

PARALYTIC MAN LOWERED THROUGH ROOF

Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26

STRUCTURE

Key-persons: Jesus, the crowd, the paralytic man, and the religious leaders

Key-location: House in Capernaum

Key-repetitions:

- Crowds: house was full (Mk 2:2); paralytic's friends couldn't get to Jesus because of the crowd (Mk2:4); everyone was amazed and praised God (Mk 2:12; Lk 5:26).
- Religious leaders: Pharisees and teachers of the Law were present (Lk 5:17); religious leaders thought to themselves that Jesus committed blasphemy (Lk 5:21); Jesus knew the thoughts of the religious leaders and spoke to them (Lk 5:22-24).
- Sins: Jesus told the paralyzed man that his sins were forgiven (Lk 5:20); religious leaders said that only God could forgive sins (Lk 5:21); Jesus proved he had authority to forgive sins by healing the paralyzed man (Lk 5:22-24).
- Praising God: the healed paralyzed man went home praising God (Lk 5:25); everyone was amazed and praised God (Lk 5:26).

Key-attitudes:

- Crowd's curiosity to see Jesus.
- Religious leaders' skepticism toward Jesus.
- Paralytic's friends' determination to take him to Jesus.
- Paralytic's friends' faith in Jesus.
- Conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders.
- Jesus' confidence when he confronted the religious leaders.
- Praise of the cured paralytic and the crowd after the healing.

Initial-situation:

Jesus was beginning the second year of his public ministry. John the Baptist had been imprisoned. Jesus was expelled from Nazareth and he moved to Capernaum, near Lake Galilee. Jesus invited four fishermen to follow him. Jesus had already performed several healing miracles.

Initial-problem:

Jesus returned to Capernaum and people filled the house where Jesus was teaching.

Final-situation:

Everyone at the house was amazed and praised God.

BIBLE STORY

Jesus went to the Sea of Galilee and invited four fishermen to follow him. A few days later Jesus returned to Capernaum. People filled the house and many stood outside the door. No one could get in or out (Mk 2:1-2).

Pharisees and teachers of the Law of Moses from many locations were also there. The power of the Lord God was present for Jesus to heal the sick. Four men came carrying a paralyzed man on a bedroll. The four men tried to take the paralyzed man into the house to lay him before Jesus. They couldn't get past the crowd at the door. The house had a flat roof and outside stairs leading up to the roof. So the four men went up on the roof, removed some tiles, and lowered the paralyzed man on his bedroll into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

Jesus saw the faith of the four men and said to the paralyzed man, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law thought to themselves, "That is blasphemous talk! God and God alone can forgive sins!"

Jesus knew their thoughts and asked the religious leaders, "Why are you thinking these thoughts? Which is easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to tell him, 'Get up and walk'? I'll prove to you that I am the Son of Man and I have authority on earth to forgive sins." Jesus told the paralyzed man, "Get up, take your bedroll, and go home."

Immediately the paralyzed man stood up, took up his bedroll, and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed and praised God. They were filled with awe and said, "We've seen remarkable things today" (Lk 5:17-26).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

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| 1. What catches your attention in the story? | 5. How did the characters face their problems? |
| 2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand? | 6. How have you faced similar problems? |
| 3. Who are the main characters in the story? | 7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you? |
| 4. What problems did the characters face? | 8. What does the story tell about God? |

SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe the cure of the paralytic man who was let down from the roof.
2. In this story, who:
 - Sits in judgment?
 - Lies flat, helpless?
 - Stands ready to help?
3. Why was Jesus able to forgive the paralyzed man's sins?

4. Who do you most identify with in the story:
 - Crowd?
 - Paralyzed man?
 - Four friends?
 - Religious leaders?
 - Home owner who invited Jesus into his house and had his roof torn up?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **Jesus has divine power to forgive sins.** He forgave the paralyzed man's sins (Mk 2:5-7). Only God has the power to forgive sins. Jesus exercised that power during his ministry. The Greek meaning of "Jesus" is, "The Lord saves" (Mat 1:21-22).
2. **Faith and action walk hand in hand.** The paralytic man's friends had faith in Jesus. The proof of that was their effort of carrying their friend to Jesus (Lk 5:18-26). Faith combined with effort is effective. (See Ja 2:14-17).
3. **Some people who follow Jesus become gate-keepers who prevent other people from coming to Jesus.** Jesus was speaking in a house. Four men tried to take the paralyzed man into the house to lay him before Jesus. They couldn't get past the crowd at the door (Lk 5:19).
4. **Those who serve Jesus need to use their minds.** The friends with the paralytic man arrived at the house where Jesus was speaking; but, the entrance door was blocked by people. The four men had to seek another way to get their friend to Jesus (Mat 9:1-8).
5. **Jesus is omniscient and knows what people are thinking.** Jesus knew the thoughts of the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees (Lk 5:21-22). See John 2:25 and Hebrews 4:13.
6. **Inviting Jesus into a home can be costly; however, it may enable the host to witness God doing amazing things.** The host invited Jesus into his home and was left with a hole in his roof (Lk 5:19), but he witnessed amazing things when Jesus healed the paralytic man (Lk 5:26).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. **Mirrored Pantomime:**

Tell the story with gestures that mime each event. Repeat the story with listeners imitating storyteller's gestures. Ask listeners to remember the story by repeating gestures without using words.

2. **Role-playing Drama:**

Pick volunteers to tell the story from the viewpoint of different participants in the story:

- One of the four men who brought the paralytic to Jesus.
- Two religious leaders criticizing Jesus for claiming he could forgive the sins of the paralytic.
- A person who stood in the doorway, refusing to allow the four men to enter the house.
- The owner of the house with the hole in his roof.