

JESUS FORGIVES AND HEALS

Matthew 9; Mark 2; Luke 5



Jesus returned to Capernaum, and news spread that He was back in town. So many people gathered to hear Jesus teach God's Word, that there was no more room in the house.

While Jesus was teaching, four men came to the house carrying a paralyzed man on a stretcher. But the men could not bring their friend to Jesus because of the crowd.

So, they carried the paralyzed man up to the roof and dug a hole through the roof. They lowered the mat on which the man was lying through the roof. Jesus saw their faith, and said to the paralytic man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

But some of the religious leaders heard this, and they thought to themselves, "Why would Jesus say this? Doesn't He know that no one can forgive sins but God?"

Jesus knew what these leaders were thinking. He said, "Why are you thinking these things to yourself? Which is easier to say to this paralyzed man? 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat, and walk'?"

Then, to show that He had the power to heal and to forgive sins, Jesus turned to the man and said, "I tell you, get up, take your mat, and go home."

Immediately the man got up, picked up his mat, and left in front of everyone. The people were amazed and gave glory to God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Christ Connection: By forgiving the man's sins, Jesus revealed that He is God. Jesus has power to heal and forgive. Only through faith in Jesus can people be saved from their sins.



1 WELCOME TIME

Greet each preteen as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

- **Do you have a best friend or a friend group? What do you like to do together?**
- **What are good characteristics in a friend?**

2 SESSION STARTER

☐ OPTION 1: NO MORE SIN

Before class, prepare the cups as follows:

- Cup 1: only water
- Cup 2: approximately 80% water and 20% bleach (pour the water in first, so the bleach doesn't splash out)
- Cup 3: approximately 80% water and 20% iodine (again, pour the water first)

Work through the teaching below as you perform the experiment. Have somewhere safe to dispose the chemicals immediately after the experiment.

SAY “ [Hold up Cup 1] This is us, but we are all affected by sin [hold up Cup 3 and pour some into Cup 1]. When we ask Jesus [hold up the Cup 2] to be our Lord and Savior, He comes into our lives and washes away our sin. Jesus is perfect; He has never sinned. Because of this, He is the perfect sacrifice for our sin. [Pour some of Cup 2 into Cup 1.] Today we will see that **JESUS SHOWED HIS POWER BY FORGIVING SIN.** ”

☐ OPTION 2: CARRY THE LOAD



Place a long piece of tape on one end of the room to mark the finish line. Create two teams of kids. Give each team a plastic cup and a handful of rubberbands and spring clothespins. Explain that they must use all of their supplies to get the cup across the finish line, but they may not touch the cup with their hands at any point. Kids will use their creativity to problem solve. If a team touches their cup with their hand, they must go back to the start point and start over. The first team to make it across the finish line wins.

SAY “ You guys had to get really creative! Great job problem solving! In today's story, we'll see that a group of friends used their own creativity to get their friend to Jesus. We'll learn that Jesus not only healed this man's body, but that **JESUS SHOWED HIS POWER BY FORGIVING SIN.** ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

The Bible tells us what is true about God and about ourselves. All of the stories in the Bible fit together to tell us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Today we are going to hear about Jesus' forgiveness and healing. Whether this is your first time or your tenth time hearing this story, there is always something new to learn in God's Word.

Read from Matthew 9; Mark 2; Luke 5.

•What does this story teach us about God?

In today's story Jesus healed a man, but first He said to the paralyzed man that his sins were forgiven. This statement angered the religious leaders. **By forgiving the man's sins, Jesus revealed that He is God.** The religious leaders did not believe this truth about Jesus. Jesus has power to heal and forgive. Only through faith in Jesus can people be saved from their sins. **JESUS SHOWED HIS POWER BY FORGIVING SIN.**

•How did the four men show faith?

The four men believed that Jesus could heal their friend. So they carried their paralyzed friend onto the roof, dug a hole in the roof, and then lowered their friend through the roof into the house so that he could be healed by Jesus.

Form groups of two or three and practice retelling the Bible story in your own words. Think of someone you could share the story with this week.

2 MISSIONS MOMENT

Share that Erik Alfred Nelson was born December 17, 1862 in Sweden. When he was seven years old, his father, who was a minister, moved the family to the United States to escape religious persecution in their own country. They settled in Chanute, Kansas, with other Swedish immigrants.

Mention that Erik became a Christian when he was 14 years old. Throughout his childhood and teenage years, he worked on his father's farm. Later, he became a cowboy and traveled extensively. In his twenties, he returned to Kansas and began to study the Bible.

W.B. Bagby, a missionary in Brazil, had written a letter that inspired Erik to want to go to Brazil. In 1891, when Erik was 29 years old, he sailed out for Brazil. He married Ida Lundberg, and she joined him in Brazil. Erik and Ida served together as missionaries, starting churches, giving out Bibles, and teaching people about Jesus. In addition to her missionary service, Ida also sewed for a living. People called Erik "The Apostle of the Amazon." Ida and Erik's total service in Brazil as missionaries was 48 years.

Pray, thanking God for missionaries who bravely go to other places to tell people about Jesus. Thank God for the work of the Nelsons in Brazil.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

Jesus is the only one who can forgive our sin. Jesus died on the cross, paying the penalty for our sin so that those who believe in Him can be saved. The Bible tells us that if we call on His name, we will be saved. Have you put your faith in Him and called on His name asking Him to be your Lord and Savior?

4 PRAY

Father, thank You for showing us Your power to heal and forgive sin. We are grateful for the new life You offer to all who believe. Help us grow our faith in You. Amen.

THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

The gospel is the good news—the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use Scripture and the guide provided below to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

				
GOD RULES	WE SINNED	GOD PROVIDED	JESUS GIVES	WE RESPOND
Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.	Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.	Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.	Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.	Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

1 THINK ABOUT THE STORY

- **What is the best way to make a friend and keep a friend for life? What does the Bible say about friends?**
- **How can you help lead your friends to Jesus this week?**

2 GROUP DISCUSSION

Distribute Bibles. Guide preteens to open their Bibles to Mark 2. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Mark 2:1-4.

Remind preteens that we have heard about Capernaum in several of our sessions. Jesus performed many miracles in Capernaum. Jesus spent much time in this city after He left His hometown of Nazareth. We will continue to hear more about Capernaum as we hear more stories about the Bible.

Choose another volunteer to read aloud Mark 2:1-4 again. Then lead the group to discuss the following questions.

1. What are some creative ways you can help someone in your life?

Jesus cared for all people, and we should want to do the same. Praying for people, helping with practical needs like food or chores, listening to them, and encouraging them are all ways we can help others. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Proverbs 17:17.)

2. Why were the religious leaders angry at Jesus?

Jesus not only healed the man's body; He also forgave the man's sins. By offering forgiveness of the man's sins, Jesus showed that He is God. The religious leaders did not believe this truth about Jesus, and it made them angry that He was telling people He is God. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matthew 9:3-6.)

3. What does the Bible say about having faith?

In today's story, we learned that the four friends had faith that Jesus would heal their paralyzed friend. Faith means believing that God can and will do what He says He will do. Faith means believing what God says is true before we see the outcome. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 5:7.)

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

What did Jesus teach when He was on earth?
Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all
Scripture is about Him.



THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

1 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

Instruct kids to open their Bibles to Matthew 5:16. Lead them in reading the key passage aloud together. Before class write the key passage on the board. Lead the group in reciting the verse together. Erase one or two small words and have them recite the verse again. Continue erasing words and reciting until all of the words are gone and the class can say the entire verse from memory.

Remind preteens that the men who came to help their paralyzed friend demonstrated their trust in Jesus. When they lowered their friend to Jesus, they let their light shine before others. Their creativity and faith, along with the demonstration of Jesus' power, helped people understand that Jesus is God.

2 PRAY

Invite volunteers to share prayer requests. Then pray, thanking God for this lesson and for the forgiveness He offers to all people who believe.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

MORE DIFFICULT?

Gather kids in the middle of the room. Explain that you will give a series of options and they have to each decide which option they think is more difficult. Assign each option to one side of the room or the other. If the kids think the first option is more difficult, they'll run to that side; if they think the second option is more difficult, they'll run to that side. Here are some examples: cooking dinner or doing the dishes; division or multiplication; learning to ride a bike or learning to inline skate; 50 jumping jacks or 50 push-ups.

Remind preteens that in today's story, we saw Jesus heal the man's body, but He did something even more amazing. Jesus showed His power by forgiving sin. When the religious leaders had a problem with Jesus offering the man forgiveness for his sins, Jesus asked them which was easier: healing someone's body or forgiving their sins.