Preschool–Grade 6

Jesus Heals the Paralyzed Man

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: Be a friend who brings others to Jesus and doesn't give up. Jesus is God, so He has power to forgive sins.
Bible passage: Mark 2:1–12 and Luke 5:17–26. Read them before class.
Memory verse: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." *Galatians 6:2 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the board. Set up a "doorway" with two chairs a little apart.

1. Opening game: Find Another Way (5–10 minutes)

Choose four or five kids to be "the crowd." They stand shoulder to shoulder in the chair doorway. The rest of the class must get a ball (or a balled-up paper) to a spot on the other side without going through the doorway or touching the crowd. Let them plan: pass it high, roll it around the end, toss it over. Ask: *When the easy way is blocked, do you quit or find another way?* Say: "Today we will meet four men who would not quit until they got a sick man to Jesus."

2. Bible story: Through the Roof (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to Mark 2. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

A full house. Jesus came back to **Capernaum**, and it was **noised**, which means people spread the news, that He was in the house (Mark 2:1). So many people gathered that there was no room, not even around the door, and Jesus preached the word to them (2:2). Luke tells us that **Pharisees and doctors of the law**, men who studied and taught God's law, had come from every town of Galilee, from Judaea and from Jerusalem, and "the power of the Lord was present to heal them" (Luke 5:17).

Borne of four. Look up Mark 2:3. Some men came bringing a man **sick of the palsy**, which means paralyzed: he could not move his body to walk. He was **borne of four**, carried by four men, lying on a bed (Luke 5:18). **Look up Mark 2:4.** They could not come **nigh** (near) Jesus for the **press** (the crowd). So they went up on the **housetop** and uncovered the roof. When they had **broken it up**, they let down the bed the man lay on. Luke says they let him down "through the **tiling**," the covering of the roof, "into the midst before Jesus" (Luke 5:19).

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Thy sins be forgiven thee. Look up Mark 2:5. Jesus saw their faith, and the first thing He said was, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Some scribes sitting there began **reasoning in their hearts**, thinking it but not saying it: "Why doth this man thus speak **blasphemies**? who can forgive sins but God only?" (2:6–7). **Blasphemies** means words that dishonor God, like a man claiming to do what only God can do. Say: "The scribes were right that only God can forgive sins. What they did not understand is that Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). He wasn't pretending to be God. He is God."

Which is easier? Look up Mark 2:8. Jesus **perceived in his spirit** (knew inside) what they were thinking. He asked, "Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?" (2:9). Anyone can *say* "your sins are forgiven," and no one can see it happen. But everyone would see if a paralyzed man got up! **Look up Mark 2:10–11.** "That ye may know that the **Son of man** hath power on earth to forgive sins," Jesus told the man, "Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." (**Son of man** is the name Jesus used for Himself as a man.)

He walked out. Look up Mark 2:12. Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in front of them all. He went home glorifying God (Luke 5:25). Everyone was amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw it on this fashion" (Mark 2:12), and "We have seen strange things to day" (Luke 5:26). The healing everyone could see proved the forgiveness no one could see.

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. The four men carried the man, went up on the roof, broke it open and let the bed down (Mark 2:3–4; Luke 5:19). What does that show about how much they cared and how much they believed Jesus could help?
2. Mark 2:5 says Jesus saw *their* faith. How can your faith help someone else come to Jesus?
3. Why do you think Jesus forgave the man's sins before He healed his body?
4. The scribes said only God can forgive sins (2:7). How does this story show who Jesus is?
5. Who is someone you could "carry" to Jesus: pray for, help, or invite to church?

Recall questions

1. How many men carried the bed? *(Four, Mark 2:3)*
2. What did the men break up to get in? *(The roof, 2:4)*
3. What did the people say at the end? *("We never saw it on this fashion," 2:12)*

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4. Memory verse: Erase a Word (5 minutes)

Explain the old words: **bear** means carry, **burdens** are heavy loads and hard things, **fulfil** means to do it all the way, and **the law of Christ** means what Jesus taught us to do. Read the verse on the board together. Erase two words and read it again. Keep erasing two words at a time until the board is empty and the class can say it alone. Then kids say it to a partner.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Four men carried a man to Jesus, and Jesus forgave his sins. God loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. Only God can forgive sins, and Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, which means God came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). How do we obey the gospel? 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means to turn away from sin; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5)."

Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

This week: pick one person to "carry" to Jesus: pray for them every day, help them with something hard, and invite them to church.

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6. Activity: Bible Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference and a question. The first pair to find the verse and read the answer out loud wins the point.

1. Mark 2:1: What town was Jesus in? *(Capernaum)*
2. Mark 2:2: What did Jesus do for the crowd in the house? *(He preached the word unto them)*
3. Mark 2:3: How was the sick man brought? *(He was borne of four, carried by four men)*
4. Luke 5:19: Through what did they let him down? *(Through the tiling, with his couch)*
5. Mark 2:5: What did Jesus see? *(Their faith)*
6. Mark 2:7: What question did the scribes think in their hearts? *("Who can forgive sins but God only?")*
7. Mark 2:11: What three things did Jesus tell the man to do? *(Arise, take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house)*
8. Luke 5:25: How did the man go home? *(Glorifying God)*

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that Jesus has power to forgive sins. Help us be friends who don't give up, who carry others to Jesus in prayer and kindness. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

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