



Four Friends Help a Paralyzed Man

Mark 2:1-12


Preschoolers are beginning to develop a sense of right and wrong, and with that sense of right and wrong comes feelings of guilt. They look to adults for cues, believing that actions that make adults happy must be right and actions that make adults angry or sad must be wrong. When preschoolers are aware that they've done something wrong, they look to adults for assurance that they're still loved. Use this lesson to help children understand that Jesus loves them and forgives them when they believe in him.



► **Bible Point**
Jesus forgives us.

Key Verse
"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Children will thank Jesus for forgiving them.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p>1 Getting Started <i>about 5 min.</i></p>	<p>Welcome and Celebrate Welcome each other, and praise God through music.</p>	<p>CD player Teacher Pack: CD</p>	
<p>2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i></p>	<p>A Forgiven Heart Pass a heart pillow to each other and rest.</p>	<p>Bible, CD player Teacher Pack: CD, plush heart</p>	
<p>3 Bible Exploration <i>about 15 min.</i></p>	<p>Puppy Pointers Discover what a beach towel has to do with Jesus helping a paralyzed man.</p>	<p>CD player, Theo puppet, hand towel Teacher Pack: CD</p>	<p>Put the hand towel over Theo's shoulders like a beach towel.</p>
	<p>Bible Time: A Helpless Man Help dramatize the Bible passage.</p>	<p>Bible, paper, child-safe scissors, glue, craft sticks Teacher Pack: "Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)</p>	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p style="text-align: center;">4 Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> (Choose 2 centers.)</p>	<p>Center 1: Take a Friend to Jesus Add handles to a mat to carry someone to Jesus.</p>	My Bible Hugs, yarn, crayons, hole punch, scissors	Remove the Lesson 12 pages from each My Bible Hugs student book, and write children's names on them. Cut two 20-inch pieces of yarn per child.
	<p>Center 2: Construction Site Make yummy thatched roofs.</p>	bread, jelly, chow mein noodles, spoons, napkins, cookie cutter, antibacterial gel (optional)	
	<p>Center 3: Jesus Will Forgive Game Role-play the man who was forgiven and his friends.</p>	1 towel or blanket for every 5 children	
	<p>Center 4: Clean Again Create two pictures of what happened in the Bible passage using their fingers.</p>	finger paints, construction paper	
<p style="text-align: center;">5 Lasting Impressions <i>about 10 min.</i></p>	<p>Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.</p>	My Bible Hugs	
	<p>Action Prayer Act out a prayer to Jesus.</p>	wet wipes, plate	
	<p>Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Four Friends Help a Paralyzed Man

Mark 2:1-12

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Jesus Makes Capernaum His Home Base

From this passage and others, it's apparent that Capernaum was Jesus' home base for much of his ministry.

Jesus was now drawing a crowd everywhere he went, and Capernaum was no exception. Even though Jesus had just arrived, no one was turned away and everyone was welcomed until the house was filled and people were standing outside the door!

Four Friends Help a Paralyzed Man Get to Jesus

The persistence the four friends showed in getting the paralytic before Jesus demonstrated their faith that Jesus could heal him. Some suggest that it was their faith alone that prompted Jesus to heal the man and forgive his sins. However, that seems inconsistent with the rest of Scripture, which consistently emphasizes personal repentance and faith. Instead, it's likely the paralytic's faith was similar to that of his friends and that his faith simply wasn't mentioned here—his friends probably wouldn't have done what they had without their paralyzed friend's consent. And it's possible that the paralyzed man was unable to speak clearly enough to express his own faith.

Jesus' Healings Amaze and Shock His Critics

Everyone in the house (and on the roof!) was likely shocked when Jesus first forgave the paralytic's sins. The skeptical teachers of the Law who were present didn't have to say anything for Jesus to know what they were thinking. He clearly intended to force them to face head-on who he really was. Evidence that sins were forgiven was not immediately visible, but healing the man's paralysis was. When Jesus healed the man,

he demonstrated that he had the power to do both. And by the order he chose, he also demonstrated that in his priorities the forgiveness of sins is more important than physical healing.

This passage says the people were amazed. In Matthew's and Luke's accounts of this incident (Matthew 9:2-8; Luke 5:17-26), we see that people also were filled with awe, the Greek word for which can also be translated as *fear*. They went away praising God, knowing that forgiveness is available in Jesus.

The Jesus Connection

A relationship with Jesus satisfies all our needs. Jesus provides help, comfort, healing, and forgiveness. Because of his five friends, this man found healing and forgiveness! Praise God for the forgiveness you've received, and thank God for the people who helped you find friendship with Jesus and his forgiveness. Praise God for these good things today. You can write your prayer here.





Welcome and Celebrate Supplies

CD player

Teacher Pack

CD: "Welcome, Welcome" (track 14),
"Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 10)

1

GETTING STARTED

Welcome and Celebrate



Tip Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each one with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to gather the children together in a circle.

Lead children in singing "Welcome, Welcome" (track 14 on the CD) to the tune of "Ten Little Indians." Have the children stand in a circle and hold hands as they swing their arms and sing. Encourage them to smile at each other throughout the song.



Welcome, welcome to our church.

Welcome, welcome to our church.

Welcome, welcome to our church.

We're so glad you're here!

(Repeat 2x.)

Say: **This week we'll learn some wonderful news: When we do wrong things,**

▶ **JESUS FORGIVES US!** Let's sing another song together. This song will help us remember that Jesus is our friend and ▶ **JESUS FORGIVES US.**

Lead children in singing "Jesus Loves Me Rock" (track 10 on the CD). Encourage children to echo the words in parentheses.



Jesus loves me; *(echo)*

This I know *(echo)*

For the Bible *(echo)*

Tells me so. *(echo)*

Little children *(echo)*

To him belong. *(echo)*

They are weak, but *(echo)*

He's so strong! *(echo)*

Jaaaayyy! *(echo)*

Eeeeeeee! *(echo)*

Ssssssss-aaaah! *(echo)*

Uuuuuu! *(echo)*

Ssssssss-aaaah! *(echo)*





And what's that spell? *(Jesus!)*
 And who do you love? *(Jesus!)*
 And who loves you? *(Jesus!)*
 Who died for you? *(Jesus!)*
 And who's your guy? *(Jesus!)*
 The apple of your eye! *(Jesus!)*
 And who's your friend? *(Jesus!)*
 He'll love ya to the end!

(Repeat from beginning.)

"Jesus Loves Me Rock" by Dean-o. © 2003 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: **Jesus loves us and ► JESUS FORGIVES US** when we believe in him. He's our friend! Let's hear about how Jesus forgave one man who believed in him.

2 KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

A Forgiven Heart

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to Matthew 11:28, and show children the words. Tell children that the Bible is God's special book.

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible, Matthew 11:28, says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). This means that Jesus wants us to come to him and rest. Let's say our Key Verse together.** Lead children in saying the simplified version of the Key Verse with you: **Come to me and rest (Matthew 11:28).**

Say: **Jesus wants us to come to him and ask him for forgiveness when we've done something bad. ► JESUS FORGIVES US, and then we feel better and we can rest.**

Show children the plush heart. Let the children pass it around to feel it.

Say: **When we do something wrong, we feel yucky about it. Jesus is the only one who can take away the wrong things we did and the yucky way we feel. When Jesus forgives us, he says, "Come to me and rest."** Lead the children in repeating the Key Verse with you.



A Forgiven Heart Supplies


- Bible
- CD player
- Teacher Pack**
- CD: "God Will Forgive Us" (track 18)
- plush heart





Say: **And when Jesus forgives us, we will feel better—we really can rest. This heart is like a pillow. It reminds us that when Jesus forgives us and our hearts are clean, we can rest. Let’s pass this heart around the circle and rest our heads on it as we say sorry for something wrong we did.** Encourage the children to tell God sorry in their heads, rather than aloud.

Say: **Now let’s sing a song to help us remember that God forgives us, and we can rest in Jesus.** Encourage the children to lie down and rest as you lead them in singing “God Will Forgive Us” (track 18 on the CD) to the tune of “Jesus Loves Me.”

 **God will forgive us. Yes, we know
Just because his Word says so.
We can tell him all our sins
'Cause Jesus is our loving friend.**

**God will forgive us.
God will forgive us.
God will forgive us.
The Bible tells me so.**

(Repeat from beginning.)

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What did you like about resting your head on the pillow?**
- **What’s it like for you when you’ve done a bad thing?**
- **Why do you want Jesus to forgive you and give you rest?**

Say: **When we go to Jesus and ask for forgiveness, he takes away bad feelings and helps us rest in him. ► JESUS FORGIVES US because he loves us, and he wants us to rest with him.**

3 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Puppy Pointers

What You’ll Do

Say: **Listen, everyone, Theo’s coming! He has something to show us. Let’s find out what it is.** Play “Here, Theo” (track 4 on the CD), and bring out Theophilus the FaithRetriever.

Puppy Pointers Supplies

CD player
Theo puppet
hand towel

Teacher Pack

CD: “Here, Theo”
(track 4)

Puppy Pointers Easy Prep

Put the hand towel over
Theo’s shoulders like a
beach towel.



Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Hello, Theo! It's so good to see you at church with us today. What do you have there?

Theo: This is my beach towel.

Teacher: Why did you bring your beach towel with you?

Theo: I heard there were some friends around here carrying a man around on a mat. And I thought I could give it a try, too. Would you carry me on this towel?

Teacher: Well, Theo, you heard right. But the friends carrying a man on a mat are friends we're reading about in the Bible today. The friends wanted Jesus to heal this man.

Theo: Wow, I thought it was a game. But I can tell it's something much more important.

Teacher: That's right, Theo. Jesus did an amazing thing that day. He healed the man so he could walk, and he forgave the man for all the wrong things he ever did. Friends, let's say our Bible Point for Theo.

(Lead children in saying the Bible Point for Theo: ► JESUS FORGIVES US.)

Theo: Jesus sure is powerful. Since we're not playing a game with towels, I'm going to run and put this beach towel back in my house.

Teacher: Sounds good! Friends, let's say goodbye to Theo.

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- Why do you think Theo said Jesus is powerful?
- What are some things you'd like to see Jesus do?
- What's great to you about Jesus forgiving someone?

Say: **The men carrying their friend on a mat knew Jesus was powerful, and that's why they brought their friend to him. And Jesus did some great things for the man on the mat, just like he'll do some great things for us when we believe in him. In fact, when we believe in Jesus, ► JESUS FORGIVES US. That's a pretty great thing because Jesus is the only one who can forgive us forever.**

Bible Time: A Helpless Man

What You'll Do

Open your Bible to Mark 2:1-12, and show children the words. Tell children that the Bible is God's special book.

Say: **Today as we read the Bible, we'll learn about a man who Jesus forgave, and we'll learn that ► JESUS FORGIVES US, too.**

The Bible says that Jesus went to a town called Capernaum. Many people there wanted to see him—so many people came that there was no more room for them



Bible Time: A Helpless Man Supplies

Bible
paper
child-safe scissors
glue
craft sticks

Teacher Pack
"Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man" poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)





inside the house where he was teaching. They even crowded around the outside of the door. Have children squeeze together in the corner or a small area of your room.

Say: **Four men brought their friend to see Jesus, but the home was already full.**

Put the children in groups of four, and have the groups sit together throughout your room. Give each group a sheet of paper and a craft stick. Then say: **Let's pretend you're the four men.** Help kids understand that each group of four children will pretend to be the four men.

Say: **These four men brought their friend who couldn't walk. His legs wouldn't work, so the four friends carried him on a mat. Let's pretend the paper I gave you is a mat and the craft stick is your friend who can't walk.** Have each group lay a craft stick on the paper. Have each child hold a corner of the paper and lift it as each whole group tries to balance the "man" on the "mat." For groups of three, one child can hold one side and the other two children can hold the opposite corners.

Say: **This craft stick man isn't very heavy, but a full-grown man would be! But it was so important to the four men to bring their friend to Jesus that they carried him all the way to the home where Jesus was teaching.** Let the children carry the craft stick men on the paper mats around the room once and then return to where their groups were sitting.

Say: **Remember, the house was so full that the friends couldn't get in. And they did something pretty great because they wanted Jesus to heal their friend. They found a hole in the roof of the home and they lowered their friend down through the hole!**

Pair each group of four with another group. You can also put three groups together. Have one group (or two groups, if you've put three groups together) kneel in a circle and put their arms over each other's shoulders to make a house. Have the other group attempt to lower the craft man on the paper mat down through the center of the group without dropping the craft man off the mat. Encourage all the children to work together to try this. Ensure each group gets a chance to lower their craft stick man.

Have the children get back into their groups of four with the paper and craft sticks. Then say: **When Jesus saw the hurt man and the faith of his friends, he said to the man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Jesus forgave the man and made him feel clean again. Then Jesus told the man to get up from his mat and walk.**

Show the "Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man" poster. Say: **The man couldn't walk before, but Jesus healed him right there so he could stand up, pick up his mat, and walk out of that home.**

Have each group cut their paper into four pieces. Say: **When Jesus heals and forgives us, we don't need to worry about all the wrong things we've done, just as the man didn't need to worry about his mat anymore. Let's pretend these slips of paper we've cut are mats. We'll roll them up like mats we can carry, and then we'll glue them to the poster to show that the man didn't need his mat anymore.** Encourage the children to roll up their "mats." Help where needed.

Say: **As you glue the rolled-up mat to the poster, pray and thank Jesus for taking**



away the bad things you've done so you don't have to worry about them anymore. Help children glue the rolls to the poster. Glue the loose side to the poster so the "mats" don't come unrolled.

Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What were you thinking as you rolled your mat and gave it to Jesus?**
- **What do you like about being forgiven?**

Say: **We don't know what the man's sin was, but we do know that Jesus forgave him. Even the crowds of people were happy that Jesus forgave the man and healed him. Jesus told them that because he was God, only he had the power to forgive sins. Being forgiven of our sins gives us a clean and wonderful feeling. ► JESUS FORGIVES US when we believe in him.**



4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

CENTER 1:

Take a Friend to Jesus

What You'll Do

Give each child a Lesson 12 page from My Bible Hugs. Say: **The four men cared very much about their friend. They carried him to Jesus to be healed. Jesus healed his body so he could walk. But first Jesus healed the man's heart by forgiving him for the wrong things he'd done.**

Ask:

- **Tell about some friends or family members you care very much about.** Allow time.
- **Why would you want to tell those friends about Jesus?** Allow time.

Say: **Let's each choose one person we want to tell about Jesus. We'll each decorate the person on our My Bible Fun pages to look like the person we each choose.** Provide crayons, and have each child color the picture. Have children punch

Center 1: Take a Friend to Jesus Supplies

My Bible Hugs
yarn
crayons
hole punch
scissors

Center 1: Take a Friend to Jesus Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 12 pages from each My Bible Hugs student book, and write children's names on them. Cut two 20-inch pieces of yarn per child.





holes in the sides of the mats. Then help the kids each thread a length of yarn through the holes on one side of the mat and repeat the process using the second piece of yarn on the other side. The yarn will be the “ropes” to carry the person to Jesus.

When kids finish, have them walk in a circle, “carrying” the people on the mats. Say: **When you believe in Jesus, he’ll forgive you. And when others believe in Jesus, he’ll forgive them, too. You each thought of someone very important to you, and that’s who you’re pretending to carry now. To help that person get to Jesus like the four men brought their friends, you can tell him or her about Jesus and that**
▶ **JESUS FORGIVES US.**

Let the children sit. Then pray for them: **Dear Jesus, we want other people to know about you. We want to bring them to you so you’ll forgive them like you forgave the man we read about in the Bible. Thank you that you forgive us when we believe in you, too. In your name, amen.**

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What are some ways you can tell others about Jesus?
- What will you do to tell the person on your mat about Jesus this week?

Say: **We have people we love, just like the four men loved their friend. Since we know that ▶ JESUS FORGIVES US and that he’s the only one who can forgive us forever, we want our loved ones to know about him, too. We can bring them to Jesus by telling them what we’ve learned.**

■ CENTER 2:

Construction Site

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Have children clean their hands and then sit down for the snack.

Say: **Today we learned that Jesus healed a paralyzed man after the man’s friends lowered him through the roof of a house. Let’s make our own roofs so we can act out what happened and remember that ▶ JESUS FORGIVES US!**

Give each child a slice of bread. Help children use spoons to spread the jelly on their bread slices. Then show kids how to sprinkle the bread with chow mien noodles. Explain that when Jesus was on earth, roofs were made of thatch, which looked a lot like straw.

Help each child use the cookie cutter to cut a hole in his or her bread “roof.”

Before children enjoy their snacks, lead them in this prayer: **Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to forgive us. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

Center 2: Construction Site Supplies

bread
jelly
chow mein noodles
spoons
napkins
cookie cutter
antibacterial gel
(optional)

! **ALLERGY ALERT**



Let the children retell what happened as they enjoy the snack.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: **When the men lowered their friend through the roof, Jesus noticed how much faith they had. Jesus wants us to believe in him, too. And when we do, ► JESUS FORGIVES US because he loves us.**

■ **CENTER 3:**

Jesus Will Forgive Game

What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **We learned today that when we believe in Jesus, ► JESUS FORGIVES US. Let's play a forgiveness game.**

Put the children in groups of five. Have one child in each group lie on the towel, and have the other four preschoolers hold the corners of the towel. Have the child on the towel say, "If we tell Jesus about the wrong things we do..." Then have the four "friends" pull the towel a few inches and say, "Jesus will forgive us." Have the child on the towel stand up and choose another child to have a turn. Repeat the game until everyone in the group has had a chance to be the forgiven person.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was it like to try to pull your friend?**
- **Tell whether you think the wrong things you do feel heavy like that. Why or why not?**
- **What can you do to get rid of those heavy things and the bad feelings?**

Say: **Our friends were really heavy. Like that, the wrong things we do can feel really heavy on our hearts, too. Jesus wants us to tell him about those things because ► JESUS FORGIVES US when we do. Then we're free to play and enjoy life more.**

■ **CENTER 4:**

Clean Again

What You'll Do ■■■■

Give each child a piece of construction paper, and set out finger paints. Say: **We read about some pretty amazing things in the Bible today. What was your favorite part of what we read?** Encourage the children to each finger-paint on the construction paper the scene they tell about.



Jesus Will Forgive Game Supplies

.....
1 towel or blanket for every 5 children

Center 4: Clean Again Supplies

.....
finger paints
construction paper



After the children finish, have them clean their hands. Then give each child another piece of construction paper. Say: **We don't have to be the only ones who know the amazing things Jesus did for this man. We don't have to be the only ones who know ► JESUS FORGIVES US.** Show children how to put the second piece of paper on top of their finger-paint creation and then lift the paper up. The paper should show a reverse print. **When we tell others about Jesus, it's kind of like how we made a print on the other piece of paper. When we tell others, they get to have the special information that ► JESUS FORGIVES US, too.**

Set the papers in a safe place to dry.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What did you like about making a new print on a different piece of paper?
- Why do you think it's important to tell others about Jesus' forgiveness?

Say: **Jesus loves us and wants to forgive our sins. When we believe in Jesus, we know that ► JESUS FORGIVES US and helps us live in heaven forever. Like we made a print on a new piece of paper, we can tell others so they'll know Jesus, too.** Encourage each child to keep one of the pictures and give the other one to a friend or family member. Tell kids they can use the pictures to tell people about Jesus.

5 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Hugs

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

After the children have cleaned up their centers, bring everyone back to a circle area on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they remember about what they learned from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: **Today we learned that ► JESUS FORGIVES US. I would like each of you this week to choose a way to thank Jesus for forgiving you.**

Give kids these two challenges to choose from:

- **If you do something wrong, ask Jesus to care for you and help you do right next time. Then thank him for forgiving you.**



- ■ **Blow some bubbles and thank Jesus for taking away your sins just as the air takes away the bubbles.**

Say: **If you want to ask for Jesus’ help, circle the choice with one dot. If you want to blow bubbles, circle the choice with two dots.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Hugs page. Make sure you choose a challenge as well, and tell the kids. Your commitment will inspire your kids and give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

Action Prayer

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Jesus cleans our hearts when he forgives us. Let’s wipe this plate as we think of ways we want Jesus to forgive us.**

Have the children repeat this prayer after you. Then invite children to repeat the prayer individually as they pass around the plate and clean it with wet wipes.

Pray: **Dear Jesus,
Please forgive my sins.
Thank you for taking my sins away
And helping me feel brand-new again.
In your name, amen.**

Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Hugs pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage the parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment during the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church’s families. Available at group.com/digital.

Action Prayer Supplies

.....
wet wipes
plate



