



Jesus Heals the Paralyzed Man

Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12



Jesus traveled all around Galilee teaching and healing. When He returned home to Capernaum, people crowded into a small house to be near Him. Four faithful men brought their paralyzed friend to Jesus. Jesus would do more for their friend than they could have imagined.

Day #1: Best Friends

What is the most crowded place you have ever been? Maybe it was a ball game or the opening night of a blockbuster movie. How did you feel in that crowded space? As word got out about Jesus, the great teacher and healer, people crowded in wherever He was.

When five friends arrived at the small house where Jesus was teaching, it was clear that they could not enter through the front door. But this would not stop the men from getting their paralyzed friend to Jesus! These men were certain that Jesus could make their friend walk. They would do whatever it took to help their friend.

✝ *Four of those who came were carrying a man who could not walk. But they could not get him close to Jesus because of the crowd. So they made a hole in the roof above Jesus. Then they lowered the man through it on a mat. - Mark 2:3-4*

The men climbed the outside stairs to the roof of the house. Then they dug through the mud roof, and lowered their friend down to Jesus.

Let's look at the characteristics that made these men such wonderful friends. First, they cared deeply about their friend; they really wanted to help him. Next, they had complete faith that Jesus was the One who could help him. They brought their helpless friend to the right Person. Also, they were willing to ACT on their faith; they did what they knew they should do. And finally, they were unwilling to give up.

* As you try to be a good friend, follow the example of these men. Care enough about others to bring them to Jesus - the One who can help them in every way.

Day #2: True Freedom

No doubt, when the four men brought their friend to Jesus, the only thing on their minds was his physical healing. They wanted their friend to be **free** of the handicap that kept him bound to his bed. They wanted their friend to know the **joy** of walking, running, and dancing.

However, when Jesus saw the man, Jesus saw a need much greater than his paralyzed legs. He saw the man's sinful heart. God can always see the heart of a person (Luke 16:15). Jesus knew that the man was a sinner, like every man, woman, and child. Jesus knew that the man was separated from God because of his sin (Isaiah 59:2). It was the man's sin that truly kept him bound - unable to know God and unable to do God's will (John 8:34).

Jesus also saw the man's faith.

✝ *Jesus saw their faith. So he said to the man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." - Mark 2:5*

The man's sins were forgiven. Even though no one could see this transformation, it was better than the miracle that the men came looking for. They wanted what was good. Jesus gave what was best! This miracle freed the man from his sin. He was given new life (Galatians 6:11). Now he would have the **joy** of knowing God. He was a part of the kingdom of God. He was **free** to do the will of God.

* Often, we pray for what is good, but Jesus wants to give us what's best. Jesus always has His focus on His eternal kingdom. When you pray, ask Jesus to use every situation for His glory and your eternal good.

Day #3: Living Proof

You can't see the wind, but when you see a sailboat move across the ocean, you can see proof that the wind exists. Hold up a piece of paper with one hand. Blow on the paper. The moving paper gives proof of the wind that you can't see. Jesus was about to give proof of His amazing power and authority.

The teachers of the law knew that only God could forgive sins. And God required an animal sacrifice. They did not know that Jesus was God, so they

Day #3 continued:

thought He was wrong to tell the man that his sins were forgiven. Jesus used something that the people **could** see to prove that He could do what they **could not** see. Jesus said:



Is it easier to say to this man, 'Your sins are forgiven'? Or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."

Then Jesus spoke to the man who could not walk. "I tell you," he said, "get up. Take your mat and go home."

The man got up and took his mat. Then he walked away while everyone watched. All the people were amazed. They praised God and said, "We have never seen anything like this!" - Mark 2:9-12

The people could not see that Jesus had the power to forgive sins, so He gave proof of His power. He showed them that He could heal a paralyzed man with just a word.



Have you ever thought that you might be someone's "proof"? The acts of kindness that you show to someone might be the proof that they can "see" that God loves them.

Day #4: Power to Obey

For his entire life, the paralyzed man had been unable to walk or stand. He was confined to his bed. He could only go where he was carried. For this man, the simple task of standing up was impossible. But when he placed his faith in Jesus, everything changed!

Jesus gave the healed man a 3-part command. He said, "Get up. Take your mat and go home." Because the man trusted Jesus, the man got up, took his mat, and went home! What was once impossible for the man was possible when Jesus ordered it. When Jesus gives a command, He also gives the power to carry out the command.



Now all glory to God, who is able, through His mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. - Ephesians 3:20 NLT

I can do everything by the power of Christ. He gives me strength. - Philippians 4:13

Very often, God uses our very weaknesses to accomplish His will (2 Corinthians 12:9). Every other

Day #4 continued:

person in that room could walk. Jesus used the man who could NOT walk to teach people about His power and authority!



Do you have something in your life that you think is a weakness? Pray and ask God to use it for His purposes.

Is there any command in God's word that you feel is nearly impossible? Remember that God will give you the strength and ability to do anything He asks of you.

Day #5: Knowing God

By healing the paralyzed man, Jesus used something the people **could** see to prove something they **could not** see. Jesus wanted the people in that house (even those who doubted) to know that He was the One who could forgive their sins. Isn't it amazing that Almighty God wants people to know all about Him?

Romans 1:20 explains that the very world we live in is like a picture for us. This amazing world that we can see gives us a glimpse of God's characteristics that we cannot see (Psalm 19:1-5).



For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see His invisible qualities - His eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God. - Romans 1:20 NLT

The endless sky tells us that God has no beginning and no end (Psalm 90:2). The tremendous power of the ocean lets us know that God is all-powerful (Job 38:8-11). The endless array of sea creatures shows us God's creativity (Exodus 31:1-4). The rising and setting of the sun lets us know that God is in complete control (Job 38:12-13). God went to great lengths to show us who He is. He wants us to know Him (Jeremiah 9:24).



When you see something amazing in God's creation, think about what God wants you to know about Him (Job 38). God gives us things we can see to teach us about Him, because He longs for us to know Him and love Him (John 17:3, Mark 12:30).

As a fun treat, listen to the Bible on your computer! ONLY with your parent's permission, go to www.biblegateway.com. Enter "Psalm 8" in the "Quick Search" box. Then click "Search the Bible." Then click the listening icon.

