

INVESTIGATIVE BIBLE DISCUSSION

Luke 5:17-21

[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?"

Questions

1. Highlight the main and minor characters
2. Where or when does the story take place?
3. What are the key events, activities or ideas presented in this passage?
4. How did the characters respond to Jesus personally, to what he said, or to what they saw?
5. How is Jesus described (by himself or others, claims made, character traits displayed)?
6. What values were taught/demonstrated by Jesus?
7. What truths/principles, were taught or demonstrated by Jesus?
8. What conclusions or observations can you draw?

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BACKGROUND

This incident takes place in a house in Capernaum. Capernaum was the headquarters of Jesus' ministry in Galilee. The house was filled with a variety of people who listened and watched. The Pharisees observed Jesus to determine if his claims were legitimate.

KEY WORDS

Pharisee: The most strict and influential of three prominent societies of Judaism at the time of Christ. They were experts in the interpretation of Scripture and were considered the religious leaders.

Teachers of the Law: Often called scribes, these men studied, taught, interpreted, and transmitted the Mosaic Law. God's real law was often buried beneath tradition.

Blasphemy: To speak lightly or carelessly of God was a mortal sin. In Israel the penalty was death by stoning.

Son of Man: A phrase rooted in the Old Testament view of the Messiah; used by Christ to describe himself.