

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

(Mark 2:1-12)

Introduction

How many of you have a really good friend? What is it that you like most about your friend? [Teacher, discuss the importance of having friends.] If you were looking for a friend, what quality would you look for in that person? [Help the children discover words such as honest, fun, caring, interesting, etc.] Why are these qualities important?

There are times when everyone needs a good friend. The man in our story today needed some good friends to help him with a very difficult problem.

Opening Prayer

Father, we want to listen very carefully this morning so that we might learn how to be a better friend. And then give us a desire in our hearts to choose good friends. Most of all we want our friendship with You to deepen and strengthen. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. (John 15:12).

Lesson

One day, Jesus returned to His home town of Capernaum which is on the Sea of Galilee. Many people crowded into a house to hear Jesus preach.

Mark 2:1-3

When Jesus returned to Capernaum several days later, the news spread quickly that he was back home. (2) Soon the house where he was staying was so packed with visitors that there was no more room, even

outside the door. While he was preaching God's word to them, (3) four men arrived carrying a paralyzed man on a mat.

Do you know what it means to be paralyzed? [Teacher, discuss with children.] What kind of a life do you think a paralytic has? What kinds of problems do you supposed this man had?

He could not get up and walk, like other people. He was dependent on his friends. His friends knew he was miserable and they wanted to take him to Jesus to be healed. But they couldn't get near Jesus because of the great crowd in the house where He was speaking.

Mark 2:4

They couldn't bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, so they dug a hole through the roof above his head. Then they lowered the man on his mat, right down in front of Jesus.

Did the friends of the paralyzed man turn around and go home when they saw how crowded it was? No! They knew their friend needed Jesus.

How disappointed these four men must have been when there seemed to be no way to get their friend to Jesus. It would have been easy to give up—the situation looked impossible. But even though everything looked impossible, these four men kept looking for a way to get their friend to the Lord Jesus. And because they really loved their friend, they were willing to do whatever it took to get their friend to Jesus! They knew that only Jesus could give their friend what he needed!

Houses in Jesus' day commonly had tile roofs. These four men were sure Jesus would help if they could only reach Him. So, they lifted him up on the roof of the house, cot and all, peeled back the tile roof and lowered him in on ropes down in front of Jesus!

Perhaps you have a friend who needs the Lord Jesus in a special way. Do you know someone right now who is sick and needs Jesus to either heal him or give him extra courage and joy through his suffering? Maybe someone you care about is having a hard time at home or school? [Teacher, this may be due to loss of a family

member through death or divorce, possibility of moving away, or failing grades.] Do you know anyone who is discouraged or upset? Do you know anyone who needs God's peace to quiet their inside hurts and fears? Perhaps someone you love is not a Christian and they need to trust the Lord Jesus as their Savior from sin.

Do you know someone that needs Jesus? If you are a real friend, you will do whatever it takes to help, even if it takes extra time and effort.

When Jesus saw the man, He said something that surprised everyone.

Mark 2:5

Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "My child, your sins are forgiven."

Jesus didn't lay hands on the man and pray for his healing, He said, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." Why do you think that was what Jesus did first? (Because a spiritual healing is of greater need and importance than the physical healing.)

Who's faith did Jesus see, that of the four men or that of the paralytic? Why do you think that when Jesus saw the faith of the four men, He forgave the sins of the paralytic? [Teacher, here's something for you to think about: on the basis of whose faith was the man healed? Does a healing only happen when someone has faith?]

Now there were some Jewish religious leaders in the crowd listening.

Mark 2:6-7

But some of the teachers of religious law who were sitting there thought to themselves, (7) "What is he saying? This is blasphemy! Only God can forgive sins!"

Why did it anger the religious leaders, when Jesus said that the man's sins were forgiven? They were shocked that Jesus would tell this man that his sins were forgiven because they knew that only God could forgive sins and they didn't believe Jesus was God. They accused

Jesus of blasphemy—having powers that only belong to God (Isaiah 43:25). Only God has the right to forgive sins!

Jesus knew what these men were thinking.

Mark 2:8

Jesus knew immediately what they were thinking, so he asked them, "Why do you question this in your hearts?"

How did Jesus know what the religious leaders were thinking? (Jesus is God and has supernatural powers.)

Jesus knew their thoughts and challenged their disbelief by asking a difficult question.

Mark 2:9

Is it easier to say to the paralyzed man 'Your sins are forgiven,' or 'Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk'?

What would your answer be if you had been there that day when Jesus asked, "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'?" [Teacher, let the children discuss this before suggesting that it's easier to say, "Your sins are forgiven you" because it's harder for others to prove or disprove.]

Mark 2:10-11

So I will prove to you that the Son of Man has the authority on earth to forgive sins." Then Jesus turned to the paralyzed man and said, (11) "Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!"

Jesus wanted to prove to them that He is God in a human body.

Mark 2:12

And the man jumped up, grabbed his mat, and walked out through the stunned onlookers. They were all amazed and praised God, exclaiming, "We've never seen anything like this before!"

Instantly he leaped to his feet, perfectly well. How happy he must have been! He picked up his mat and walked toward the door. Everyone was amazed! They said they'd never seen anything like this! They knew that only God could have done this miracle!

Jesus was willing and glad to forgive the man and to heal him.

Can you imagine how glad those four men must have been to have taken the extra effort to help their friend? They were part of a miracle! What a difference they had made in the life of their friend!

We can bring our friends to Jesus just as the four men in our story worked hard to bring their friend to the Lord.

As you see the needs of your friends you must realize that you cannot give them courage, peace, joy, or forgiveness, but you can introduce them to Jesus—the only One who can give them all those things!

If you know the Lord Jesus as your Savior, God can use you to make a difference in someone else's life. When you have a friend who needs Jesus in a special way, God can give you His kind of love.

Will you show God's love to a friend in need this week? You never know what miracles God will do!

Closing Prayer


Father, if any of us here today has a friend that needs You for any reason, I pray that that we might be willing to do whatever it takes to make a difference in that person's life, even if it means going out of our way and doing extra things or giving up our time, our money, or our energy. Help us to be the kind of friend this paralytic man had. We always want to encourage others to know and trust You, Lord Jesus. You're the only One that can help in time of need. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.


Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Recipe for a Friend


Recipe for Friendship





- 1 cup happiness
- 1 handful of kindness
- 2 spoonfuls of gentleness
- 1 scoop of sharing
- 1 teaspoon of helpfulness
- 3 tablespoons of laughter
- 1 gallon of smiles

1. Mix all these together with a pinch of tenderness
2. Very lightly beat in a bowl of loyalty
3. Sprinkle with cheerfulness
4. Bake for a lifetime and serve repeatedly



Teacher, Be sure to have the children design and write their own recipe cards rather than copy the above example. Give children 3" x 5" cards and invite them to create a recipe for a great friend. Challenge them to think of "ingredients" they would include. List how much (one cup, three teaspoons, a sprinkle) of each quality they would add. Consider whether Jesus qualifies as a great friend, according to their recipes.

Game Center

Teddy Bear Relay

Props: A watch that can be used as a timer; 1 small hand towel to use as “stretchers” and 1 teddy bear to be carried on the towel for each team.

Set Up: Create an obstacle course with chairs and tables (these represent the crowd of people in the house). Place some chairs or tables in a circle to represent the “house” with the hole in the roof – the teams will have to lower the bear on its towel into the “house”.

Play: Each team will form pairs with the kids on their team. Each pair of children will have to complete the obstacle course, stepping over or around the obstacles. Time them to see which team can complete the course the fastest. **The course must be completed without the teddy bear falling off the “stretcher”**. If the bear falls off, the pair must return to the start while the clock keeps running.

When they get to the “house”, they lower the teddy bear into the house. The bear is healed, so they pick it and the towel “stretcher” up and run back to the start/finish line. They hand the bear and towel off to the next pair.

Or, use the following review questions in a game of your choice:

1. Where was Jesus when people were crowding in to hear Him teach? (In a house in Capernaum.)
2. Why couldn't the man get up and walk like other people? (He was paralyzed.)
3. Why was the house so full of people? (People heard that Jesus was there.)
4. Why didn't the friends of the paralyzed man turn around and go home when they saw how crowded it was? (They knew their friend needed to see Jesus.)
5. What did the four men do to get their friend to Jesus? (They lifted him up on the roof of the house, cot and all, peeled back the tile roof and lowered him in on ropes to Jesus!)
6. How can God use you to make a difference in someone else's life? How can you show God's love to a friend who needs Jesus? (The best kind of friend will always encourage others to know and trust the Lord Jesus, the only One who can really help them in time of need.)
7. What did Jesus do first – heal the man or forgive him of his sins? (Jesus forgave the man's sins.)
8. Why did Jesus forgive the man's sins first? (Because a spiritual healing is of greater need and importance than the physical healing.)
9. In verse 5, who's faith did Jesus see, that of the four men or that of the paralytic? (Four men for sure, maybe all 5 of them.)
10. How did Jesus know what the Jewish religious leaders were thinking? (Jesus is God and has supernatural abilities.)
11. Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, “Your sins are forgiven you,” or to say, “Arise, take up your bed and walk”? (It's easier to say, “Your sins are forgiven you” because it's harder for others to prove or disprove.)
12. Who else besides Jesus can forgive people of their sins? (No one else! Jesus is the creator of the universe; He came to earth to take the punishment for all sin; He alone has the right to forgive sins.)
13. How could you be a better friend to others? To Jesus?