

LESSON 12

Jesus Heals the Paralyzed Man

LUKE 5:17-26



BIBLE TRUTH

FORGIVENESS IS THE GREATER HEALING

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Luke 5:17–26 from the Scriptures or read story 90, “Jesus Heals the Paralyzed Man,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 15 MIN

By What Power?

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ pencil and paper
- ✓ Bibles for the class

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Perseverance Demonstrates Faith

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ empty two-liter soda bottles (or gallon milk containers)—one for every four students
- ✓ marbles—two per child
- ✓ prizes for the winner

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Drawing It Out

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Mind Reader

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ index cards and pencils
- ✓ three volunteers prepared ahead of time

TOTAL 70 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

Among a crowd of skeptics, men of faith were found—Consider who made up the crowd in this familiar story. Word spread throughout Israel about a new teacher who performed miracles and spoke with authority. As a result, on this day, religious leaders from across the country gathered to meet and listen to Jesus. By the time the men came with their paralyzed friend, the crowd had blocked their entry. Desperate to bring their crippled friend to Jesus, the men hoisted the stretcher up onto the roof and cut a hole to lower him through. The opening verse tells us that the power of the Lord was present for healing (Luke 5:17), but we do not read about any Pharisees being healed. They sat all around Jesus, and many of them had ailments Jesus could have cured. Yet the Pharisees had come to evaluate and judge Jesus, not to cry out to him. Doubt filled the hearts of the religious leaders, but the friends of the paralyzed man were filled with faith. Nothing would stop them from getting to Jesus.

Jesus knew their thoughts—Jesus knew the thoughts of everyone present. He knew the crippled man believed he could heal him, and he knew the religious rulers were doubters. So, instead of healing the man descending from the ceiling, Jesus called out and forgave his sins. The scribes and Pharisees were outraged, since they knew that only God could forgive sins. *“Who gave this Jesus such authority,”* they thought. But just as Jesus knew the faith of the crippled man, he also knew their thoughts. Today, we quickly forget that God is aware of every one of our thoughts. At times, we fool ourselves into thinking that our sins are somehow hidden from view. Our sins may be hidden from man (our friends, coworkers, parents), but our sins are never hidden from God. In spite of their unbelief, Jesus didn’t rebuke them; he gave them reason to believe and healed the paralyzed man. By restoring the man’s legs, Jesus demonstrated that he also possessed the authority to forgive sins.

The paralyzed man was healed and everyone was amazed—It is interesting to see the results of Jesus’ miracle. The man was no longer paralyzed and he left praising God, while everyone, including the Pharisees, gave praise to God as well. Though they were critical of Jesus, and didn’t fully see that Jesus was God, they knew that any healing was a work of God. Perhaps many religious rulers thought Jesus was a prophet, for the prophets of old could heal. Even so, prophets from the Old Testament did not personally forgive sins. In time, the Pharisees would become jealous of Jesus, feel threatened by his teaching, and label his claims blasphemous. Never did they realize that Jesus was more than a great teacher, a great prophet, and a great healer. Jesus was God.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Blasphemy

In Leviticus 24:13–16 we are told that a blasphemer is to be stoned. Moses describes blasphemy as cursing God, but a broader interpretation of this sin was applied to Jesus. If anyone who was not God claimed to be God, he would be guilty of disregarding God’s law. The sin of blasphemy was understood by the religious rulers of Jesus’ day to cover this broader application (see also Mark 2:7; John 5:18; 10:33).

Where Is the Gospel? _____

How does today’s Bible story fit into God’s greater plan of redemption?

Jesus could forgive the sins of the crippled man because he knew what was before him. In a few short years, he would walk the road to Calvary and hang upon a tree. The crippled man’s sins would be placed upon Jesus, and the Father would pour out his anger for them and all the sins of mankind. Jesus would bear the punishment until God’s anger was completely exhausted, and then he would say, for the crippled man and for all the sins of all those who place their trust in Jesus, “It is finished” (John 19:30). People today have the same choice as those gathered in our story. We can either approach Jesus, critical of his teaching and skeptical of his claim to be God, or like the crippled man, we can demonstrate faith and allow nothing to come between us and seeing Jesus.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Luke 5:17–26 from the Scriptures or read story 90, “Jesus Heals the Paralyzed Man,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 15 MIN

By What Power?

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ pencil and paper
- ✓ Bibles for the class

Use this exercise after teaching the children the lesson or after reading the Bible story. Have the class read Hebrews 9:11–28 and then write out their answer to the questions below. (Encourage the class to write at least a full-sentence answer.)

Questions:

- What five-letter word is used the most in this passage of Scripture? Hint: It appears in verses 12–14, 18–22, and 25.
(The five-letter word that is used most in this passage of Scripture is blood.)
- How does verse 22 relate to Jesus and his death on the cross?
(Jesus’ death and shedding of blood on the cross made forgiveness possible.)
- Read what Jesus said to the paralyzed man in Luke 5:20. What is Jesus going to have to do to make his promise to forgive sins possible? Keep in mind what you just read in Hebrews 9:22.
(Hebrews 9:22 tells us the basis upon which Jesus could grant forgiveness: “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” Jesus would need to shed his blood so that the paralyzed man could be forgiven.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Perseverance Demonstrates Faith

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ empty two-liter soda bottles (or gallon milk containers)—one for every four students
- ✓ marbles—two per child
- ✓ prizes for the winner

This relay race will help the children understand how faith informs our perseverance. (We have faith that the marbles fit through the opening of the bottle; we know it is true. Therefore we hope to drop them in through the opening. The men in the story had faith that Jesus could heal; therefore, they persisted in finding a way to bring their friend to Jesus.

Evenly divide the class into teams of four children. Line up each team in front of a bottle. Give each student two marbles. Instruct them to drop their marbles into the bottle one at a time from a standing position. The marble should touch their nose and be dropped from that position. (This will ensure the children do not lower their hands to the bottle.) At the word “go,” the first team member in line will attempt to drop their marbles into the bottle one at a time, retrieving them from the floor as often as necessary. The first team to drop all their marbles into their bottle is the winner. (If this is too difficult, set a time limit. The team with the most marbles in their bottle when time runs out is the winner.)

After the game, lead the class in discussing the following questions:

- **How did knowing the marble would fit in the bottle help you persevere?**
(Because we knew the marble fit we had faith to keep trying. If the marble did not fit we would not have had faith to keep trying.)
- **What did the friends of the crippled man know and believe about Jesus that helped them persevere?**
(They believed Jesus could heal their crippled friend. In spite of not finding a way through the crowd, they did not give up.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Drawing It Out

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Draw a picture of the paralyzed man picking up his mat and praising God.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Mind Reader

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ index cards and pencils
- ✓ three volunteers prepared ahead of time

Enlist the help of three volunteers prior to class for this trick.

This exercise will amaze your class until you tell them how you did it. Once they know the trick, you will stand in stark contrast to God who knows all our thoughts.

Choose three volunteers, two to play the role of casual audience members and one to play the skeptic (the skeptic should be a student if possible). Prior to class, arrange two separate questions and answers for each of your accomplices. These questions should be simple think-of-a-number or think-of-a-color type questions. Memorize the responses ahead of time to add to the trick.

In class, explain that you are pretty gifted at knowing the thoughts of people. Ask for volunteers and then call on your first two helpers. Call them to the front and ask them the prearranged questions, one at a time. Have the volunteers write their answers on index cards. Make a show of searching their minds for the correct answer. Have them reveal their card after you have guessed. The class will be skeptical. Your skeptic should be fueling suspicion, accusing you of some sort of trick. Finally the skeptic should say that the other two were set up and that if you really can read minds you should allow him to pick someone. Agree to the challenge. After scanning the class, the skeptic should say he doesn't trust anyone else and that he is to be the one.

By this time the class should be snookered really good. Bring the skeptic up to the front and have him write his answer on a card. Have the skeptic act flabbergasted when you guess correctly.

Ask the class if they can guess how you did it, and then confess. Ask the class the following questions:

- Did you think it was a trick of some kind?
- Why did you think it was a trick?
- Did Jesus really know the minds of the Pharisees in the story?
(Yes, Jesus really knew what the Pharisees were thinking.)
- How could Jesus know?
(Jesus is God and is all-knowing.)