



# The Power of Faith

## *Glory to Jesus Christ!*

Popularity has a powerful effect on people. Whether you seek it or run from it, popularity can create or destroy friendships.

**Jesus Christ was popular** and the crowds flocked to Him. They wanted to hear His words, receive healing, and be changed by **encountering Him**.

## *Jesus is in the House*

Scripture tells us that as more people became aware of Jesus, their desire led people to do radical things.

They rejected social expectations, climbed trees, and even tore the roof of houses, just to get closer to Him. What would you do to **get closer to Christ**?

## *Is Jesus in our Church?*

Our church is often called the House of God - not that God needs a place to live - but as the **center of our spiritual community**. It is the place where we come together as Orthodox Christians to worship and praise God in a **unity of Faith**.

Our faith in God generates a desire to be in church. Why do you want to hear God's words in the gospel and **receive His Body and Blood** in the Eucharist?

## *Is Jesus in our Home?*

The spiritual nourishment we receive in **the liturgy sustains us** in our homes throughout the week. When we bring God home from church, His teachings and instructions can **inspire our actions** with our families and neighbors.

How does being involved in **the liturgy inspire you** as an Orthodox Christian in your home and communities?

## *Is Jesus in our Heart?*

God can't live in a box, kept on a shelf until Sunday morning or moments when we need help. We need to allow God to live in our heart, mind, and soul every day.

When **God is in our thoughts**, we can turn from negative ideas. When **God is in our actions**, we can offer help to those in need. When **God is in our heart**, our Faith can move mountains.

Our faith needs to be nurtured, becoming as strong like the men who ripped open the roof for their friend to see Jesus. What are you willing to do to **strengthen your faith to get closer to Christ**?

## *Scripture Readings*

for the Second Sunday of Lent:  
St. Gregory Palamas

Epistle: **Hebrews 1:10-2:3**

Gospel: **Mark 2:1-12**

## *Hymns of the Day*

for the Second Sunday of Lent:  
St. Gregory Palamas

## **Troparion (St. Gregory) - Tone 8**

O light of Orthodoxy, teacher of the Church, its confirmation, O ideal of monks and invincible champion of theologians, O wonder-working Gregory, glory of Thessalonica and preacher of grace, always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved.

## **Kontakion (Triodion) - Tone 4**

Now is the time for action! Judgment is at the doors! So let us rise and fast, offering alms with tears of compunction and crying: "Our sins are more in number than the sands of the sea; but forgive us, O Master of All, so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns."

## **Kontakion (St. Gregory) - Tone 8**

Holy and divine instrument of wisdom, joyful trumpet of theology, together we sing your praises, O God-inspired Gregory.

Since you now stand before the Original Mind, guide our minds to Him, O Father, so that we may sing to you: "Rejoice, preacher of grace."

Parents, Church School Teachers & Youth Directors:  
Watch for the ☞ to indicate topics/questions you can use to inspire conversations with youth. Or use the corresponding study guide for this resource.

# Scripture in my Life

## What do these readings mean for me?

Ages 11-13 (Grades 6-8)

Today's reading (Mark 2:1-12) is one we've heard before - Jesus tells a story about a man who is robbed and beaten. After being ignored by his own people, a foreigner, a Samaritan, stops to help him with generosity. This message is intended for us. Let's explore the message of the parable and see how we can be a Good Samaritan in our lives.

**Instructions:** *In pairs or small groups, read each verse of today's gospel lesson, then answer the corresponding questions, using the back of this page to write down your answers. Come together as a class to share and discuss the reading and your life.*

1. A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them.

*What does Jesus do to attract such large crowds? How would we react if we lived at that time? How do we react about coming to church?*

2. Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them.  
*The men were truly friends of the paralyzed man, helping him - how do we help those in need?*

3. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on.  
*How much effort do the men make to help their friend? How far would you go to help others encounter Jesus Christ? Do you?*

4. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."  
*Why does Jesus say this? Is this what the men wanted for their friend? How do we react when God answers our prayers in unexpected ways?*

5. Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"  
*The teachers judge Christ, not recognizing that He is God. Do we judge others without knowing the full story? Do we judge God when our prayers aren't answered in exactly the way we want? Explain why it's important not to judge others.*

6. Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, “Why are you thinking these things?”  
*As God, Jesus Christ is all knowing. How would Jesus respond to your behavior? What habits can you change to become more like Christ?*
  
7. Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’?  
*Jesus wants us to be like Him, merciful towards others - He knows that forgiving sins is difficult, yet He shows us it is possible. What can you do when struggling to forgive someone an offense? How can your faith in God help you be merciful?*
  
8. But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.  
*Jesus forgives sins because He is God. How can the sacrament of confession help us make a change in our efforts to “sin no more”?*
  
9. So he said to the man, “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.”  
*Jesus frees the man of sin and then frees him of his physical suffering. How does this reveal that Jesus is the Son of God? (Read Matthew 11:4-5)*
  
10. He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all.  
*How was this man’s life changed by encountering Jesus Christ? How does participating in the liturgy or reading scripture shape your life?*
  
11. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”  
*How would you react if witnessing a miracle of God? Do you need to see a miracle to have faith in God? Explain your answer.*