

INTERRUPTIONS

"LOOK"

LUKE 5:17-26

This Week's Core Competency

Trinity – I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2 Corinthians 13:14 *May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

"Son of Man" was the title Jesus used most frequently to refer to himself; it occurs twenty-five times in Luke's Gospel alone. While it alludes to the humanity of the one called "son of man," as in Daniel 8:17 where Gabriel uses it to refer to the prophet, it clearly implies much more when used to refer to "one like a son of man" in Daniel 7:13-14. The prophet writes, "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven." Clearly this figure is human and then some. "He approached the Ancient of Days, and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him." In a nutshell, this spectacular figure is destined to rule the whole earth previously misruled by the many kings of four Gentile kingdoms during "the times of the Gentiles" (Lk 21:24). Although he isn't *explicitly* called "God" in Daniel 7, a number of things *implicitly* suggest

Who can forgive sins but God alone?

– Jewish Leaders

as much. This son of man is clearly no mere mortal. His dominion is *everlasting*; his kingdom will *never be destroyed*. What's more, all peoples, nations and men of every language will one day *worship him*. Jesus' use of this title to refer to himself goes back to Daniel 7:13-14.

In Luke 5:17-24, Jesus makes *explicit* what Daniel 7:13-14 leaves *implicit* by healing an unnamed paralytic. Seeing the faith of the paralyzed man as well as that of his friends, who took extraordinary measures to bring their companion to him, Jesus says, "Friend, your sins are forgiven" (v. 20). This statement raises the ire of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law present who were more than able to do the spiritual math. Only God can forgive sins, so if this man thinks he can forgive sins, this man must think he is God. The conclusion that Jesus speaks blasphemy because he claims the divine prerogative to forgive is unavoidable.

At this point in the story, Jesus identifies himself with the one in Daniel 7:13-14, explaining he will prove that "the Son of Man" (Lk 5:24) has authority on earth to forgive sins. Then he does the "harder" thing by healing the man. Luke says, "He said to the paralyzed man, 'I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.' Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God." Jesus had made his point. He is the Son of Man and the messianic Son of God (3:22) who has the authority to forgive sins.

day 1

ENCOUNTER – read God’s word to put yourself in touch with him.

Luke 5:17-26

17 One day as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there. And the power of the Lord was present for him to heal the sick. 18 Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. 19 When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

20 When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

21 The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

22 Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? 23 Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? 24 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins . . ." He said to the paralytic man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." 25 Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. 26 Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."

Cf., another translation

17 Now on one of those days, while he was teaching, there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting nearby (who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem), and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. 18 Just then some men showed up, carrying a paralyzed man on a stretcher. They were trying to bring him in and place him before Jesus. 19 But since they found no way to carry him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down on the stretcher through the roof tiles right in front of Jesus. 20 When Jesus saw their faith he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven." 21 Then the experts in the law and the Pharisees began to think to themselves, "Who is this man who is uttering blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 22 When Jesus perceived their hostile thoughts, he said to them, "Why are you raising objections within yourselves? 23 Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and walk'? 24 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"-he said to the paralytic man-"I tell you, stand up, take your stretcher and go home." 25 Immediately he stood up before them, picked up the stretcher he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God. 26 Then astonishment seized them all, and they glorified God. They were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen incredible things today." (NET)

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- * Circle "Pharisees" in v. 17.
- * Circle "teachers of the law" in vv. 17, 21.
- * Underline "Galilee," "Judea," and "Jerusalem" in v. 17.
- * Box "and" indicating *connection* in v. 17.
- * Bracket "the power of the Lord" in v. 17.
- * In the margin next to verse 17 write, "Cf., 4:1, 18, 36, 39-41; 5:6, 13."
- * Circle "mat" in v. 18.
- * Double underline "before Jesus" in v. 18 and "right in front of Jesus" in v. 19.
- * Circle "tiles" in v. 19.
- * Highlight Jesus' words in v. 20.
- * Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 24.
- * Underline "Son of Man" in v. 24.
- * Circle "them" in v. 25.
- * Bracket "gave praise to God" in v. 26.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Verse 17 builds readers' excitement and heightens readers' anticipation. How so?
2. Verses 18 and 19 introduce four men (cf., Mk 2:3) on a mission. What was it?
3. "Friend, your sins are forgiven." Do you suppose that's what the paralytic wanted to hear? Explain.
4. Do you suppose Jesus knew how the religious leaders would respond to his words? Explain.
5. On what basis did they accuse him of speaking blasphemy?
6. Answer the question Jesus asked in verse 23.
7. Explain the *contrast* in verse 24.
8. The paralytic stood up "in front of *them*" immediately. This proved what to whom?
9. **Discussion:** Talk about why everyone *praised God* for what took place.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

Healing an unnamed paralyzed man marks the beginning of the controversy between Jesus and his Jewish opponents. One commentator puts the story told in Luke 5:17-26 in its context. He writes: "In 5:17-6:11 we have five controversy stories that contrast the people's enthusiastic reaction toward Jesus here and earlier (4:31-5:15) with the negative reaction of the Pharisees and teachers of the law. The culmination of these controversy stories is found in 6:7, 11 . . . Hitherto Jesus had been portrayed as healing (4:38-39, 40-41; 5:12-16), exorcizing (4:31-37), and performing a nature miracle (5:4-9), but now in this and the next account attention is focused upon Jesus' divine prerogative to forgive sins" (Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, NAC, 174-75).

All stories are stories, but not all are the same. We recognize there are different kinds of stories: fable and folk tale, science fiction and horror, historical fiction and biography, to mention just a few. The Four Gospels contain different kinds of stories, one of which is the *quest story*. One commentator describes this kind of story as follows: "In the synoptic quest story someone approaches Jesus in quest of something very important to human well-being. This quest is the dominant concern of the story; its importance is shown by the fact that the episode does not end until we are told whether the quest is successful or not . . . the episode begins by introducing a questing person and ends when we learn that the quest was successful or unsuccessful" (Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*, 1:111).

As with all good stories, quest stories contain some obstacle or another that stands in the way of the quest being accomplished. The same writer explains: "Suspense is heightened by the presence of some difficulty or conflict which blocks fulfillment of the quest. The conversation in the scene will highlight this difficulty or conflict. Jesus may pose a difficult condition or raise an objection. Or an objection may be expressed by another party. There may also be contrasting characters who represent conflicting ways of acting or judging. Through these devices the storyteller focuses attention on a particular issue as the crucial issue for the success or failure of the quest" (11-12).

Luke sets the stage for Jesus' miracle in verse 17. Hearing of his healing powers, an enormous crowd that includes Pharisees and teachers of the law, the cream of Judaism's crop, from "every village in Galilee" and as far away as "Judea and Jerusalem" bustles about, inside and out, either hoping to be healed or hoping to see a healing. So many people make it virtually impossible for more than a handful of them to get close to Jesus. To spark readers' excitement and heighten their anticipation, Luke goes on to say that God's Spirit is present, furnishing Jesus with the power to heal. A miracle is clearly in the offing.

Then Luke introduces the "questers" in verses 18-19. Four determined men do their best to bring their paralyzed friend to Jesus, thinking if they can find a way to "lay him before Jesus," Jesus will heal him. Too bad, obstacles stand in their way. The first is the crowd. They can't get in the house where he is; in fact, they can't even get close to the door. From outside they can't see Jesus, and Jesus can't see them, so they do the only thing they can. They go up on the housetop, open a hole in the roof, and lower their friend down "into the middle of the crowd right in front of Jesus" (v. 19).

A second obstacle is then created by what Jesus says to the man, "Friend, your sins are forgiven" (v. 20). Welcome words indeed, but likely not what the man expected to hear. He had come to be healed, but that would have to wait. Jesus must first answer the objection of the Pharisees and teachers of the law who immediately recognize the implication of his words. They reason: 1) only God can forgive sins; 2) Jesus forgives this man's sins; 3) therefore, he speaks blasphemy by claiming a prerogative of God alone.

Answer he does, and his answer is genius (vv. 22-25). Jesus does what is "harder to say" in order to prove what is "easier to say." It's harder to say, "Get up and walk," than to say, "Your sins are forgiven." As one writer notes, "Anyone can 'say' that someone's sins are forgiven, but to do something, such as curing a physical ailment possibly brought on by sin, is an altogether different question" (Craig A. Evans, *Luke*, NIBC, 89). Jesus tells the man to "get up, take your mat and go home" (v. 24) and Luke tells us,

"Immediately he stood up in front of them" (Jesus' opponents), "took what he had been lying on and went home praising God" (v. 25). The instantaneous healing of the man dramatically answered the critics' objection by proving that "the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" (v. 24). It also brought the paralytic's quest for healing to a successful conclusion.

The *upper* story of this narrative is about Jesus, who identifies himself with the Son of Man, and

demonstrates that he has the authority on earth to forgive sins by healing the paralytic indicating that he is also the Son of God.

The *lower* story is about a desperate paralyzed man and his four friends, all of whom have faith in Jesus to heal. No doubt they have heard the gospel of the kingdom he has been preaching and believe that he is the Messiah, who brings to Israel and to them "the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins" (1:78).

The Message of the Passage

Jesus, the Son of Man, has proven divine authority to forgive the sins of those who have faith in him.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Try some of the challenges below to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your thoughts on the passage:**

–Write about how God revealed himself to you . . .

–Write about how God wants you to change you . . .

–Write about how God wants to use you to change your world . . .

notes STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 17 **Pharisees** Lit., "separated ones." "Unlike the Sadducees, who were wealthy, aristocratic, and very conservative theologically and politically, the Pharisees were more numerous [about 6,000 in that day] and much more popular with the people. The Pharisees traced their origins back to the glorious days of the Maccabean struggle for freedom (167-146 B.C.). They were zealous for the Jewish faith and were champions of the messianic hope. They believed that if all Jews would dedicate themselves to a faithful observance of all of the laws of the law of Moses (which included the observance of their oral traditions, designed as a 'fence' to protect the law; see Pirke Aboth 1.1) God would raise up his Messiah and deliver Israel" (Evans, 91; see also Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*, NICNT, 189-91).

v. 17 **teachers of the law** "This term (*nomodidaskaloi*) occurs only here in the Gospels and may be a synonym for 'teachers of the law' (*grammateis*) in Luke 5:21. Although one could be a 'teacher of the law' or scribe and not a Pharisee, most scribes were in fact Pharisees and leaders in this sect" (Stein, 175). "Since most lawyers were Pharisees, the whole phrase here is to be interpreted as a hendiadys" (I Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, NICNT, 212) referring in general to one group, not two, i.e., religious leaders.

v. 17 **Galilee . . .** Although Jesus performed this miracle in Capernaum (Mk 2:1), the controversy it sparked extended all the way to Jerusalem. "Luke may have referred to Judea and Jerusalem at this point to alert his readers that what happened here in the controversy stories foreshadowed what would happen later in Jerusalem" (Stein, 175-76).

v. 17 **power of the Lord** I.e., power of God; "kuriōs when used without the article means God" (Marshall, 212). More specifically in this context, "**the power of the Lord** is probably equivalent to the Holy Spirit (see 3:22; 4:1)" (Evans, 91).

v. 18 **mat** Cf., "stretcher" (NET). "Traditionally, 'on a bed,' but this could be confusing to the modern reader who might envision a large piece of furniture. In various contexts, (*klinē*) may be translated 'bed, couch, cot, stretcher, or bier' (in the case of a corpse). See L&N 6.106" (the NET Bible, 63^{tn} on Lk 5:18).

v. 19 **tiles** "In Mark's account (see 2:4) the men 'dug through the roof,' i.e., they dug a hole through the clay and straw that made up the roof. Luke, however, says that the men made an opening in the tiles. Luke put it this way probably for the sake of his Greco-Roman readers who would have been more familiar with tile roofs. It is, of course not impossible that the house in this episode may have actually had a tile roof, for Roman architecture and building materials were present in first-century Palestine" (Evans, 91-92; see Marshall, 213). "Roofs of simple homes were constructed in three layers: the first was wooden beams, often cypress and sometimes cedar. On top of the beams straw mats were laid, and on top of these, a layer of clay. The clay would be packed down tight before the first winter rains with the use of a stone roller. This type of roof would have to be 'broken through' (Mark 2:4) by chopping a hole . . . Luke's version of the same story (Luke 5:19) has the man let down 'through the tiling'. In the village setting, tiled roofs were less common" (Miriam Feinberg Vamosh, *Daily Life at the Time of Jesus*, 44).

v. 21 **blasphemy** I.e., "anything uttered about God that was demeaning or insulting (see Lev. 24:10-11, 14-16, 23)" (Evans, 92). Jesus isn't simply announcing that God has forgiven the man; he is exercising the authority to forgive the man himself, which entailed the use of divine prerogative and amounted to blasphemy in the eyes of the religious leaders.

v. 23 **which is easier?** "It is easier to say, 'your sins are forgiven' than, 'Get up and walk' because the legitimacy of the former cannot be disproven whereas the latter can if no healing takes place . . . Luke understood that if God granted Jesus power to work this miracle, then God himself supported Jesus' claim that he can forgive sins" (Stein, 177). "Logic tells us that it is easier to say one's sins are forgiven, since that cannot be seen; but in fact that is more difficult, since one must have the authority to do that. Then Jesus links the two issues together. He acts so that the audience can know the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins. He tells the man to walk. He enables the hard thing—having the paralyzed man get up and walk—in order to show the even harder thing—the power to forgive sin" (Darrell L. Bock, *The NIV Application Commentary: Luke*, 158).

v. 24 **Son of Man** "This is the first time Luke recorded Jesus calling Himself the 'Son of Man.' Luke used this title 26 times, and in every case Jesus used it to describe Himself (except in Acts 7:56 where Stephen used it of Him). This was a messianic title with clear implications of deity (Dan. 7:13-14). Since the Son of Man is the divine Judge and Ruler, it is only natural that He would have the power to forgive. It was only consistent for Jesus to claim deity, since He had just demonstrated His deity by forgiving the man's sins. He would prove it by healing him" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Luke," 2013 ed., 78, www.soniclight.com). "The traditional figure of the Son of man is of one who has the right to act as heavenly judge and ruler, and such a figure has implicitly the power to forgive" (Marshall, 215).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

The men in our story this week were good friends to the paralyzed man. They heard Jesus could help their friend and went to great lengths to make sure he saw Him. They learned that friends go the extra mile to help each other. The struggle to get on the roof, lift the man onto the roof, remove the tiles and gently lower their friend into the crowded room was no small task. Good friends are invaluable and they don't happen by accident. Friendships are cultivated with great care and over time. One of the privileges of parenthood is teaching our kids how to be a good friend and how to choose good friends. We do this by modeling good friendships and talking about it a lot! Play this fun game with your kids to discuss ways of being a good friend. Write several phrases on slips of paper and put them in a bowl. Some of these phrases should be what good friends do (pray for each other) and others what we shouldn't do as a friend (make fun of someone). Take turns pulling slips out of the bowl. Decide by voting a thumbs up (good friend) or thumbs down (bad friend) on each action. Use this activity to start a discussion with your kids about their friendships and how to be a great friend!

What Does The Bible Say

Read: Luke 5:17-26

1. Why couldn't the men get their friend to Jesus?
2. What did they decide to do?
3. What did Jesus say to the man?

What Do You Think

Before Jesus told the man to get up and walk, he told him his sins were forgiven. What does this tell you about what Jesus thinks is most important - a healed heart or a healed body?

What R U Going To Do

Look for an opportunity to bless a friend this week! Bake them cookies, make a nice card, pray for them and tell them you did... Write down what on the back of your scrolls and get an extra token next week!

MEMORY TIME

Core Comp

Trinity - I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Memory Verse

Luke 19:10 - *For the Son of Man came to seek and save what was lost.*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC ____ and Verse _____. Family completed **Say** _____ **Think** _____ **Do** _____

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn tokens by completing the Bible study portion of this page.
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.