



World Christian Fellowship

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Jesus power over Sin!

Matthew 9:1-8

What is the most distinctive thing that Christianity must proclaim?

Unquestionably, the most distinctive thing that Christianity must proclaim is the reality that sin can be forgiven.

Forgiveness of sin is the heart and lifeblood of the Christianity.

Although the Christian faith has many values, virtues, and endless applications, the most essential message that God ever gave to man is that man, a sinner, can know the fullness of forgiveness for that sin.

Matthew 9:1-8, *So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. ²Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." ³And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!" ⁴But Jesus, knowing their thoughts,*

said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts?⁵For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise and walk?’⁶But 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.”⁷And he arose and departed to his house. ⁸Now when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

Matthew has been focusing on various miracles of our Lord in **chapters 8 and 9**.

These miracles are intended to present to us,

- ✓ The deity of Jesus Christ, and
- ✓ His character as the Messiah of Israel.

Matthew does not give us a lot of miracles to prove that He’s God. He gives us specific miracles designed to attach to very specific messianic kingdom prophecies so that Israel will know that this is the one who is able to fulfil the role of Messiah and introduce into the world the kingdom of God.

There is a very Old Testament character to the kind of miracles that Matthew selects under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Let us review the miracles we have seen so far.

1. By the touch of a hand, cleansed the leper.
2. By a word He healed a centurion's servant.
3. He banished the fever of Peter's wife's mother.

He went beyond the physical miracles, and He began to deal with nature.

4. He stilled the winds and the waves.
5. His power over supernatural forces demons when He cast out the demons.

Matthew shows us that Jesus has power over the root of all man's misery which is sin. He deals with human guilt, and human pollution, the evil that separates man from God the maker.

And so, the great physician can not only heal the sick and still the storm and deal with demons, but He can bring to the human soul the thing that it needs the most, the forgiveness of sin.

The same incident is written by Mark and Luke.

Mark 2:1-12

Luke 5:17-26.

V1, *So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.*

Jesus had healed the demon-possessed men on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

We don't know how much time lapses between the end of chapter 8 and chapter 9. Matthew is not so concerned with chronology as he is with specific miracles to fit his thrust as inspired by the Spirit.

Jesus got back in a boat and proceeded back to the west and came into His own city.

Nazareth was His city at one time.

Matthew 4:13-14, *And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:*

Jesus left Nazareth.

Luke 4:29-30, *and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. ³⁰Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.*

He left Nazareth because they threw Him out. He was a prophet without honour in His own country.

Jesus has re-established His home just a few miles away in the little town of Capernaum on the north shore of the Lake of Galilee. It is also very likely that He had taken up residence in the house of Peter.

It appears that house is the same house as mentioned in **Matthew 8:14**, Peter's house, where He healed Peter's mother-in-law.

Before He crossed the Lake of Galilee, the miracles that He was doing in Capernaum and the surrounding area had generated massive crowds of people. They were following Him everywhere. He was healing all kinds of diseases and casting out demons and doing all these mighty works.

The crowd was on the rise. When He comes back, it's only natural to assume that another massive crowd is going to come to the place that He stays.

As He comes back to Peter's house, that is precisely what happens. It was common in those days to build a two-story house.

On the second floor was a large room where the social gatherings occurred.

Remember the Lord on the night in which He broke bread with His disciples, went into an upper room. That was common in most homes. The kitchen and other things downstairs and upstairs were this great meeting area.

Then on top of that was the roof. And they would spend much time on the rooftops as well. The climate being what it is in that part of the world, the rooftop was a pleasant place.

Almost every home had an outside staircase going up the side and up to the roof.

On this occasion, the Lord is in a house which may have been like that. The people have literally filled that house.

1. Faith.

Suddenly, a marvellous thing takes place.

V 2, Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you."

Matthew leaves out lot of details, but it was filled in by Mark and Luke.

Mark 2:3, *Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men.*

Who are they?

Four friends or four relatives.

They have all heard that Jesus is in town, and they desire their friend to come to Jesus.

Maybe he has poured out the need in his own heart. He has probably recruited them to do this. They bring their friend.

Why do they need to bring Him?

Because He was a man sick of the palsy.

He was a paralytic.

Maybe just a basic definition of that is a loss of motor function, the mechanical function of the body, and sometimes a loss of sensory ability. The inability to move or to feel to one degree or another.

This kind of paralysis can come about a lot of ways. It could come about through accident, a neck injury, a back injury, come about through a birth defect, muscular dystrophy, polio, various and sundry things that can cause paralysis.

It was a severe paralysis. It may well have been that he was quadriplegic. At least we know that he was lying on a bed. He

was flat on his back, apparently unable to move himself in any way, unable to even assist those who moved him so that it took four men to carry him.

The Bible says he was lying on a pallet or lying on a bed.

There were also little wooden frames. They had a little slight wood frames that they would lie it on and had ropes to kind of suspend that little pallet. But the man had been paralyzed, and he was lying on a bed.

There were many possible things. But he was lying on a bed, unable to care for himself.

In those times, it would have been doubly difficult to be paralyzed. It's difficult enough now. But in those times, it would have been doubly difficult because there was not the apparatus, there was not the ability to assist, there was not the medical knowledge, and the person would be in grave distress, having to be cared for in all the very basic necessities of life.

There was much more of a social stigma then than there is now.

He was sick because he was sinful. Because that was the common feeling of the time, that his disease and his illness was a result of his sin.

Remember there was a blind man in John chapter 9?

Jesus's disciples asked Him the question.

John 9:2, *And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"*

The disciples were right in the sense that all sickness is linked to sin. Because if there were no sin, there would be no sickness.

But they were wrong.

They were just reflecting the feeling of the day that you are sick because you are sinful.

This kind of thinking were there for a long time.

When we go all the way back to the book of Job, which may be the first book every written in the Bible, and that is exactly what Job's friends told him, "You have got problems because you are sinful, and there is a direct relationship."

So, the man not only suffered from the disease, suffered from the stigma that went with it. But he suffered from an overwhelming sense of the fact that he was sinful.

A man in his situation would be a walking illustration of his own personal sin in the eyes of everybody else.

It would not be uncommon for such people to seek to be alone and to shun the crowds. But this man wanted to come to Jesus.

The reason he wanted to come to Jesus was because of his sin, not his sickness.

That is why Jesus said to him, *“Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven.”*

Because the thing that had torn him up, the despair of his life, was not that he was physically ill, but that he was sinful.

All sickness may not always be related to sin.

You may be ill because God has other purposes, not necessarily because you have sinned.

Not all sicknesses are chastening.

But all sickness is a graphic demonstration of the destructive power that’s a work in the world because of sin.

So, whether or not the man was feeling that very immediate reaction that his sickness was tied to a sin, and he knew it.

I believe the man came to Jesus for a spiritual problem, not a physical one.

His friends bring him.

What makes this great faith?

V 2, *When Jesus saw their faith,*

How do you know they had faith?

They must have had faith.

The men must have felt that Jesus could do something, even though he perhaps had brought them to help him, and even though he was the one who knew what was deep in his heart, they must have believed that Jesus could heal him physically, because Jesus says He saw their faith.

Now, it wouldn't have been hard to see because here's what they did.

They came to the house, and they couldn't get in.

It would have been tough to crawl around and try to work your way through the crowd when you have four guys carrying a bed. So, they decided that there was only one way to get in, and they climbed that external staircase which is so common. They went up on the rooftop and tile by tile, they began to tear the roof apart.

Luke 5:18-19, *Then behold, men brought on a bed a man who was paralyzed, whom they sought to bring in and lay before Him. ¹⁹And when they could not find how they might bring him*

in, because of the crowd, they went up on the housetop and let him down with his bed through the tiling into the midst before Jesus.

Mark 5:4, *And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.*

They must have caused the place fairly well, because when they got done, they dropped him straight down at Jesus' feet.

Can you imagine the reaction of everybody inside?

Suddenly, the tiles start disappearing from the ceiling.

They take the roof apart, and they drop him through, right at the feet of Jesus. He is lying there. He may have even been paralyzed in terms of his speech, because he never says a word.

This is persistent, relentless, and inventive faith.

There's no request given!

Nothing is said.

He was just placed himself at the feet of Jesus, in full view of everybody, filled with grief.

I am sure he was filled with fear and panic. He knew Jesus was a healer of bodies, and he must have hoped he was also a healer of hearts, because the thing that burdened him most was his sin.

It may well have been that his illness was a direct result of some sin, and he was overwrought with guilt. But what an exhibition of faith.

His friends did not walk away when they saw a massive crowd. They did not offer any excuse.

But they had great faith. They tore the building apart to get him in there and dropped them down.

“Jesus, seeing their faith”

All five of them it was not an ordinary faith but a strong faith. It was a persistent faith. And Jesus saw it.

There were times when Jesus healed people with no faith. There were times that He healed people with little faith. But He was especially disposed to healing people with great faith.

Matthew 9:18, *While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, “My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live.”*

That is great faith. Jesus did it.

Matthew 9:28-29, *And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." 29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you."*

He was especially disposed to those of this kind of faith. Here the man is, lying at His feet. It's a silent faith. It knows no speech. Only the dumb speech of faith and reverence. No one says anything. No one even speaks until the Lord speaks.

Jesus said this to the one who was paralyzed.

V 2, *He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you."*

The Greek word **teknon** could probably be translated child. It's a term of infinite tenderness.

Here is a man who is overwrought with his sin. It's been thrown at him from the social viewpoint it bubbled up inside of him from the guilt of his own soul. He knows he is a sinful man. He believes that this man has the power of God. He has the faith, as a sinner, to put himself in the presence of a holy God and take his chances, and he is afraid.

That's why the Lord says to him, "Don't be afraid." "Take courage" simply means stop being afraid.

There's nothing to fear.

The man is afraid because he's a sinner.

But how wonderfully does the Lord say to him, "Child," a word of tenderness.

How thrilling to face the Holy One with terror and fear and hear Him say, "Child."

That's the tenderness of Christ, to love the sinner, even though he was offended by his sin.

"Be of good cheer," or, "Take courage."

There is plenty to fear if you come before God as a sinner without repentance.

But there was nothing to fear when this man came, because he had a broken and a contrite heart.

It is not the one who tries to hide his sin who has nothing to fear, it is the one who reveals it that has nothing to fear. He was shaken with grief; he was overcome with fear.

V 2, *He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you."*

A divine miracle.

What an eloquent statement by the Lord?

Remember now, the man had never said a word.

How did the Lord know that's what he wanted?

Because the Lord knows the heart.

All through this whole account He reads the heart.

He read the heart of the man who was sick.

He reads the hearts of those scribes.

He can read the heart of anybody.

He knows the request before it's ever asked, the giver of all good gives before we even articulate it.

Except Jesus no one speaks in this miracle!

This is the remission of sins that the Bible talks about. This is salvation. This is forgiveness, full and complete.

Sins are sent away.

He says, "Dismissed."

Psalm 103:12, *As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.*

Hebrews 8:12, *For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.*"

1 Timothy 1:13-15, *although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.¹⁴ And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.¹⁵ This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*

2. Forgiven.

When the missionaries went to Eskimos and wanted to translate the New Testament into their language, they found that there was no word in the Eskimo language for forgiveness.

They were stuck because that's the major message of Christianity. But they found that the Eskimos had a very interesting phrase.

The word is ***issumagijoujunnainermik***. That's all one word in Eskimo.

“Not being able to think about it anymore.”

They use that all through the Bible for the word for forgiveness. God is not able to think about it anymore. He has removed it. He has dismissed it. He forgave his sins.

The Lord gave to him the greatest gift meant to deal with the greatest need.

The deepest need and grief in a human life. When Jesus said, “*Your sins are removed,*” he met that man’s need in the deepest, most profound way.

This is the message of Christianity.

It is the forgiveness of sin.

We must know that our message must be about sin and about the forgiveness of sin.

People may say that you shouldn’t bring up sin. It is negative thinking. It’s the message of Christianity. If we don’t preach that message, we have prostituted our message.

1 John 3:4-5, *Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. ⁵And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.*

Sin is defiling. It has blotted out God's image and stained the soul. Sin has planted in us the devil's image.

Sin is rebellion against God. Sin is gross ingratitude to God. Sin is incurable.

Jeremiah 13:23, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil.*

Sin affects all men.

Romans 3:23, *"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."*

Sin is deep in the heart of man; even regenerate man still fights against sin.

Sin dominates the mind.

It perverts the will,

It stains the affections,

It pollutes the body.

Sin brings man under the dominion of the devil. It brings man under the power of the wrath of God.

The best news you could ever give them is that God can forgive sin and does forgive.

This man is living proof.

When Jesus said, “*your sins are forgiven you,*” I believe in that moment, thrust into His great heart was another taste of Calvary, because he knew that the only way, He could forgive the man’s sin was to bear the man’s sin.

Jesus tasted the bitterness and the agony of the cross. All through His life, every time He forgave sin, He knew full well He would bear the punishment that He had removed from that helpless soul.

3. Anger.

V 3, *And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, “This Man blasphemes!”*

Luke 5:17, *Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present ^{to} to heal them.*

Mark 2:6-7, *And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, “Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”*

The first man, the crippled man, wanted forgiveness. All these men concluded was He is a blasphemer.

Why?

What's the difference?

Didn't they want forgiveness?

No, because they never really knew they had a need.

They wouldn't acknowledge it.

Just like the woman taken in adultery.

Jesus offers forgiveness to adulterous woman and all these Pharisees. She stays, and they all leave. It's been going on like that for a long time.

You can preach a message on forgiveness, and some will stay and open their heart to Christ, and some will leave. They are not interested.

They don't know the need.

They don't recognize the problem.

They are not willing to accept the forgiveness.

They say, Only God can forgive sin, this man then, in saying He forgives sin is claiming to be God, and He is a blasphemer.

To say things worthy of God only could be ascribed to you would be the ultimate blasphemy.

You know, they were right about the first half.

Only God can forgive sin.

Isaiah 43:25, *“I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.*

God can forgive sin, and He alone.

They were right about that, but they were wrong about Christ because He was God.

V 3, *And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, “This Man blasphemes!”*

Mark 2:6, *And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts,*

They didn’t even speak but Jesus read their thoughts.

This is another mark of the omniscience of Christ.

He knew what was in the heart of the sick man.

He knew what was in the mind and the thinking of these others as well.

He could read minds because Jesus is God.

“This Man blasphemes,”

This just began to build the fire that ultimately led them to crucify Christ.

They are accusing Him of immorality. He runs around with a bad crowd. He must be a bad man.

Matthew 9:3, *And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!"*

He is a blasphemer, and He is immoral.

Matthew 9:11, *And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"*

They accused Him here of being irreligious.

Matthew 9:14, *Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?"*

They really are beginning to fume.

Matthew 9:34, *But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons."*

Finally, He is satanic.

What a contrast?

On the one hand, the faith, and the forgiveness.

On the other hand, the fury, and Christ in the middle.

Always that is the way.

Christ comes with a message of love and grace and forgiveness. There are those who know it and receive rejoice in it, and there are those who hate it and despise it and become infuriated by it.

4. Argument.

Jesus presents an argument for what He did. He doesn't always defend His action, but He does here because there's an important truth.

V 4, *But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?"*

Jesus, knowing their thoughts!

People come and say that Jesus isn't God. Well, then I don't know how He knew their thoughts.

John 2:24-25, *But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men,²⁵ and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.*

Anybody who knows the thoughts must be God.

1 Samuel 16:7, *But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."*

1 Kings 8:39, *then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and act, and give to everyone according to all his ways, whose heart You know (for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men),*

1 Chronicles 28:9, *"As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.*

Jeremiah 17:10, *I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.*

Ezekiel 11:5, *Then the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said to me, "Speak! 'Thus says the Lord: "Thus you have said, O house of Israel; for I know the things that come into your mind.*

God knows everything.

We think and Jesus knew what they were thinking.

V 4, *But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?"*

Why do you want me dead?

Evil heart is a heart that plots against God.

In **Acts 5**, **Ananias and Sapphira** tried to deceive God. **Peter** said, "Why has Satan entered your heart to deceive God?"

In **Acts 8**, **Simon** tried to deceive God.

V 5, *For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'?*

Which is easier?

Notice they don't give any answer.

There is no answer because neither is easier.

- Both are impossible to men.
- Both are possible to God.

They knew they couldn't say either one, but He could say both.

He can do either with the same divine ease.

They are both just as easy to Him.

God doesn't sweat doing anything.

- ✓ Only God can heal.
- ✓ Only God can forgive.

They were the ones who taught that disease and sickness was a result of sin.

The two things were inseparable:

One who could heal diseases could forgive sin.

One who could forgive sin could heal disease.

"Which is easier? To forgive or to heal?"

Both are impossible to them.

Our Lord is saying to them that if I can do one, I can do the other.

If I can do the other, I am not a blasphemer but God.

They were trapped.

They knew He could heal.

Just shows you that their rejections were a wilful rejection against the truth. If Jesus put away sickness, disease, and demons, and disasters, and death. You could certainly deal with sin.

V 5, *For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'?*

Which is easier to do?

Neither one!

Which is easier to say?

Easier to say is to your sins are forgiven.

If one of you walks up, I could say to you, "Your sins be forgiven." It can't be proven. It's easy to say.

But if one of you rolls up in a wheelchair, and I say, "Rise up and walk," that's going to be easy to verify that I can't do that.

It's easier to say, "Your sins be forgiven you," if that's all you are going to do is say it.

V 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."*

If all Jesus said was, "Your sins be forgiven," they would never know that He did it. But when He says, "Rise up and walk," and the guy rises up and walks, and He has the power to do that, the only thing they conclude is that He must have forgiven His sins because the two are inseparably linked.

It's a demonstration.

The same thing when Jesus cast the demons out of the man at Gadara. He sent them into the pigs.

Why?

Because if he had of just said, "Demons leave," nobody would have known whether they left or where they went. But when they saw 2,000 pigs take a dive off a cliff and drown at the sea. They knew exactly what had happened. That the demons had entered those pigs, which proved the point that He had cleansed those two men.

Here is the same thing.

Jesus healing the man is a proof of His power to forgive. But it was the forgiveness that was the root and the disease that was the symptom. If He could do one, He could do the other.

Any pretender can come along and say, "Your sin is forgiven." Jesus proves it by doing the visible, He manifests the power to do the invisible. The man was only healed incidentally as a proof of Jesus' ability to forgive his sin.

5. Power.

V 7, *And he arose and departed to his house*

Here's four friends out with their heads through the roof as they were watching. The people are listening. The Pharisees haven't said a word.

Nobody has talked but Jesus.

But Jesus read their hearts and nailed them to the wall with his argument.

Now Jesus says, "Get up and go home."

The guy gets up, rolls up his little bed under his arm, picks up the little wood frame, and you believe that an aisle was instantly created as that guy walked out of that place.

When he got outside, can you imagine what went on when his four buddies came tripping down the stairs on the outside?

They had some kind of trip home.

What power.

Jesus has the power to forgive your sin.

Application.

V 8, *Now when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.*

The Greek word *phobeō*, *phobos* from which we get *phobia*, fear. They were afraid. *“they glorified God.”*

They knew God was there, God was in their midst, and that He had given such power to men.

They knew he was a man, but they knew that God was in that man. I don't think they understood the fullness of all that the God/Man incarnation meant. But they knew God was there, and that He had given power unto that man, and they were afraid.

Isn't that the same reaction we have seen all along?

Phobeō. Several meanings in classical Greek, but the one that is used most in the New Testament is the word for awe or reverence.

What is it?

It's the kind of fear that someone feels in the presence of one who is infinitely superior.

It is used in the New Testament gives its definition.

- It is used of the reaction of the disciples when they saw **Jesus' walking on the water.**
- It is used of the reaction of the disciples when **Jesus calmed the storm.**

- It is used of the reaction of the people after the healing of this man.
- It is used after the raising of the **widow's son at Nain**.
- It is used after the delivering the demon possessed man.
- It is used of the feeling of Zacharias when he saw an angel of the Lord beside the altar, and it is used of the spectators when **Zacharias** recovered his speech in **Luke 1**.
- It is used of the **shepherds** when they heard the song of the angels.
- It is used of the **guards at the tomb** when the angel rolled the stone away.
- It is used of the women as they went home after seeing the **empty tomb**.
- It is used of the feelings in men's hearts when they saw the signs and wonders and felt the power of the early **Church in Acts 3**.
- It is used of the reaction of the people to the death of **Ananias and Sapphira**.
- It is used of the discomfited Gentile exorcists at **Ephesus in Acts chapter 19**.

It is awe, reverence, the fear of God.

Beloved, we should so be in awe of Christ.

Acts 9:31, *Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.*

It is essential that we be in awe of Him.

Why?

You see the power of God and the fear in the Gospels.

You see the power of God and the fear in the acts.

As the epistles unfold, they apply that response to our behaviour.

For example, it is the source of a chaste life.

1 Peter 3:2, *when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.*

It is the source of holiness.

2 Corinthians 7:1, *Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

2 Corinthians 7:11, *For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.*

Philippians 2:12, *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;*

Ephesians 5:21, *submitting to one another in the fear of God.*

2 Corinthians 5:11, *Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.*

1 Timothy 5:20, *Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.*

This fear, this ***Phobeō***, this referential awe of God is the substance out of which all Christian behaviour is to come.

They glorify God, and so should we.

But they did it because they feared God, they revered, they were in awe of His presence.

That's the right response. I hope you have such awe of Christ.

So, Jesus forgives sin. The greatest message we must give.

All I can say to you is I hope you have had that forgiveness.

When the crowd was split, there were those who were forgiven and those who were furious. It doesn't tell us about another group, but they were there, too. Those who were fickle. They just took it in and walked away.

Christ offers forgiveness, blots out all the past, washes away all sin's past, present, future – the greatest news you will ever have. It's available to you.