

What Are Friends For? - Mark 2:1-12 (NIV)

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralyzed Man

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. "So he said to the man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

I began to wonder... How is it that these men brought this paralyzed man to Jesus? It's relational because these men climbed to the top of the roof... Cut a hole in the roof and carefully dropped this paralyzed man down from the roof....

HOW does the paralyzed man get there? His **FRIENDS BROUGHT HIM** to Jesus.

We live today in a land where the church houses are often filled; it is not uncommon to hear of a church with hundreds and even thousands in attendance. In and of itself attendance is not the issue that we will address in this message, but rather the condition of the hearts of those in attendance. It is often the case that we come to church for the wrong reasons: for personal blessings, for personal worship, for personal edification.

When God is moving in the church house personal blessings should be the farthest things on our hearts. The large crowds that followed Jesus in his earthly ministry followed expecting their daily, physical needs to be met. Whether the need was healing, miracles, or simply the daily bread needed for life.

When we come and bask in the glory of God, accepting his blessings, without ever considering the needs of the lost and undone outside of the saving grace of Jesus, we are no different than the crowds that followed Jesus simply for what he could do for them.

Many of our churches in our day are really organized, but accomplishing little.

Let us look at the teaching of our Savior, Jesus Christ, concerning a church service that was **disturbed** for the Glory of God. If you will pardon the reference to a card game, let's say, "**Four of a kind beats a full house.**"

I. A **Full House**: Mark 2:2 - Because the house of God is full does not always mean that the house is full of God!

· Full of **People**: The 5000 on the mount, the crowd at the sea, all looking for what Jesus could do for them.

· Full of **Pride**: Many were taking pride in that they were close to Christ, taking no thought of others who could not say the same.

· Full of **Preaching**: The Word was preaching the Word. The preaching stopped when the sinner needed a touch. By the foolishness of preaching

II. Four of a Kind: [Mark 2:3](#)

· Of like **mind**. Their **hearts desire** was to see this Friend brought to Jesus. We all have individual talents, but all should work together for the glory of God.

“Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.” 1 Pt. 3:8

“then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.” Phi 2:2

· Of like **motive**. These men had a **single motive**, to get their lost friend to the Savior. Nothing would stop them, not pride, manners, people, nothing could deter them from their goal of seeing this friend to meet Jesus, the great physician. Not willing that any should perish. [2 Peter 3:9](#) *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

· Of like **Motion**. Their effort was **resolute**, if they had worked hard, but in different directions, the friend would have never reached Jesus. Division in the house of God will lead to no good end and the loss of many opportunities to lead the lost to the Savior. [1 Corinthians 1:10](#) *...in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.*

III. Faithfulness Rewarded: [Mark 2:5](#)

· Faith of the **Four**. The faith of the four men was a **"benefitting"** type of faith. They had faith that if they could only get the friend to Jesus, he would save them. [James 2:26](#) *As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.*

· Faith of the **Forsaken**. They cannot understand less someone show them. They must be led by the Holy Spirit and guided by the saved.

· Faith of the **False-hearted**: The scribes had been in attendance to criticize and complain, many today attend for the same purpose, and they hinder the moving of the **Holy Spirit**

IV. Fashionable **Fanatics**: [Mark 2](#): 12

The congregation, used to religious ceremonies, had never experienced anything like the service where Jesus moved. The people left: · Amazed Full of wonderment, in awe,

A **New Vision** They had never seen anything like this Jesus. Once experienced, he can never be forgotten and his fellowship is longed for in every service, how soon we get over the Spirit of the Lord in our services.

Question?

Have our churches become so full of Christians who's devotions lie in the hearing of the Word, in personal **worship**, in personal **blessings** without regard for the **lost and undone** outside the church?

Are there any who's faith allows them to **commit to the lost**, knowing that if they can only get them to Jesus he will touch them?

Is our faith such that we would go out and carry those who cannot come on their own?

The lost is just as the Paralyzed Man, they cannot come on their own, and someone must care enough for their souls that they would bring them to Jesus.

Jesus stopped the church services and commended the men for their faith, and rewarded their faith by forgiving and then healing the Paralyzed man.

Will we continue to walk by the lost as we make our way to church?

Jesus was clear in his teaching... personal blessings should be secondary to sharing our blessed salvation... with those who are outside the saving grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.