

March 29, 2020

Bible Passage: Mark 2:1–12

(Healing of the Paralyzed Man)

God Forgives

REMEMBER VERSE

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Hebrews 4:16

Storytelling

Bible Passage: Mark 2:1–12

RELATE

In The Big God Story, Jesus—the Savior whom God had promised to Adam and Eve, Abraham, David, and all of God’s people—finally came to earth. After Jesus was baptized and God’s Spirit gave Him the power to resist temptation in the wilderness, Jesus began teaching people about God, performing miracles, and healing those who were suffering. Lots of people began to follow Him wherever He went. **Before we hear more, let’s pray together.** Lead children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

One day, Jesus entered a city called Capernaum and went to a house. When people heard that Jesus was there, so many people came to hear Him teach that there was no room left in the house—not even outside the door! Let’s read in our Bibles what happened. Have the children turn to Mark 2:1–4 and follow along as you read.

Can you tell me what *paralyzed* means? Pause for answers. Someone who is paralyzed can’t move one or more parts of his body. In this case, the paralyzed man couldn’t walk. His friends really wanted to get this man to Jesus because they knew Jesus could heal him. So they put the man on a mat and carried him to the house where Jesus was preaching.

Since there wasn’t room to bring the man to Jesus through the door, the four men took a step of faith by going up to the roof instead. While you’re seated, can you join me by stomping your feet as we pretend to climb up to the roof? The men went up, up, up, up, up, up! As you say, “Up,” lift your knees high and stomp your feet down to imitate the act of climbing. Up on the roof, the friends made an opening in the roof and lowered the paralyzed man inside.

Let’s see what happened next inside the house. Have the children follow along in their Bibles as you read Mark 2:5–11. And do you know what the man did? He got up, took up his mat, and walked! Everyone was amazed, and they praised God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!” (Mark 2:12). Can you join me in clapping and praising God? Invite the children to clap and shout with you, exclaiming, “We have never seen anything like this!”

Through the healing of the paralyzed man, the people saw Jesus’ authority. Can anyone tell me what *authority* means? Pause for answers. Good thoughts. *Authority* means the power to command something to happen. Jesus showed His authority to both forgive sins and heal bodies!

Now, the teachers of the law knew that only God can forgive sins, and that’s why they were angry. They didn’t understand how Jesus could say that the man’s sins were forgiven. They didn’t know that Jesus is God. But because Jesus is God, He knew exactly what this man needed. Jesus knew that the man’s body wasn’t the only thing that needed healing. His heart needed healing as well.

Because of sin, this man’s heart was broken, and his relationship with God was broken. Have the children make a heart shape by cupping together their two hands and then pull their hands apart to symbolize a broken heart. But when Jesus forgave the man’s sins, his heart and his relationship with God were healed! Have the children bring their hands back together again so they form a whole and complete heart shape. Jesus healed the man on the inside first, and then Jesus healed him on the outside.

Like the paralyzed man, we've all sinned. But Jesus came so our relationship with God could be healed and made right again! Only God has the authority to forgive sins, and He wants to do that for you. When we trust and obey Jesus and take a step of faith, He changes us.

Discussion Questions

- Why did the man's friends carry him on the mat? Mark 2:3
- What did the man's friends do? Mark 2:4
- Why did the friends want to bring the paralyzed man to Jesus? Mark 1:34
- What is authority?
- Why does Jesus have authority to forgive sins? Mark 2:6–12

RESPOND//

Washed Hearts

Children have the opportunity to confess sins and ponder God's forgiveness using washable markers and water on paper.

SUPPLIES

- Heart template
- Plain white paper towels (1 large sheet per child)
- Paper (1 sheet per child)
- Scissors
- Yellow washable markers (1 per child)
- Bowl
- Water
- Dish soap
- Spoon
- Tape

SET UP

Print the Heart template and use it to cut out two hearts for each child—one out of the paper towel and one out of the paper. Fill the bowl with water and a generous amount of dish soap. Stir the soap so that it mixes into the water.

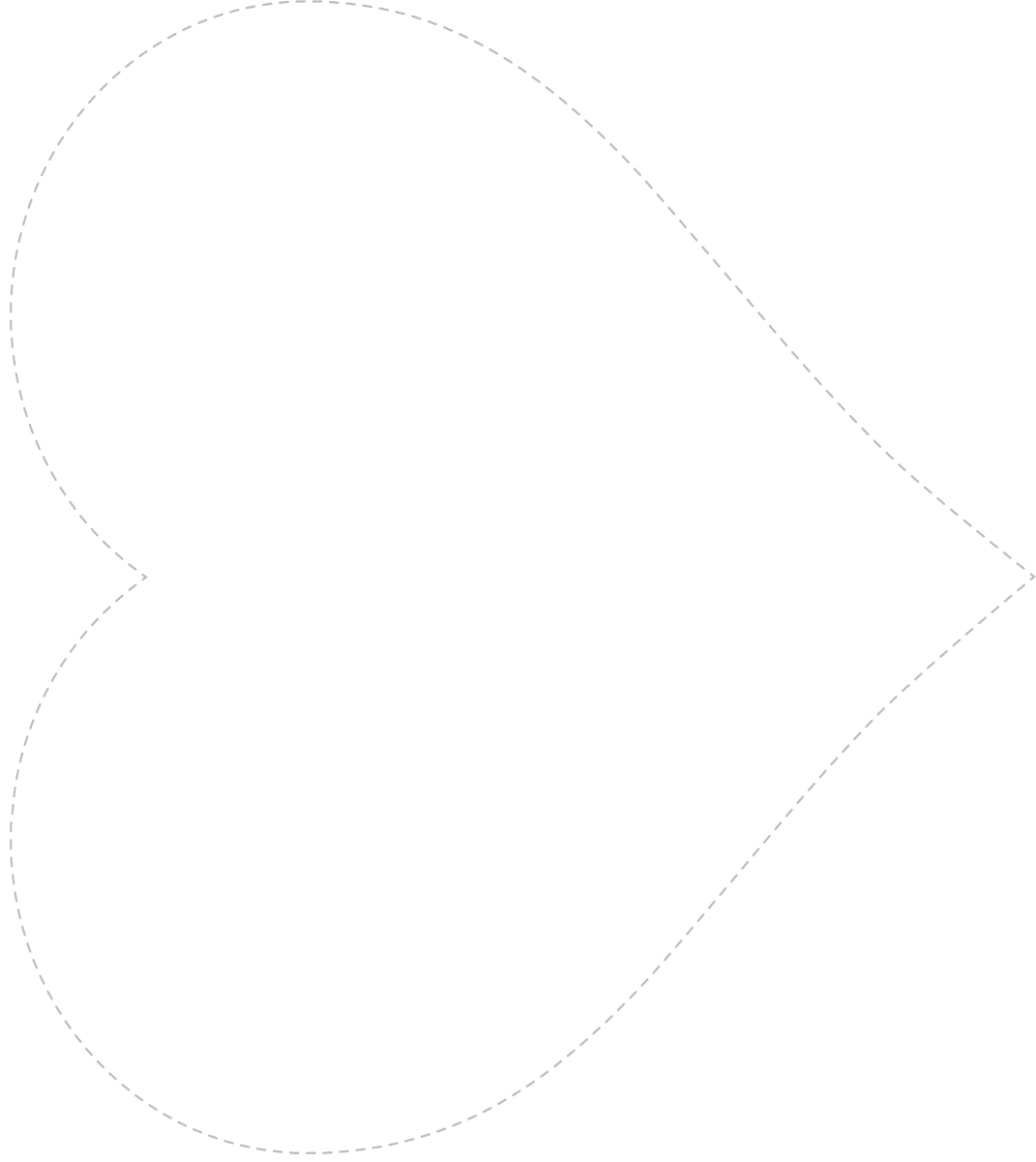
RELATE

Just like the man in our story today needed God to forgive his sins, we all need God's forgiveness. Each of us has sinned: We have said hurtful things in anger, we have lied, we have been mean, we have been boastful, we have refused to share. Because we have all sinned, we have all broken our relationship with God. But because God is so amazing, He made the way for us to heal our relationship with Him. He tells us to be honest about our sins and to ask Him to forgive us.

Give a paper towel heart to each child. Invite the kids to take a minute to confess their sins to Jesus by writing or drawing on the hearts with the yellow markers. Let the children know that when they're ready, they can kneel beside the bowl. Then they can begin to gently wash the paper towels in the tub, rubbing them back and forth with their fingers. The marker will wash off, like how God washes away our sin.

Allow the children to leave their hearts in the water. Then give each one a paper heart. Invite the kids to return to use the markers to fill their hearts with prayers of thanksgiving or pictures for God. When they're done, the children can tape their paper hearts to the wall as a way of praising and thanking God for His authority to forgive sins.

Heart Template



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