8 (NIV)

Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the presence of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you must go with this people into the land that the LORD swore to their ancestors to give them, and you must divide it among them as their inheritance. ⁸The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."

- Joshua was going to pick up where Moses left off. Joshua was being called into his ultimate moment of leadership for God's people, but Moses knew the most important lesson for a young leader was to remember that God would always go before him. **Have you experienced a similar reminder that God would be with you through challenging leadership moments?**

- *God, you have always been with me. Make me strong and courageous to enter whatever lands you lead me into today. Amen.*

FRIDAY: 1 CORINTHIANS 12.21-26 (NIV)

The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"²² On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,²³ and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty,²⁴ while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it,²⁵ so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

- God meets us in our individual messes for sure, but our individual messiness also shows up in community. These words from Paul point to the good that can come from sharing our imperfect lives with other followers of Jesus. God mends the messiness within the community. **How have you experienced your community (family, church, neighborhood, etc) to be a place of shared messiness? How could it become a safer place for honest sharing among the members of the body?**
- *Holy God, thank you for the gift of the church which reminds us that we are part of something bigger than ourselves. Show me what I have to contribute to the life of the church, and fill me with gratitude for others who share in my suffering and rejoicing. Amen.*

SATURDAY: ISAIAH 55 (NIV)

*"For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,"
declares the Lord.*

⁹*"As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

¹⁰*As the rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return to it*

*without watering the earth
and making it bud and flourish,
so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for
the eater,
¹¹so is my word that goes out from my mouth:
It will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

- Spiritual maturity tends to emerge at the point where we recognize our inability to fix every mess. Some things require a power far beyond ourselves. Isaiah recorded the words declaring that God's ways are not limited to our ways. God's ways are deeper and higher than ours and so we have to submit to that truth in order to see a way through our personal and collective messes. **Which images from Isaiah 55.8-11 most connect with your experience of God's great ability to accomplish amazing things?**
- *Almighty God, speak your life-giving word over my life so that new life might continue to spring up in me. Amen.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Reread Luke 5:17-26 and consider the following questions. Share your responses with your group. .

- What stood out to you from the readings this week? Where did God show up?
- When have you carried someone else to Jesus?
- Who has carried you into the presence of Jesus?
- What leads the people in your community to say, “*We have seen extraordinary things today.*”?