

## SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC MAN

Christ is risen! Dear brothers and sisters!

Easter songs are heard in all our temples, announcing the most important event in the history of salvation - the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Very inspiringly, and with great exaltation, we continue to sing the troparion of the feast, "Christ is risen from the dead, by death he conquered death, and to those in the tombs, he granted life."

Every Sunday after Easter, the task is to affirm our faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, our faith in our salvation and eternal life. On these Sundays, the Church reads the Gospel stories of Jesus' miraculous healing of the sick, the conversion of sinners, which are proof of His divinity, and the greatest proof of the divinity of Jesus Christ was His resurrection as a sign of final victory over death. It is faith in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, by the power of His divinity, that assures us that we believe in Him, a personal victory over sin and all evil, and over all kinds of difficulties in life.

On the third Sunday after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we read the story of Jesus' healing of a man, in Jerusalem, who had been paralyzed for 38 years. After his recovery, Jesus met the man in the temple, in Jerusalem, and said to him, "...See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse befall you" (Jn 5:14).

In the healing of the paralytic man, we see how God reveals even more deeply the mystery of His mercy. The Son of God not only meets those who seek Him, but He Himself seeks a sick man and miraculously heals him, seeing in his heart an unquenchable ray of hope for God's help.

Like this paralytic man, we Christians often come to the temple for personal prayer, for worship, to listen to God's teaching, and to enjoy the Holy Mysteries. And it is worth asking one question: how do we get out of the temple. During worship, Christ meets us through the words of the Gospel and speaks to us, and then unites us in Holy Communion. In this way Jesus tries to enter our lives.

One young mother gave birth to a boy. But doctors said the child had an incurable disease and had no chance of surviving. The mother, however, did not cope with the sad statement of doctors. Then, in tears, she asked the doctors to allow her to stay in the ward with her son. The doctors allowed her to stay with her son to appease her. She sat by her child's bed day and night and prayed quietly all the time. Time passed, and the child continued to improve. Then the doctors did an examination and found that the child was completely healthy. The young mother asked the doctor in surprise: "It's a miracle, what drug cured him?" "It's not a miracle. He was cured by maternal love," said an experienced doctor.

The Lord loves us. When we find in biblical descriptions how He heals people, He first heals their souls. We know that man consists of three parts: spirit, soul, and body. The Spirit is responsible for our fellowship with God. Our soul, according to the teachings of the Church, is our mind, feelings, and will. So that the mind does not leave us, so that all the senses obey us, and our will remains directed only to God and good, and we must not allow anything evil to possess us.

In other words, Christ tells us:

Arise, and be just yourself.

Get up and be loyal to others.

Do not expect help from others, but help yourself.

Don't wait for others to change this world, but start changing it yourself.

Do not blame people that they are the cause of your misfortunes, but start making your neighbors happy yourself.

What, then, will anyone gain by winning the whole world and forfeiting his life? Or what can anyone offer in exchange for his life? (Matt. 16:26)

These words tell us that even the whole world, with all its richness and greatness, has no such value as the human soul. And the real wealth of man, as well as his happiness, is not the possession of the whole world, but the human soul. Not even the whole world, and its possessions, can make a person happy. A person can be happy only when they have a pure and not enslaved soul.

Because people have ruined their souls, they seek happiness in owning the world and other people. We repeatedly force others to make us happy, satisfy our whims, and fulfill our desires. We want even the laws of nature to obey us. We want even God to always listen to us and give us what we ask for. We are unhappy because we ourselves are not able to bring into this world, and into human life truth, love, peace, and good.

Dear believers, may the Lord help us, with His Divine power, to be bearers of truth, love, peace, and good in this world, and free from all spiritual shackles and enslavements.