

WHICH IS EASIER?

One day Jesus declared the sins of a paralytic “forgiven.” The orthodox religious leaders pounced on this reasoning in their hearts that ONLY God can forgive sins. Jesus responded in this way:

Matthew 9:5 (NKJV)

5 For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise and walk’?

Jesus here, in effect, challenges them to be consistent in their thinking. Now realize He has just said to the paralytic, “***Your sins are forgiven you.***”

But now He puts forth the question: “Which is easier to say, ***‘Your sins are forgiven’ or ‘Arise and walk’?*** As far as just saying the words, one can say them with equal ease, but in terms of outward evidence demanded, it is much easier to say, “*Your sins are forgiven*” *than to say, “Arise and walk”*.”

You see, anyone could pronounce “Your sins are forgiven,” but how would anyone ever really know? There is no outward proof demanded. It can’t be tested! It is unobservable and unprovable. That is easy. Anyone could say it without confirming the evidence! Mere talk is easy to do! To make claims that are unable to be substantiated is easy.

In reality, the greater thing is actually the forgiveness of sins, but again, it is in the abstract and therefore easy to claim with no verification possible. Any clergy type person dressed up in religious garb might sprinkle a little holy water and intone “your sins are forgiven”. That is easy! Merely saying “you are forgiven” provides no concrete proof of anything.

On the other hand, to say, “***Arise and walk,***” demands outward immediate results. If the person can’t do it, it would show immediately that the person is a fraud, just spouting words. So saying, “***Arise and walk***” is much harder in the sense that it demands immediate outward evidence as proof that the person saying it actually has the power to make it happen.

Matthew 9:6 (NKJV)

6 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—then He said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”

The way Jesus stated this should have gotten their attention. He calls Himself the “**Son of Man**” which was clearly a Messianic designation going back to Daniel 7:13-14.

Daniel 7:13–14 (NKJV)

13 “I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the **Son of Man**, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.

14 Then to Him was **given dominion and glory and a kingdom**, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an **everlasting dominion**, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

This “**Son of Man**” destination clearly referred to no regular man. He is called “**Son of Man**,” but with God-like qualities in that He comes with the clouds of heaven, and He reigns supreme over all forever. He has eternal glory and an eternal kingdom. Thus, He lives forever in this capacity.

Clearly, Jesus was claiming to be this unique Messiah figure in calling Himself “**the Son of Man**” (which by the way was His favorite designation of Himself occurring some 78 times in the gospels). And the proof provided was not in abstract terms but rather came in concrete, objective terms that were immediately demonstrated.

That they might KNOW He has the divine power to forgive sins, He commanded the paralytic to take up his bed and go to his house. The word “**power**” is more accurately translated as “**authority**”. Again, in view is Lordship authority indicative of being Lord-God.

The observable physical miracle of healing provided proof of the unobservable spiritual miracle of forgiveness. A key reason for this miracle was to show that Christ indeed had the Lordship authority to forgive sins.

This all fits with a kingdom narrative. Christ was the promised King doing kingdom miracles, thus providing kingdom proof that He was indeed the prophesied Messiah.

“This is one of the most significant signs Jesus performs relative to the kingdom program. It shows that He is capable of forgiving sins on earth.” – **Stanley Toussaint**

Jesus was the Messiah-King, doing what only God can do- forgive sins, and He miraculously proved it.

ONLY God can forgive sins! Jesus claimed to forgive sin and backed it up with miraculous healing, thus showing that He, in fact, is God!

Jesus is man, Jesus is God; He is the God-man, fully man and fully God in One person.