

Send It - Week 1

Faith - Jim Burgen

February 20, 2022

Group Creed

We come together as a Group with the goal of Spiritual Formation--encouraging one another to become the same kind of person that Jesus is, so that we can live out every part of our lives inside of His Kingdom.

// Bible References

Mark 2:1-8; Romans 8:31-32; Hebrews 11:1.

// Message Summary

This Sunday we began a new, 5-week series on one of the most important topics in the Bible: faith. Pastor Jim explained how we can usually substitute the word “faith” for similar words, like “trust”, “believe”, “confidence” and “assurance”. We read the story of Jesus healing the paralytic man after seeing the great faith of his friends, as they lowered him through the roof of a house to get him to the feet of the Great Healer. Our faith - or our confidence that something we hope for will come to pass - is not based on blind hope, but on past experience. We have confidence in a thing (the brakes on our car, for example) because we have not been let down by it before. We can also have confidence that God will fulfill His promises to us in the future, because He has kept all of His promises to us in the past - especially through the death and resurrection of His Son.

// Biblical and Historical Context

All three writers of the synoptic gospels relay the story of the paralytic man healed by Jesus in the small fishing town of Capernaum (Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26). It’s likely that the home Jesus was teaching in was Peter’s house, and it was crowded with eager listeners. Like most homes in the Palestine region, Peter’s home probably had a flat roof which provided an area for relaxation during the day or sleeping on hot summer nights. There was usually an external stairwell that would allow access to the roof from outside the home, and the friends of the paralytic man would have taken him up this stairwell to enter the home from the roof and avoid the crowded ground floor. Jesus’ subsequent forgiveness of the disabled man’s sins would not have been entirely unexpected, as many Jewish people thought that disease and affliction was a direct consequence of sin. In their minds, to heal the man of his injuries, Jesus would have had to forgive him of the sins that first brought about his sickness. But by doing both - forgiving the man,

and He healing his disorder - Jesus performed the invisible and the visible miracles, showing that He is truly God and worthy of our trust and confidence.

// Community Questions

1. If you had to pick one person to help you escape from a desert island, flee from an erupting volcano, or run from marauding velociraptors, who would it be and why?
2. When you want to give up, who encourages you to keep going?

// Discussion Questions

1. As a group, read Mark 2:1-12. What do you find interesting? What questions does this passage raise?
2. Jesus said, "I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." Why would His act of healing help people trust His act of forgiveness?
3. Think about a time when God has proven worthy of faith. Share it with the group.
4. When Jim was reflecting on his own faith, he said:

"God may do some good stuff in my life - and I hope that He does and I'm going to keep asking to do it. But, my faith cannot rest on what God might or might not do today."

Why can't our faith rest solely on what God may or may not do today?

5. Three characteristics of a trustworthy person are:
 - a. **honesty** ("I **will** do for you what I say I will do"),
 - b. **ability** ("I **can** do for you what I say I will do"), and
 - c. **benevolence** ("I **want** to do for you what I say I will do").

Think about these attributes of a trustworthy person. How do they relate to a trustworthy God?

// Challenge

Consider an area of your life that you would like God to involve Himself. Think about all the ways you would like God to intervene and act.

Are you prepared to trust God, even if He doesn't act the way that you would like Him to act? Ask God to help you trust Him to protect you and provide for you even when He is moving in ways that you don't understand.