



The Journey
Week of 04.21.13

I Was As Good As Dead: Stuck

by Andrew Blackburn

I don't like failing. I don't know many people who do, I guess, but my fear of failure has some pretty real implications on my life. I don't like saying the wrong thing. I don't like doing the wrong thing. I don't like doing the right thing in the wrong way. I just don't like being wrong. And sometimes, I'm so afraid of doing the wrong thing that I don't do anything at all. Sometimes I'm so afraid of failing, I feel paralyzed—I feel stuck.

Do you ever feel that way? Do you ever feel like you know you should be doing something, and maybe you even know what that something is, but you just can't get yourself to do it? Do you ever feel stuck? I'm guessing we all feel that way sometimes. And while we might all have different reasons for feeling paralyzed or stuck, I think we can trace most of them back to one common thread: fear.

Fear is one of Satan's biggest weapons against us, isn't it? He knows that the areas where we have fear are the areas where we're weakest. So he preys on them. He goes after them relentlessly. Because Satan is cunning—he knows that he doesn't need to convince us to commit some horrible sin. All he needs to do is keep us from what God wants us to do. And by hitting us in the areas where we're weak, he can paralyze us—he can get us stuck.

The good news for us is that Jesus can bring us strength in the areas where Satan wants to attack us the hardest. In fact, the way Jesus looks at our problems is a little bit funny. For example, a group of men brought their friend to him who was physically paralyzed and asked him for healing, which seems like the kind of thing Jesus would do. But what does Jesus say to the paralyzed man? "Son, your sins are forgiven." (Mark 2:5) Then, later (after rebuking some teachers of the law for doubting him), he tells the man to get up and walk. As if it's an afterthought: "Your sins are forgiven. And, oh right, that paralysis thing. I'll take care of that, too."

This isn't Jesus being insensitive. It's Jesus giving us a glimpse at how difficult our problems look to him. In that passage, he says, "Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk?'" (Mark 2:9). It's pretty clear what he's saying: this man's problem, the thing that literally had him paralyzed, was easy for Jesus to fix. And that's true of us, too. The things that Satan uses to attack us—that make us feel paralyzed or stuck—are waaaaay within Jesus' power to fix. All we have to do is ask..

*"The Lord is my light and my salvation
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life—
of whom shall I be afraid?"*

Psalm 27:1

Week's Overview: In Jesus we find deliverance, forgiveness, healing, joy, and life. So why do we sometimes still feel stuck in old habits, problems, or difficulties?

monday 4.22

Read: [Mark 2:1-12](#)

Study: Here we see Jesus healing a paralyzed man, but not in the way we'd expect him to. What is Jesus getting at with the question he asks the teachers of the law? How would this have challenged their normal way of thinking? How does it challenge ours?

Personal: What areas in your life do you need to present to Jesus for healing? Do you believe he can heal you as easily as he healed this man?

tuesday 4.23

Read: [1 Corinthians 3:1-3](#)

Study: How does the Apostle Paul describe the "stuck" spiritual condition of the Corinthian church? What does he identify as the cause(s)?

Personal: What similar (or not so similar) barriers might be hindering or keeping your spiritual growth stuck? What will you do to get unstuck? Find someone you trust to talk with to help you get unstuck.

wednesday 4.24

Read: [Psalm 32](#)

Study: How does David describe "being stuck" in this passage? Notice that in verse 5, David says that God not only forgave his sin, but the *guilt* of his sin. Do you think this is significant? Why or why not?

Personal: It's often easy for us to believe in our heads that God has forgiven our sins, but still carry guilt for them in our hearts. Is this true in your life? If so, what guilt do you need to take before God and be healed of? How would such healing help you, or anyone for that matter, get unstuck?

thursday 4.25

Read: [Mark 5:25-34](#)

Study: This woman was healed just by touching Jesus' robe. She didn't even talk to him before she was healed. What does this say about Jesus' power to heal the areas of our life that are broken? What can we learn from this about His power? And what does Jesus' response tell us about Him?

Personal: Jesus has the power to heal us, but sometimes reaching out to Him is the hardest part. What things, if any, get in the way of you reaching out to Jesus to receive His healing?

friday-sunday 4.26-4.28

Read: [1 John 1:5-10](#)

Study: This passage reveals an important point about God's forgiveness: we have to ask for it and admit we need it. How can we "walk in the light," as is referenced in this passage? What does it look like to do that, but not "claim to be without sin"?

Personal: What does this look like in your life? Are there areas of sin that you need to bring into the light by confessing to God and/or another person you trust? What will you do about that?

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grow (resources to help you in your study)

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