

Jesus heals the paralysed man

Text and illustrations: Roy Harrison

PLEASE NOTE!

You can make the visual for this lesson yourself, by joining 4 strips of cardboard of around 30 centimetres each with 3 paper fasteners.

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Introduction

Teaching Bible truths

As you teach this lesson make sure that you do not get so engrossed in the narrative that you do not teach Bible truths. We fall short of our responsibility as teachers if we only tell children Bible stories. It is essential that children learn the truths those stories were written down to teach us, and that we then take them a step further to show what that truth means to them in their daily lives. Of course, we cannot in one lesson cover all the teaching any particular story would provide, so one central truth has been chosen. The teaching of the central truth has been woven throughout the narrative, but to help you in your preparation the teaching sections have been marked “CT”.

Make yourself available for counselling

When you present the Gospel message, there will be children who will respond to it independently. They may or may not at a later date tell you that they have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. There will, however, be others who would like some help. They may have questions to ask; they may need help or encouragement in knowing what to say.

As you teach the saved children, there may be times when they would like advice in a difficult situation; they may need clarification on how a particular lesson applies to their daily lives; they may find themselves in a situation where they do not know what the Bible says they should do; they may want to share a difficulty so that you can pray for them, especially if you are the only Christian support they have.

For these reasons it is important that the children know you are available to talk. It is also important that they know when and where to go when they want to talk to you. Finally, it is essential that unsaved children do not confuse coming to the Lord Jesus with coming to you.

In all cases you should not make yourself available at the same time as giving the Gospel invitation, so that the children never get the impression that they cannot come to Christ without coming through you, or that they are saved simply by waiting to speak to you.

An example for use with the unsaved child

“Do you really want to live for the Lord Jesus, but don’t know how to come to Him? I will be glad to explain it from the Bible; come and see me. I’ll be standing by that tree when the meeting is over. Remember, I can’t take away your sin - only the Lord Jesus can do that - but I will be glad to help you understand better how you can come to Him. Just come and sit with me under that tree.”

An example for use with the saved child

“If you have trusted the Lord Jesus as your Saviour and you have never told me about it, please let me know. I’ll be standing beside the piano after the meeting is finished. I would like to know if you too have trusted the Lord Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, so that I can pray for you and perhaps help you.”

Practise using the visuals

It is wise to practise using the visuals before teaching the lesson to children. Become thoroughly familiar with how to use them in the lesson.

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Scripture for teachers

Matthew 9:1-8

Mark 2:1-12

Luke 5:17-26

Central truth

When you put your trust in the Lord Jesus, you should try to bring others to Him.

Lesson

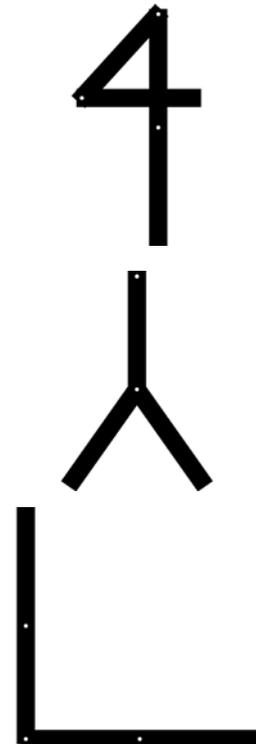
When we receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, He wants to use us to bring others to Himself. He does not take us straight home to Heaven, but leaves us here to tell others about Him. You could use this Bible story to tell others about the Lord Jesus. You could make your visual aid out of four pieces of cardboard and three paper fasteners and, even though you cannot remember everything, you could tell this story to your friends and to your family, and so in this way you can help bring others to the Lord Jesus.

Do you think that four pieces of cardboard could tell a story? Well, if you keep your eyes open and ears open you are going to hear a story and see a story with four pieces of cardboard.

This is a story about **four** men who lived a long time ago in the land of Israel.

These four men had a special friend. He was not like other people because he could **not walk**.

This friend could **not even sit**.





This man had a terrible disease called paralysis and had to **lie** all day long and all night long on his bed. He had been paralysed like this for a long, long time.

These **four** friends wanted to see him healed. They had perhaps tried other remedies, but nothing had made him better. Then they had heard about Someone Who was there in their land and Who was doing wonderful things. This wonderful Person had given blind people their sight, had made the deaf to hear, had healed the lepers. He had even fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fish. Who is this wonderful Person? It is the Lord Jesus Christ. These men lived when the Lord Jesus was here on Earth and they had heard about His miracles.

CT | The Lord Jesus is God the Son and that is why He was able to do these wonderful things. He is all-powerful. He is the perfect Son of God. He is the One Who created the heavens and the Earth and so He is able to do these wonderful things.

And then one day these men heard how the Lord Jesus had come to their town, the city of Capernaum. So they decided to bring their friend to Jesus. They believed that Jesus could heal him.

They put their friend on his **mattress** and with one at each corner they lifted him and began to carry him through the streets of the city to bring him to Jesus. It must have been a strange sight, but they were bringing their friend to Jesus.

CT | If you are a Christian and have put your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, you should be bringing your friends to Jesus. You do not have to put them on a mattress and carry them through the city, but you can pray for them and tell them how the Lord Jesus came into your heart and life and what He has done for you. You can invite them to Good News Club® and to Sunday school to hear the good news of the Gospel. You can even tell them a story about the Lord Jesus, using four pieces of cardboard - this story, which I am telling you.

Finally, the four men arrived at the house where Jesus was teaching the people. They wanted to go into the house through the **door**, but they could not get in the door.

Perhaps one of them went and looked through the **window**. Do you know what he saw? He saw a house full of people! There were people everywhere! They wondered how they could bring their friend through that great crowd to the Lord Jesus.

And then they had an idea. They said, "If we cannot bring our friend to Jesus through the door or even through the window, we will get in

through the **roof**.” Do you know this story? You will find it in your Bible - in Mark chapter 2. If you read this story in your Bible, it will help you to be able to tell it to others, so you can read Mark 2:1-12.

The houses in Israel do not have **slanted roofs**, like the roofs on our houses. Their houses have flat roofs.

Their houses have something else which is different. They have **steps** up the outside of the houses. They do not have them on the inside, but on the outside. So the four men carried their friend on his mattress around to the steps of the house and they began to carry him up the steps to the roof of the house. Up and up they went until they were finally on the roof.

The roof of the house was made of wood, covered by reeds and earth, and so the four men began to make a **hole** in the roof. It was just a small hole to begin with, but they made it bigger and bigger until soon there were four faces looking down through the hole in the roof and everyone inside was looking up to see what was happening to the roof.

The four men were not going to let anything stop them from bringing their friend to Jesus. There are things which would stop us from bringing our friends to Jesus. It is not easy to tell others about the Lord Jesus Christ. They may not want to come with us the first time we invite them to Good News Club or Sunday school. They may make fun of us when we tell them how the Lord Jesus Christ has come into our lives to save us from sin. Not everyone we speak to will want to ask the Lord Jesus to be their Saviour and Lord. It is not easy, but we should not let these things stop us from bringing them to the Lord Jesus.

The four men tied **ropes onto the four corners** of the mattress and began to let their friend down into the house. They let him down gently, right to the feet of Jesus.

There the man **lay** on his mattress in front of the Lord Jesus. When the Lord Jesus saw him, He loved him. The Lord Jesus loves each one of us. He wants to bless us and do us good. God knows us each one. He is interested in us and loves us very, very much.

The paralysed man was lying in front of the Lord Jesus on his mattress and the people in the house were waiting for the Lord Jesus to touch him and make him better, but Jesus did not do that right away.

The Lord Jesus said to the man lying in front of Him, “Your sins are forgiven you” (Mark 2:5). Jesus was saying that He forgave this man



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all the wrong things he had ever done or said or thought. All the evil in his life was cleansed, was forgiven.

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The Lord Jesus knew that He could forgive this man his sins because He was the Saviour Who would soon die on the cross for this man's sin. The Lord Jesus has died on the **cross** for our sins. He did not have to die for His own sins. The Lord Jesus never sinned, but He took the punishment for our sins on Him. He died for us and gave His precious blood for all the evil in our hearts and lives. The Bible says, "Without shedding of blood there is no remission [forgiveness for sins]" (Hebrews 9:22). The Lord Jesus gave His precious blood on Calvary's cross for us. He paid it all. He died and was buried, but the third day He rose again from the dead. He is a living Saviour. The Lord Jesus is the only Saviour from sin.

So the Lord Jesus said to this man, "Your sins are forgiven you" (Mark 2:5).

But the enemies of the Lord Jesus were in the house that day - the scribes and Pharisees. When they heard the Lord Jesus say those words to the paralysed man, they began to murmur and say wrong things about the Lord Jesus. They did not speak out aloud, but among themselves and in their hearts they were saying wrong things about the Lord Jesus.

Can you imagine those enemies of the Lord Jesus saying these wrong things?

The first one, enemy number **one**, may have said something like this about the Lord Jesus, "Who is this saying He can forgive sins?"

Nearby, another Pharisee or scribe, enemy number **two**, was also saying something wrong about the Lord Jesus, "It is only God Who is able to forgive sins."

Nearby, another enemy of the Lord Jesus, number **three**, was saying something like this, "Jesus is saying that He is God, that He is able to forgive sins."

Another Pharisee or scribe, enemy number **four**, perhaps said something like this, "I don't believe that Jesus is God. He is not able to forgive sins."

These scribes and Pharisees were murmuring wrong things about the Lord Jesus, and He knows all the wrong things we say or do or even think.

The Pharisees are not the only ones who have done wrong things or thought wrong things. The Bible says, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Have you ever had hatred in your heart for someone also? Have you ever wanted to hurt someone you did not like? Have you ever been jealous of someone who has had something better than you? Have you ever said something wrong and sinful? Have you ever told a lie? This is sin and it is very serious. We do these things because our hearts are evil and wrong. Sin spoils our lives, sin hurts others and, worst of all, sin hurts God. God is holy and cannot look on sin. Sin separates us from a holy God. He should punish us for all our wicked thoughts, words and deeds, but He loves us. He does not love our sin, but He loves us.

The Lord Jesus knew what His enemies were saying about Him and so He said to them, "In order that you may know that I have power on Earth to forgive sins," and then He turned to the **paralysed man** lying on his mattress, and said, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house" (from Mark 2:10-11).

At the words of the Lord Jesus, a wonderful thing happened that day. A miracle took place - that paralysed man **sat up** on his mattress ...

... he **stood up** and took his mattress on his back ...

... and he **walked** right out of the house completely healed.

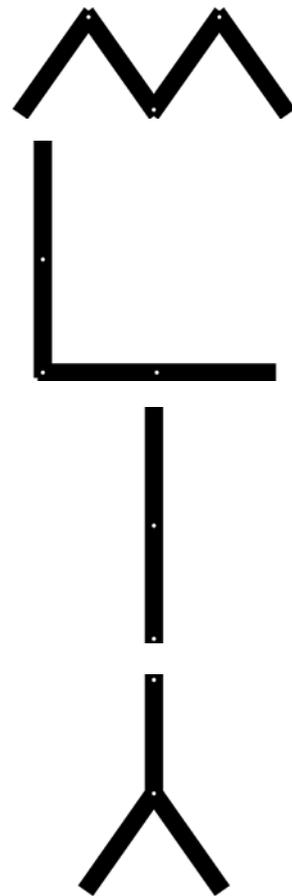
Everyone was amazed. They were amazed that the Lord Jesus had been able to heal him of his disease, but they were also amazed that the Lord Jesus had been able to forgive him his sin.

Did you ever come to the end of a sentence and put this on the end? It is a **question mark**. You put this sign when you have a question. I have a question to ask you today. Why did the Lord Jesus forgive this man his sins before healing him of his terrible disease? Why did the Lord Jesus not just heal him first and then later on forgive his sins? Why did the Lord Jesus forgive his sins first?

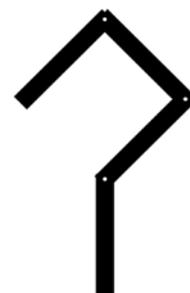
Leave time for the children to give their answers.

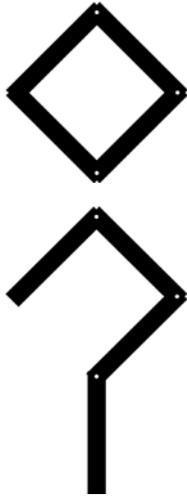
I believe the Lord Jesus forgave his sins first of all because He wanted to do the most important thing first, and for this man to have his sins forgiven was the most important thing of all.

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And for us today, it is the most important thing in this whole world to have our sins forgiven and to have the Lord Jesus living in **our hearts and lives** as our Saviour and Lord. It is more important to see the Lord Jesus as our Saviour from sin than even to be healed of the most terrible disease.

I have another **question** to ask you and this time I do not want you to shout out and answer. I want you to think about your own life. Here is my question. Have you ever turned from your sin and asked the Lord Jesus Christ to come into your life and make you a child of God? If you have not done this, you have not done the most important thing in this whole world.

The Lord Jesus is able to save you from sin. He died on the cross for your sin and rose again. He has said in His Word, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20). He says that your life is like a house. He is outside but He wants to come in to forgive your sin, to make you a child of God, to be your Lord and Saviour in your life. He says, "If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in." You must turn from your sin and ask Him by faith to come in to your life to save you, to forgive your sin. Will you receive Him today? He says, "I will come in."

If you have never received the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, you can come and sit on one of these chairs in the front at the end of the meeting. If I see you sitting there I will know that you want to receive the Lord Jesus as your Saviour and I will come to talk with you and show you from the Bible what He promises to do in His Word.

Copy, cut out and keep in your Bible



Summary of steps for counselling the child who wants to come to Christ

Make sure the child understands about

God

Who is God?
God made us. He speaks to us through the Bible.
God is holy and pure. He loves us.

Sin

What is sin?
Sin is disobeying God's commands. It is against God.
Speak about specific sins.
The child is a sinner by nature and act. (We sin because we are sinners.)
Sin deserves punishment.

The Saviour

Who alone can take away your sin?
God the Son died on the cross for sinners.
The Lord Jesus rose again from the dead.
He is Lord of all.

Explain how to be saved

Explain what the Lord wants us to do, and what He will do.
Use a Bible verse (*John 1:12; 3:16; 6:37; Acts 16:31; Romans 6:23 or 10:13*).
What does the Lord want you to do?
What will the Lord do?
Warn about difficulties.
Ask: "Do you want to trust Christ, or would you rather wait?"
Encourage the child to pray audibly (if ready).

Speak about assurance of salvation

Go back to the Bible verse you used.
Speak about a changed life.
Tell him what the person who is truly trusting in Christ can know.

Give (later) some advice about the Christian life

Read and obey your Bible.
Talk to God, our Heavenly Father.
Tell others what the Lord has done for you.
Ask God to forgive you when you sin.
Meet with other Christians.
Remember the Lord promises: "*I will never leave you*" (*Heb 13:5*).