



SESSION 6: Encounters with the King

The Paralyzed Man

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Key takeaways for Pre-Disciples:

- Jesus has the power and authority of God to forgive all our evil and disobedience
- Jesus demonstrates that He is God's promised king and that he can forgive disobedience by healing the paralyzed man.
- We can know forgiveness in our lives by believing in Jesus, and this belief will mean we will want to do whatever it takes to get our friends to Jesus too

Part 1

identity

worship

mission

Part 1: catch up

- Icebreaker question – Get everyone to share about how their week has gone, what has been happening in their life in the past 7 days. Listen out for things you could pray for.
- Ask everyone how they got on sharing the story
 - (this is not to keep tabs on people, but is a helpful reminder that part of them learning the story well is you asking them every week if they managed to share it.)
- Ask someone to re-tell last week's story

Part 2 (story)

identity

community

mission

The Paralyzed Man (Mark 2; 1-12, Luke 5;17-26)

Story-Audio-Link: <https://christ-central.org.uk/pre-disciple/>

Now after he was baptised by John, Jesus began travelling , healing the sick, teaching the Good News of God's Kingdom, and calling people to follow him. One day, it was reported that Jesus had returned to his home region, and many people crammed their way in the house where Jesus was staying to hear him speak God's message. Now as Jesus was teaching four men came to the home, carrying their friend on a mat because he was paralyzed. They wanted to get him to Jesus, but there was no space. So they carried their friend onto the roof they broke their way in and let down the bed with the paralyzed man right in the middle of the home where Jesus was.



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*And when **Jesus saw their belief**, he looked down to the paralyzed man and said to him ‘Son, all of your evil and disobedience has been forgiven’*

*Now in the crowd there were **some of the religious leaders** in the community, and when they heard what Jesus said, they **began to accuse him in their hearts** ‘How can say this...This is **outrageous...Only God can forgive evil and disobedience!**’. Jesus knew in his heart what they were thinking so he said to them, ‘**is it easier to say to this paralyzed man “your disobedience is forgiven” or to say “get up and walk”?**’ But so that you might **know that God’s promised King has the authority to forgive disobedience.**’-he turned his attention to the paralyzed man and said to him ‘rise, pick up your bed and go home’.*

*And **immediately, the Paralyzed got up**, and taking his mat in his hand he went out of the house, **and fear and amazement swept through the town, and everyone praised God saying ‘we have never seen anything like this!’***

And that’s the story from God’s word.

Re-tell the story as group: allow everyone to share a section of the story. If there is more than 6 people consider breaking up into pairs to retell the story.

Questions for discussion

1. What do you like about this story/What stood out to you?
2. What bothered you about this story?
3. What does this story show you about God?
4. What does this story show you about people?

Part 3 (practice / takeaways)

identity

worship

mission

Ask the remaining questions:

5. What does this story mean for your life? How will you live your life differently having learned this story?
6. How will you remember this story? (tell it!)
7. Who are you able to tell this story to?

Encourage everyone in the group to think of people in their life whom they could retell the story to; mention that at the next session we will recap the story and ask who remembered to tell the story. Again it is helpful to emphasise the reason for going and telling the story ourselves is that it is the best way for us to remember the story.

Notes for leaders - questions / topics that may arise



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How did the friends get the paralysed man to the top of the roof?

- The average home in Capernaum, where this story took place, could probably hold fifty people standing. The largest home excavated in Capernaum is 18 feet wide. Homes had flat roofs with a staircase on the outside leading to the roof – made of branches laid over the roof beams and covered in mud. The roof was sturdy enough to walk on. It seems that Luke contextualised information for Theophilus, his audience, in Luke 5:19 when he said that the friends removed some tiles from the roof. Galilean homes would have had flat mud thatch roofs that would have been dug through, as Mark describes in Mark 2:4. However, Theophilus may have had a home with a flat tile roof, as was common in the Greek world. You can describe the friends' action as something like opening up the roof, or parting the thatch, so they could lower the mat. The original audience would have understood that the men climbed stairs that were on the outside of the house to reach the top. You may include this implicit information in your story if necessary. Although neither Gospel account (Luke or Mark) explicitly states that the men used ropes to lower the mat, you may include that information if it is necessary for audience comprehension. •

Jesus says that He sees their belief, and then He forgives the paralysed man of his sins. What about the friends?

The men believed that Jesus could heal their friend, and their belief was evidenced by the fact that they destroyed a roof to get to Jesus! The context suggests that the paralysed man believed for himself also. The story is not about the friends, so we do not know more about them. However, we know that their belief in Jesus certainly helped the paralysed man (who also believed) get to Jesus. Again we see that belief in Jesus is what healed the man both physically and spiritually.

Is Jesus saying that healing sickness is harder to do than to forgive sin? Doesn't Jesus want to heal our physical problems too? Why did He start with forgiving the man's sins? o

The question in Luke 5:23 is not one that is meant to be answered in terms of actually choosing which is more difficult, but it is meant to show that the two are the same. Most non-Western cultures do not differentiate between spiritual and physical healing; for them, physical healing often involves some sort of dealings with spiritual issues. Therefore, Jesus' pronouncement of forgiveness was the moment of healing. For Jesus, our spiritual health is the ultimate goal.

How did healing the paralysed man prove that Jesus could forgive sins?

It seems easier to say that sins are forgiven because the legitimacy of that statement cannot be proven since the results cannot be seen. However, for Jesus' audience it would have been considered easier to do the action of healing – they believed that only God Himself could forgive sin. Some Jewish teachers of the time believed that someone performing miracles proved that he was a representative of God. The action of healing therefore might have served to prove to some Jesus' first declaration that He could forgive sins. However, neither act could be done in man's power alone – both acts required divine intervention.



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Feedback from Group Leader

In our vision for discipleship, we have identified 4 key ingredients to healthy and growing disciples. As you are leading your group, for each session, make some notes under each heading for how the group is faring in each of these areas .

identity

worship

community

mission