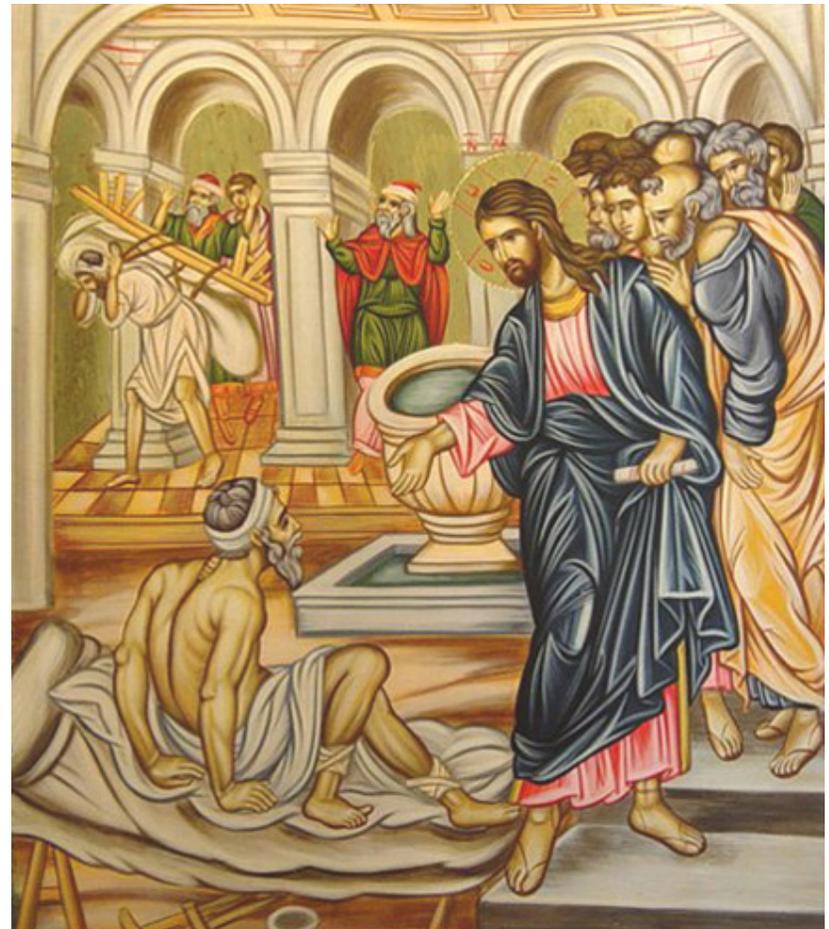


THINK ABOUT IT ...

1. People who did not understand that Christ could heal people and had healed the paralytic, criticized the man because:
 - A. He should have waited for them to put him in the pool.
 - B. He was carrying his bed, and they thought he was working, and work should not be done on the Sabbath.
 - C. They thought the man did not deserve to be healed.
 - D. They thought he was not telling the truth and he couldn't be the same man who was paralyzed.
2. The Orthodox Church considers sin:
 - A. Punishment
 - B. Spiritual sickness
 - C. Condemnation
 - D. None of the above
3. Who forgives us our sins in the Sacrament of Confession?
 - A. The Priest
 - B. People who we offended
 - C. Christ Himself
 - D. The Bishop
4. Forgiveness of sins and Christ's help to us is called:
 - A. Mercy
 - B. Judgement
 - C. Sacrifice
 - D. Penance
5. Christ told the man who He healed "*Rise, take up your bed and walk*" and "*Sin no more.*" The lesson in this is that after we have repented and confessed our sins:
 - A. We are ok whatever we do until the next Confession.
 - B. We are expected to try very hard to improve our behavior.
 - C. We will be punished if we sin again.
 - D. We shouldn't carry beds because we will hurt ourselves.

Sunday of the Paralytic



KONTAKION

Tone 3

By Your divine intercession, O Lord,
as You raised up the paralytic of old,
so raise up my soul, paralyzed by sins and thoughtless acts;
so that being saved I may sing to You:
“Glory to Your power, O compassionate Christ!”

CHRIST -- THE PHYSICIAN OF OUR SOULS

From the Gospel of John 5:1-15

During a feast day, Jesus went to Jerusalem.

In Jerusalem there was a pool called in Hebrew, Bethesda. In those days, an angel went at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first was made well of whatever disease he had. So, many sick persons went there: people who were blind, lame, or paralyzed.

There was a certain man there who had an illness for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"

The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me."

Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked.

That day was the Sabbath, so the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed." He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'" Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" But the one who was healed did not know who it was, because Jesus had left that place.

Afterward Jesus found the man in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, or a worse thing might happen to you."

The man left and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

St. Michael's Orthodox Church, Jermyn, Pennsylvania

In the Orthodox Church, sins are called "spiritual sickness."

The healing of the paralyzed man teaches us that Christ heals not only physical sickness but more importantly that He heals spiritual sickness.

Christ said to the man, "*See, you have been made well. Sin no more, or a worse thing might happen to you.*"

What was the "worse thing" that Christ warned the man about?

Christ was NOT threatening the man with another physical illness. God does NOT punish persons that way.

He WAS saying that there are two kinds of paralysis:

-- physical paralysis: a person can't move physically

-- **spiritual paralysis: a person isn't moving spiritually**

God created people with both a body and a soul. From the time we are babies, God helps us to grow both physically and spiritually. When we grow spiritually, we **move closer to God**.

We know that if we don't take care of our bodies, we will not grow physically into healthy adults.

We have to take care of our souls too. When we do our best to move away from sin, we grow in **spiritual health**. When we are spiritually healthy, we have the **freedom to move to do the right things**.

Christ healed the paralyzed man because He had mercy on him. "Mercy" means that Jesus understands that all people have weaknesses and is always ready to help us, whether our weakness is physical or spiritual.

In the Orthodox Church, the **Sacrament of Confession** enables us to examine our conscience, repent of things we have done wrong, receive forgiveness, and move forward to do better.

The Sacrament of Confession heals us from "spiritual paralysis." When we are sorry for what we have done wrong (repentance), we are forgiven of our past sins -- we then move forward and **grow as spiritually healthy persons**.