

JESUS HEALS THE PARALYZED MAN

Mark 2:1-12

Lesson Aim

To help students learn to trust Jesus, who heals and forgives sin, and to be good friends to others.

Memory Verse

This quarter, Luke 2:1-7; this week, Luke 2:4 - "So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David."

Lesson Background

Jesus is the great Healer and Forgiver of sins, and in today's Scripture we see a demonstration of His power in both these areas. Although there can be a causal relationship between sin and sickness, here the Lord seems to be emphasizing that the solution to these problems is the same - Himself. Only God can truly forgive sin, but since the state of a man's soul cannot be readily observed, Christ gives a more tangible proof of His authority. He speaks tenderly (the Greek indicates He called the man "child" or "son") to the paralyzed man, and he is healed.

Not everyone rejoiced at this miracle. The scribes and Pharisees became angry, primarily because of Jesus' claim to be God. The term "Son of Man" is a messianic title (see Daniel 7:14). The Jewish leaders realized that Jesus' claim to forgive sins constituted blasphemy or was the truth. The latter was unthinkable to them and they turned away.

The story takes place in Capernaum, probably in Jesus' own place of residence. Four men, concerned about their friend, attempt to bring him to Jesus, but are stopped by a large crowd blocking the doorway to the house. Undaunted, the men ascend outside steps to the flat roof (or stairs from a neighboring house from which they could reach the roof they desired) and remove a portion of the mud and sticks from which it was constructed to lower the paralyzed man to Jesus. These men are persistent in their faith and creative in their striving to bring their friend to Christ. Their time and effort and willingness to persevere in spite of obstacles and what others might think of them is rewarded and the paralyzed man is healed. We should imitate these friends in their love and faith. We, too, must be concerned with our spiritual as well as physical needs. May we rejoice because Christ has declared to us: "Your sins are forgiven!"

Knowledge Objectives - To know that four men brought their paralyzed friend to see Jesus where He was living in Capernaum; that they lowered their friend through the roof because of the crowd; that Jesus healed the paralyzed man and forgave his sins; and that the scribes and Pharisees were angry about this because Jesus claimed to be God.

Behavioral Objectives - By God's grace, to trust Christ, to show love to our friends, and tell them about Him.

Lesson Procedure

Introduction - "Imagine what it would be like to be paralyzed and not be able to move your legs and even, perhaps, your arms? "FREEZE" where you are while I talk for a few minutes and think how you would feel." (Don't forget to tell your students they can move after a while.) "In some ways you would be just as you are now; you would think, have emotions like being happy or afraid; you would want to play and talk or laugh. But some things you would not be able to do. You could not kick a soccer ball, jump rope, or perhaps not even get dressed and eat by yourself or even scratch your nose if it itched. You would need friends to love you and help you, especially if you lived a long time ago before wheelchairs and other things were invented that let handicapped people do many things by themselves. If you were paralyzed, you might think the most important thing that could happen to you would be for you to be able to walk and move freely. However, there is at least one thing that is more important than that. See if you can figure out what that is from our Bible story." Adapt the above introduction if there is a handicapped child in your class.

BIBLE STORY

Read **Mark 2:1-12** (NIV). Insert any pertinent background material as you read, e.g., the construction of Palestinian roofs. You may wish to dramatize this story with little plastic people (such as made by Fisher-Price or Playskool) as you read.

Discuss the story. Ask such questions as: "Where does the story take place? What did the paralyzed man's four friends want to do? Why did it seem as if this would be impossible? What did the men do to solve the problem? How should we be like the four friends? (Trust Jesus, love our friends, try to help our friends, try to bring them to Jesus, don't give up, and be creative when we confront obstacles.) What did Jesus do for the paralyzed man? (Healed him and forgave his sins.) How did this show that Jesus is God? How did the Jewish leaders react to what Jesus had done?"

STORY

Read *That's What Friends Are For* (Florence P. Heide and Sylvia W. Van Clief, illus. Brinton Turkle, Scholastic Book Services, 1968.), or another story where friends show love for one another.

SONGS

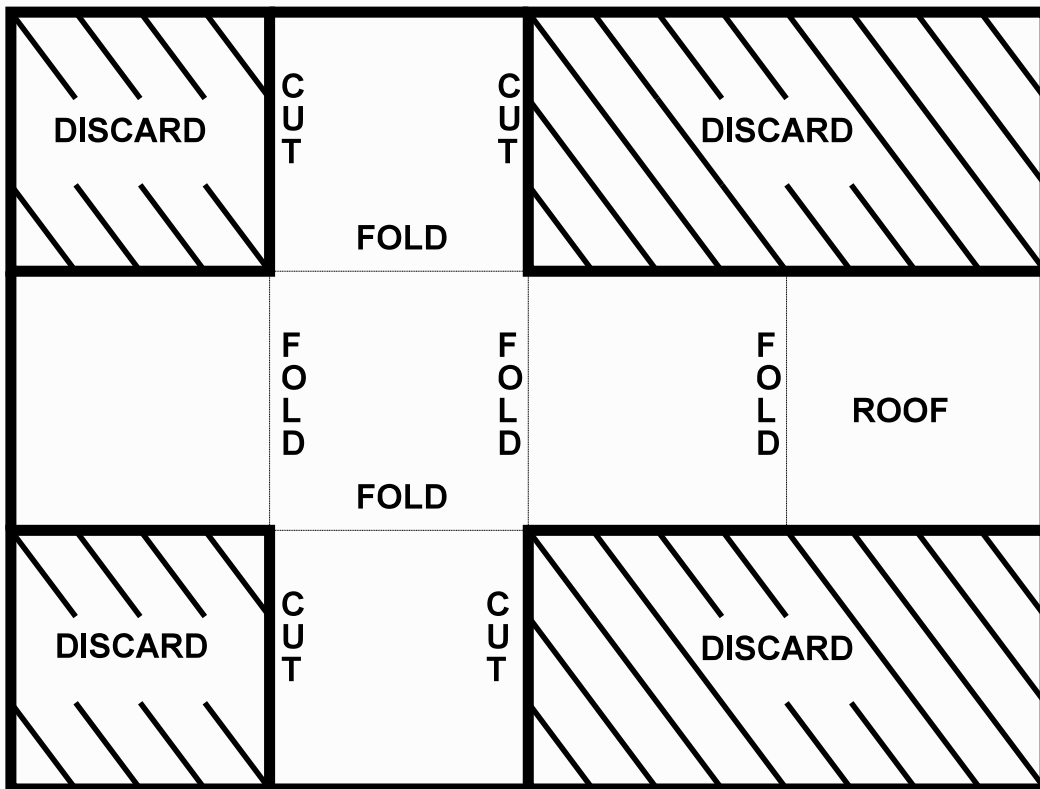
"What A Friend" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #533); "Only Trust Him" ("Come Ev'ry Soul," *Trinity Hymnal*, #724); "Come Ye Sinners" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #393).

Take Home Activity

Do one or both of the following:

1. **Bible Story Paper Model** - Construct a model scene of today's Bible story from paper. Make the people from a folded piece of paper (see Year I, Quarter 1, Lesson 5) and the house from a small box (half pint milk cartons with the top cut off work well) or make a box from construction paper (see diagram). Tie thread, yarn, or string to the four corners of a piece of cloth or construction paper for the paralyzed man's bed and let his four friends lower him through the roof of the box.
2. **Friendship Booklet** - Make a booklet as in Year I, Quarter 2, Lesson 5. On the cover print "A friend..." Inside write and draw pictures of various characteristics of friendship. Permit the children to use some of their own ideas of what friendship means, but you may also want to include Scripture (e.g., Proverbs 17:17; 18:24; 27:6,9,10,17) and more conventional ideas (e.g., "...shares his toys," "...loves at all times," "...tells you about Jesus," "...doesn't say unkind things about you to others").

DIAGRAM FOR CONSTRUCTING PAPER CUBES (HOUSES)



BIBLE PASSAGE - LESSON FOCUS

Mark 2:1-12 - Learn to trust Jesus, who heals and forgives sin, and be a good friend.

MEMORY VERSE

This quarter, Luke 2:1-7; this week Luke 2:4 - "So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David."

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

1. Discuss the Bible story. Jesus said He would forgive the paralyzed man's sin. Why can Jesus forgive sin? (He is God and died to take the punishment Christians deserve for their sin.)
2. Read other Scriptures that tell of Jesus healing people. How are these stories the same and different from what is related in Mark 2? (Matthew 8:1-22; John 9; and other Scriptures.)
3. Read Scriptures about friendship (e.g., Proverbs 17:17; 18:24; 27:6, 9, 10, 17) and discuss how you each can be a better friend with someone. Decide on a specific plan of action for being a better friend this week. Decide on a specific plan to lead a friend closer to Jesus.
4. Read *Charlotte's Web* (E. B. White, Dell Publishing Company, 1952.); *That's What Friends Are For* (Florence P. Heide and Sylvia W. Van Clief, illus. Brinton Turkle, Scholastic Book Services, 1968.); or other books about friendship to your child (or have your child read the story to himself) and discuss.
5. If you and your child are Christians, thank God for His forgiveness, healing, and friendship.
6. Sing songs about friendship and forgiveness such as "What A Friend" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #533); "Only Trust Him" ("Come Ev'ry Soul," *Trinity Hymnal*, #724); "Come Ye Sinners" (*Trinity Hymnal*, #393).

SUGGESTED PARENTAL READING

Scripture: Scriptures above or others on friendship, forgiveness, or healing (use a concordance to find them).