

JESUS HEALS THE PARALYTIC

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: LUKE 5:17-26

*Forgiveness is the greater healing*

The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

Among a crowd of skeptics, men of faith were found. We often do not consider who made up the crowd in this familiar story. The word had gotten out about Jesus. His reputation for miracles and healing drew Pharisees and teachers of the law from all the surrounding villages. When the men who carried the paralyzed man could find no way through the crowd of religious rulers, they decided to try lowering their friend to Jesus through the roof. The text tells us that the power of the Lord was present for healing, but we do not read about any Pharisee being healed. The rulers came to evaluate and judge Jesus. They were filled with doubt in their hearts. When Jesus saw the men lower the cripple through a hole in the roof He commended their faith.

Jesus knew their thoughts. When Jesus forgave the sins of the crippled man, the Pharisees questioned in their minds His authority to forgive sins. Jesus, however, knew their thoughts. We can too quickly glance over the amazing fact that God is aware of every one of our thoughts. We can fool ourselves into thinking that our sinful thoughts are somehow hidden from Him. They may be hidden from everyone else, but not from God. Rather than rebuke these men for doubting, Jesus gave them reason to believe. He healed the paralyzed man. By healing the man, Jesus demonstrated that He had the authority to forgive sins.

The paralytic was healed and everyone was amazed. It is interesting to see the results of Jesus' miracle. The paralytic left praising God, and everyone, including the Pharisees, gave praise to God. Though they didn't fully see that Jesus was God, they knew that any healing was the result of God. For them, Jesus could have been a prophet, for the prophets could heal. Prophets from the Old Testament did heal, but they did not personally forgive sins. The people present were struck with such awe that they failed to realize God was among them. Had they realized that Jesus was God, their response would have been to worship Him.

JESUS HEALS THE PARALYTIC

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: LUKE 5:17-26

WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

The teachers of the law, the scribes, and Pharisees knew full well that only God had the power to forgive sins. In response to their objections (remember, Jesus knew what was in their hearts), Jesus challenged them by healing the crippled man. By this He was saying they were correct. Only God could forgive sins; Jesus is God.

The teachers, scribes, and Pharisees were amazed along with everyone else. Jesus was more than a good man or teacher. He was God Himself, sent to suffer and die for our sins. Jesus could forgive the man based only on the cross. The paralyzed man placed his faith in Jesus, the Savior, and God forgave him.

ON THE ROAD TO EMMANUS

Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.

Bible Passage: Psalm 119:97-104

Connecting the passage to Christ:

Though the claim of this passage might be pursued by any man, Jesus is the only man who fulfilled the claim. Jesus is the only one who meditated on the law of the Lord all the day and kept His feet from every evil way.

Questions for reflection:

- How does Psalm 119:98 fit in with the passage for this week in Luke 5? (In Luke 5:21 the scribes and the Pharisees questioned Jesus, trying to trap him. Jesus, however, was wiser than the Pharisees. He even knew what they were thinking!)
- How should we apply this passage to our own lives, even though we are not perfect in our obedience? (God's Word can make us wiser than our enemies, help keep our feet from evil, and give us understanding. We should try to meditate on God's Word every day.)

JESUS HEALS THE PARALYTIC

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: LUKE 5:17-26

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

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.

ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?

PERSEVERANCE DEMONSTRATES FAITH

Supplies:

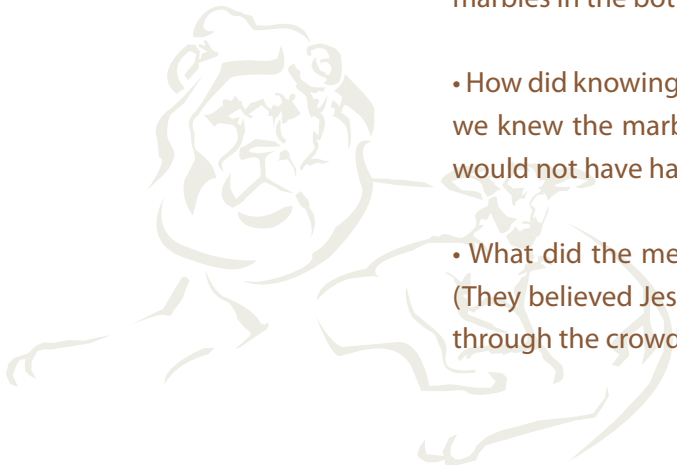
- 6 empty two-liter soda bottles
- enough marbles to give each member of your class two
- prizes for the winner

The object of this relay is to 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 have 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 the man before Jesus.

Divide the class into four to six even teams. Give each team a two-liter bottle and each student two marbles. Tell them they must drop the marbles into the bottle 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 drop his or her marble into the bottle then retrieve it off the floor and try again until they are successful in dropping both marbles. The first team to drop all their marbles is the winner. (If this is too difficult you can set a time limit. The winning team is the team with the most marbles in the bottle when the time is complete.

- 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 men 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.)



JESUS HEALS THE PARALYTIC

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: LUKE 5:17-26

MIND READER

You will need 3 volunteers for this trick. You will need to enlist their help prior to class.

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 of 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 color type questions. Memorize the responses ahead of time to add to the trick.

In class explain that you are pretty gifted yourself in knowing the thoughts of people. Ask for volunteers and then call on your first two helpers. 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 his 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 real good. Have the skeptic act flabbergasted when you guess correctly.

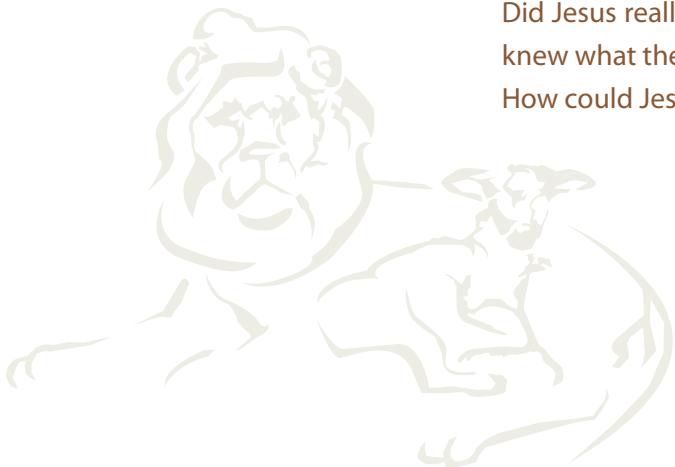
Ask the class if they can guess how you did it, then confess. Ask the class the following questions:

How many of you thought it was a trick of some kind?

Why did you think it was a trick?

Did Jesus really know the mind of the Pharisees in the story? (Yes, Jesus really knew what the Pharisees were thinking.)

How could Jesus know? (Jesus is God and God is all-knowing.)



JESUS HEALS THE PARALYTIC

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: LUKE 5:17-26

ACTIVITY #3

Supplies:

a selection of sheets and cloaks to act as costumes and a stretcher for carrying the crippled man (Only dress up the main roles: Jesus, the paralytic and the men who are carrying him.)

Since this story contains a crowd, use the class to act it out. Get creative. Have the class act skeptical, even cynical, and then erupt in praise and amazement. After dramatizing the story, ask the class the following questions:

How did acting out the scene help you to imagine what it must have been like?

What is the most significant part of this story? (The most significant part of this story is that forgiveness is granted. Though Jesus does not explain in this passage the basis of His granting of forgiveness, we know this is only possible because of His death on the cross. Jesus was aware, as He extended forgiveness to the crippled man, that He would soon die for that man's sins. Forgiveness can be granted only because of Christ's atonement on the cross. Help the class see that forgiveness is not as easy to grant as saying the words. Jesus had to take the Father's wrath for our sin and die upon the cross in our place.)

PRAYER

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

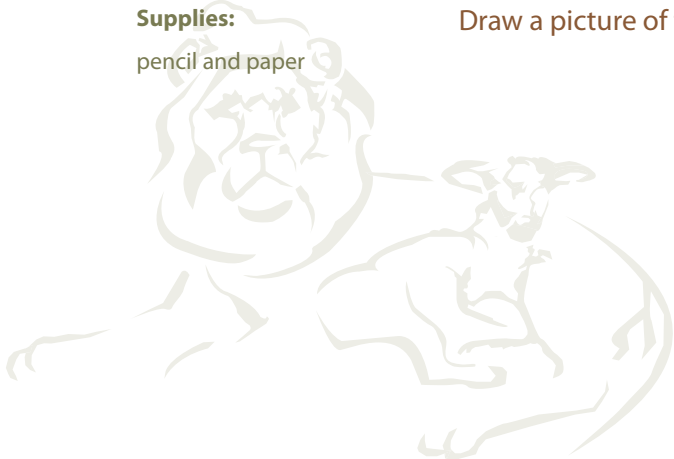
IN CLASS PROJECT

AN ACTIVITY

Supplies:

pencil and paper

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



JESUS HEALS THE PARALYTIC

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: LUKE 5:17-26

FOR THE OLDER GRADES

Have the class read Hebrews 9:11-28 and then write out their answer to the following question:

How does this passage in Hebrews relate to Luke 5:17:26? (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 paralytic could be forgiven.) Have the class do more than write a one word answer. Tell them they need to write at least three sentences.

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 and John 10:33.

