

Through The Roof

Mark 2:1-12

MEMORY VERSE

MARK 2:12a

“And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God,”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

As many small prizes (pencils, erasers, stickers, etc.) as the number of children in your class.

A magnet and a plate of paper clips.

A stretcher, blanket, or large beach towel.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

"Not Even Near the Door"

Have the children stand together and form a barrier between you and another child volunteer. Tell them they can join hands or lock arms, but they cannot touch the child volunteer.

Encourage your child volunteer to try to wedge his way into and through the crowd of students to get to the other side of the barrier (be sure to supervise this activity carefully to avoid any potential roughness). Set a time limit so several children will get a chance to try.

If a child is successful, reward him with the privilege of passing out stickers or a small prize to the rest of the class for participating.

LESSON TIME!

Today we will look at a man who had some pretty good friends. Do any of you have friends? What do you like most or appreciate most in those friends? We will meet a man today who came to appreciate his friends very deeply. He was in a tough spot, but they were determined to help him out. Let's read about what they did for him. **We walk by faith, not by sight.**

MARK 2:1

And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house.

Jesus had left the city of Capernaum because the crowds around Him had grown too large to properly control. Mark 1:45 tells us that Jesus was thronged by people so that He "could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places." He then came back to the city and went to a friend's home. It was probably Peter's house. The people heard He was back in town and they longed to hear Him teach.

MARK 2:2

Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.

They did not wait to eat lunch, finish the laundry, or bathe the dog; they immediately gathered together at the house where Jesus was. Jesus draws people to Himself through His truth and love. When we have Jesus in our lives and ask Him to fill us with His Spirit, He will draw people to Himself through our lives. Can you think of someone who you feel drawn to? Someone you love to be around? You always want to be near them. It could be that it is Jesus in them that you long to be near.

Magnetic Personalities

Bring a magnet and a plate with paper clips to class.

Draw the magnet closely over the paper clips so that they cling to the magnet. Allow some of the children to try this also.

Illustrate that the love of Christ is like this magnetic force. When it passes over a life, that life is drawn to Christ.

So many people came to the house to see Jesus that they did not all fit inside. There was so much crowding outside that people could not even get in the door. Jesus was in there preaching the Word of God. The Word of God is the most exciting book, the Bible. It is alive and active.

HEBREWS 4:12

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Jesus was preaching this glorious living Word that sees right into our hearts, sees our need, and answers that need with His power.

MARK 2:3-4

Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men.

And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

Picture this: four friends come carrying a stretcher, one man at each corner. They cannot even get in the front door, let alone anywhere near Jesus. They had one goal in mind...get their friend to Jesus. If they could just get their friend to Jesus, they knew that everything would be OK. They knew that Jesus was the only one who could help him. Not doctors or books or medicine or exercise or wishes or trying hard or anything else could heal him; only Jesus could help their friend. They were desperate for Jesus' help, and they were determined to get it.

These friends must have had great faith in Jesus. They believed in His love and willingness to help. They had heard about Him and His message. Everything may have looked impossible and impassable, but they did not pay attention to how things looked; they knew that they must walk by faith. **We walk by faith, not by sight.** They did not get discouraged, and they did not give up. They had absolute confidence, complete faith in Jesus. **We walk by faith, not by sight.**

How can we be good friends to others? By bringing them to Jesus. When we know someone who is going through a hard time, we can tell them about Jesus' love and His power to help them. We can pray with them and point them to Jesus. **We walk by faith, not by sight.**

Look at the man in our Bible reading. He is a paralytic. That means he could not move his arms or legs. He could not walk or sit, feed himself or brush his own hair. He could not swim or play the piano, dance or climb or swing; all he could do was lay still. He was completely unable to help himself. He could not get to Jesus on his own. But he did have one very important thing going for him. He had determined friends who were walking by faith. **We walk by faith, not by sight.**

On his own, he was in a hopeless condition, absolutely helpless. He needed Jesus desperately. He wanted to get to Jesus. So the four friends and the one paralyzed man found a way. And what a way it was! They climbed up on the roof of the house and tore a big hole through it.

Everyone in the house must have wondered what was happening, as bits of debris and dust came down and the sun slowly began to shine through the ceiling. Everything probably stopped, and the four friends let down the bed their friend laid on right in front of Jesus. Wow! The moment had come! Their friend was now face-to-face with Jesus, the Savior, the Healer, the Great One who changes lives. What would Jesus do?

"He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother"

Bring a stretcher (a blanket or a large beach blanket) to class.

Ask for a volunteer to lie down on the stretcher, and allow a number of the children in the class to have a turn carrying the volunteer around.

Keep the rides brief, and give many children an opportunity to ride as possible. Make certain you have enough carriers to hold the child being carried without dropping him or her.

MARK 2:5

When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you."

What an interesting verse. Jesus is so remarkable. Jesus saw the man lowered down slowly in front of His eyes. What did He see? He saw much more than anyone else did or you or I could have. He looked right through the man's crippled body and into his heart. He also looked up and saw the man's four friends and their hearts.

Jesus saw something in all five of their hearts that pleased Him and still pleases Him when He sees it in our hearts. Verse 5 tells us that He "saw their faith." When He saw they had absolute confidence in Him, it pleased Him. They trusted Him just because of who He was, and they brought their need to Him. They did not come with gifts or money or promises, they just came with their need and trusted Jesus would take care of it. How we need to bring our needs to Jesus! **We walk by faith, not by sight.**

The first thing that Jesus said to the man may not have been what he or his friends wanted to hear, but Jesus knew the man had a greater need than just being able to move his body. It is the great need of all of our lives; we need to have our sins forgiven. Our sins make us utterly helpless and spiritually paralyzed. Jesus saw the man's faith in Him and forgave him his sin. Jesus took care of the greatest need first--sin.

Worse than being paralyzed, sin is death. Jesus chose to heal the man's soul before healing his body. Sure, his body was paralyzed but that was not as awful as his soul being dead in sin. Jesus always knows where to start. We may want Him to fix something we are desperate about, but first He fixes our sin situation so we can be made alive in Him. Then He begins to fix other areas.

Only God can forgive sin. Jesus was able to forgive this man's sin because Jesus is God. He knows the best place to start His work in our lives. He is pleased when we put our faith in Him and honors that faith with His forgiveness.

Share a Personal Experience

Tell the children about a time in your life, or the life of someone you know, that the Lord answered your prayer in an unexpected way. Perhaps you were seeking him for something, and He led you in a direction completely different than you expected. Explain to the children how God was faithful in that situation.

Allow one or two of the children to express similar experiences.

MARK 2:6-9

And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts,

"Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts?"

"Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'?"

Not only were there people in the house who loved Jesus and desired to be taught by Him, but there were also enemies of Jesus in the room. Jesus' enemies never take Him by surprise. He knows who they are, where they are, what they think, and what scheme they may have to try to harm Him. Enemies do not fluster Jesus. He knew exactly what these scribes were thinking.

They must have been shocked when He said, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts?" They had not said a word, but He knew what they were thinking and asked them about it. Only God could do that! You would think they would realize that, but the very thing that should have been obvious was the thing that made them mad! In forgiving the man's sins, Jesus was communicating that He is God. Then He let them know that the invisible miracle of forgiven sin is greater than the visible miracle of a healed body. To demonstrate that He had the power to forgive sins, He showed them that He has the power to heal.

MARK 2:10-12

"But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"; He said to the paralytic,

"I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

Jesus starts His command to the paralyzed man with four very important words. He said, "I say to you..." The key to all of this was that Jesus said it. Only Jesus is able to heal, and we receive His healing when **We walk by faith, not by sight**. The man immediately got up. He did not stop and stammer and make excuses, saying, "But, Jesus, how can I get up, I'm paralyzed?" Instead he walked by faith. It was his complete trust in Jesus that allowed him to obey without questioning! **We walk by faith, not by sight**.

The "Simon Says" Game

Have the class stand up and play a round of "Simon Says."

When the children respond to a command that begins with the phrase "Simon Says," they remain in the game. If they respond to a command without the command "Simon Says," they are eliminated and must sit down.

When the game is over, explain to the class that we need to respond to the Lord's commands with instant obedience. Even though we

do not always understand why Jesus tells us to do certain things, when we obey, we show our faith in Him.

As we obey and trust Jesus, we will see Him working in our lives. Just like the paralyzed man was in desperate need of help, we are all sinners, in desperate need of Jesus to forgive our sins and give us strength to live for Him. He is the answer to all of our questions and the solution to all of our problems. He is the God of the universe and worthy of all our trust. Let us trust Him with all our hearts as **we walk by faith, not by sight.**

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to walk by faith, not by sight. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.