

# Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

Grades  
**5-6**

## FRIENDS

MARK 2:1-12

### What's happening in this story?

A paralyzed man's friends bring him to Jesus. When they can't reach the door because of the crowd, they cut a hole through the roof and lower the man to Jesus. Jesus proclaims the man's sins forgiven, but some scribes accuse him of blasphemy, declaring that only God can forgive sins. To demonstrate that he does in fact have such authority, Jesus commands the man to stand and walk. The paralyzed man jumps up and the bystanders glorify God!

### What does this story mean for kids?

Kids can hear this story from the viewpoint of the paralyzed man and of his friends. Like the man, kids know what it's like to sometimes need extra help. Ask kids who helps them in such situations, and how they feel about that. This story shows the lengths to which friends can go to help each other. It also shows Jesus' power to heal people, both in body and in spirit.

### Why this theme?

This story is a fun one for kids because of the drama of men tearing a hole in the roof and lowering their friend into the house—all to get him to Jesus! Kids can wonder about what some people in their lives have done to get *them* to Jesus.

### AGE LEVEL TIP

At this stage in their lives, kids are starting to develop a deeper understanding of friendship. The changes are often subtle but reflect a growing maturity and self-awareness as kids start to understand relationships as mutual ventures and become more willing to invest in a few good friends.



### GENERAL SUPPLIES

- White paper
- Pens
- Tape
- Glue
- Markers

### LESSON SUPPLIES

- Sticky notes
- Scrap of fabric

## Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Write three or four friendship questions on different pieces of white paper and tape them to the wall. Keep it simple: "Who was your first friend?" "Who is your newest friend?" "Do you have more friends who are girls or boys?" Have kids write answers on sticky notes and stick them onto the papers.

## Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

Think about your friends. What things do they have in common? What makes a *friend* different from an *acquaintance*? What qualifies someone as a *best friend*? Allow time for kids to respond. **Friends are an important part of our lives. Friends support each other. They are trustworthy and loyal. And like the friends in our story today, they'll go through a lot of effort to help a friend in need.**

Pray together: **Dear God, thank you for friends. Help us to treat our friends, and everyone else, the way we want to be treated. Amen.**

## Pass out leaflets and pens.

As Jesus' reputation spread, more and more people traveled from farther and farther away to see him. Lots of people packed into small places where he

was teaching, and some were even turned away. Get together with a partner and interview each other using the questions on your leaflets. Take notes on the map as your partner talks. Allow time for kids to work, then invite them to share with the group one thing their partner said.



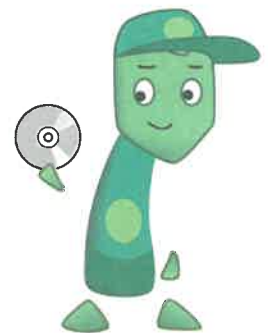
## Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

Friends are people who watch out for each other. Sure, sometimes they tease and goof around, but when things get tough, the best friends are the ones who do whatever it takes to help each other. Let's watch.

View Episode 11, "Can't Stop Won't Stop," on the Year Gold Winter Grades 3–6 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- **Would you say that Leo and Gabe are friends? Why or why not?**
- **What do Leo and Gabe have in common?**
- **What did Gabe do to help Leo?**
- **When did you do something to help a friend? What was it?**
- **What has a friend done to help you get through a tough time?**



## Open your Whirl Kids Study Bibles.

Today's passage is in the book of Mark. It's in the New Testament in the Gospels and Acts section of the Bible. If this is your first time reading from Mark, invite kids to check out the book introduction and comic on page 1198.



In this story, Jesus returns to Capernaum. Word about his ministry and his reputation for healing are widespread, and the crowds that show up to see him have multiplied. Some people come because they want to hear Jesus, while others make the journey so he can heal them. Some even come along because they want Jesus to heal their friends.

Help kids find Mark 2:1-12 and read it in this creative way together: Act it out! Assign volunteers to read the narrator, Jesus, and scribe parts while others silently act out the parts of Jesus, the paralyzed man, the four friends, and the scribes. When you get to the quote at the end of verse 12, have everyone read together.

Invite kids to check out what Leo says about Mark 2:3-5.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- **What is the most surprising part of this story?**
- **How do you think the paralyzed man felt when he saw the crowd?**
- **Removing a roof to get help for a friend is an incredible example of going above and beyond! What's the most significant thing you've ever done for a friend in need?**
- **Why did the scribes get so upset?**
- **Why did Jesus heal the paralyzed man?**

## Make your mark on the Wall Chart.

Look at the chart and find the theme for today. Give kids time to find the word *Friends*. Jesus healed the paralyzed man in part because of the faith demonstrated by his friends. What does that say about your role in the well-being of your friends? In the box by *Friends*, glue a small piece of fabric as a reminder of the mat the friends used to carry the paralyzed man.



### BIBLE BIT

Jesus' forgiveness of the man's sins was as scandalous as his healing of the man's paralysis. This story reveals Jesus' divinity because only God can forgive.

### WATCH IT AGAIN

If you watch the video again, pay attention to the way Leo treats Gabe. How does it affect the way Gabe responds when Leo needs help?

### OUR CHURCH

Help make your church a friendly place for visitors! Volunteer to assist the greeters, ushers, or other people who help welcome people to church.



# RESPOND 10

## Open leaflets and pass out pens.

Tear off leaflet square.

1. **The paralyzed man in our story wasn't able to get himself to Jesus, the one person who could heal him. He had to rely on his friends. Even if we don't ever experience that kind of dependence on others, we can still use some help getting closer to Jesus.**
2. If you have an odd number of kids in your group, pair up with one. **Find a partner. You'll need your leaflet squares and pens.**
3. **Your leaflet shows a path. It looks like a maze, but there aren't any wrong turns or dead ends. With the help of your partner, you're going to trace the path from the paralyzed man to Jesus.**
4. **One person will close their eyes and hold a pen. The other person will hold their partner's hand, guiding it along the path. After they reach the end of the path, they can open their eyes.**
5. When kids are done, have them switch roles and use the other leaflet to follow the path.
6. **What did it feel like to rely on a friend to guide you along the path? What did it feel like to be the guide?**
7. **In what ways do you and your friends guide each other toward Jesus in your daily life?**

# LAUNCH 10

## Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Friends bear an awesome responsibility for each other. Not only do friends provide companionship and fun, but friends can also be like family, celebrating successes and helping each other through difficult times. Think about your closest friends; how do you help each other?

## Return to the leaflet panels and pass out markers.

Jesus forgave the paralyzed man's sins. And then he healed him so he could walk! Do you know anyone who needs healing, love, help, or support? Write their name in the mat on your leaflet. Collect leaflet panels and give them to your church's prayer ministry.

## Send kids out with a blessing.

Circle up with kids. **God blesses all of us. And that means me** (place a hand on your chest). **And that means you** (place your other hand on the shoulder of the kid next to you). Each kid passes the blessing by repeating those words and actions. When the blessing makes it back to you, say, **Go and bless the world.**

Thank kids for coming today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.