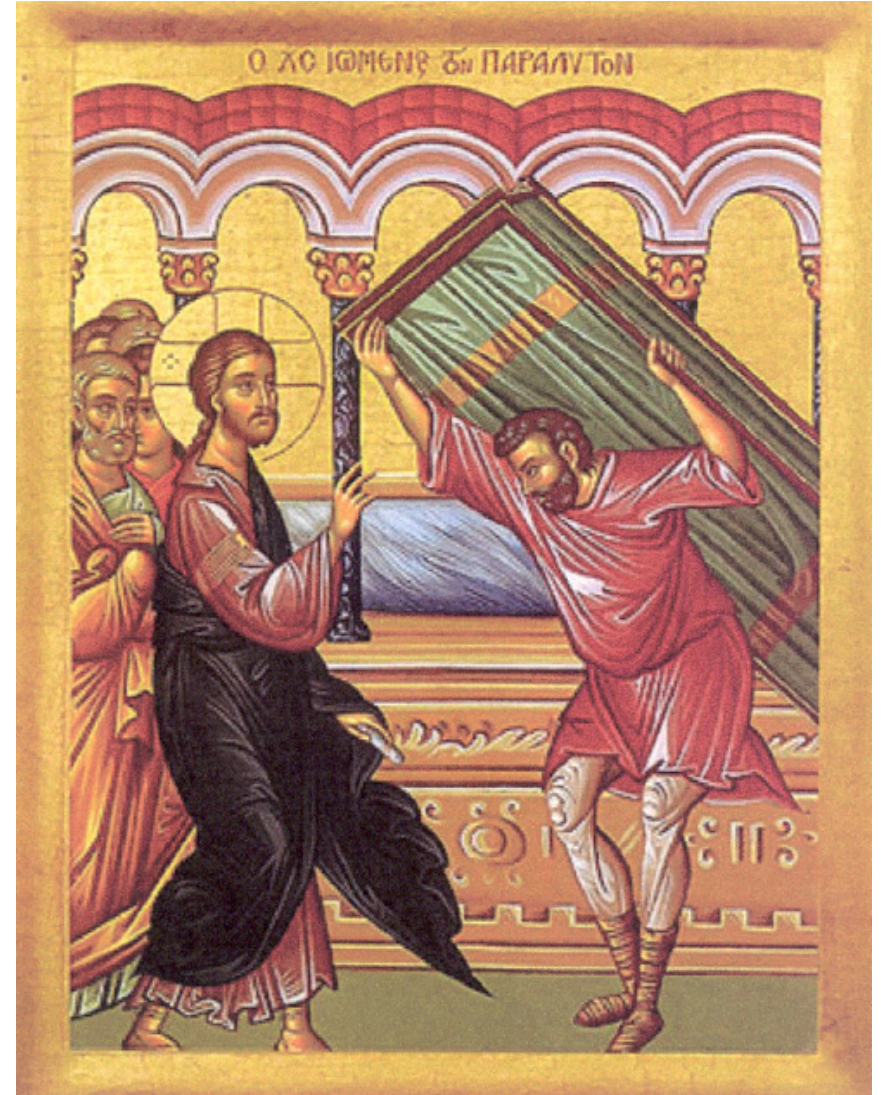


THINK ABOUT IT ...

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 wasn't really paralyzed.
2. The Orthodox Church considers sin:
 - A. Punishment
 - B. Spiritual sickness
 - C. Condemnation
 - D. Not very important
3. Who forgives us our sins in the Sacrament of Confession?
 - A. Any Priest
 - B. Special Deacons
 - C. Christ Himself
 - D. Only a Bishop
4. Forgiveness of sins and every time Christ helps us is called:
 - A. Mercy
 - B. Judgement
 - C. Sacrifice
 - D. Penance
5. Christ told the man whom 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

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 Bethesda. In those days, an angel went at certain times into the pool and stirred the water. Then whoever stepped in first was made well. Many sick persons went there who were blind, lame, or paralyzed.

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

The man answered, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I try to come, someone always gets in before me."

Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk." And immediately the man was made well, he walked and carried his bed. (At that time in history most beds were like a folding cot.)

That day was the Sabbath, so the Jews said to the man, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed." (People were not allowed to do any kind of work on the Sabbath.) He answered, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'"

Then they asked him, "Who said that to you?" But he did not know who it was, because Jesus had already 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.

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 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.**