

Day Twenty

And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

Mark 2:4-5

Four friends moved by an overwhelming sense of compassion and love for their friend. Four friends willing to pick up their corner of the blanket and bring their friend into the healing presence of Jesus Christ. Four friends determined and unwilling to be stopped by crowds, unwilling to say, "Sorry, we can't do it, maybe next time."

As we begin to wind down our devotional journey of faith, some may be thinking, "I can never do what the people in these stories have done." And yet the common thread for each story is simply the willingness, the overwhelming desire, to do their share, to pick up their corner of the blanket and bring their church, their community, their friends, the world, into the healing presence of Jesus the Christ. Each of us has been blessed in different ways and to different levels. God simply asks us to pick up our corner.

A rather well-to-do woman approached her pastor and asked if her gift of \$500 would be sufficient. The pastor's wise response was, "Does your gift represent the blessings God has given you?" The lady took the check back and departed without saying a word. A week later she returned with a check for \$5,000 and asked the same question. The courageous pastor gave the same reply and once again she took the check back and left. The pastor wondered if he would ever see her or the check again. But the scene repeated itself the following week. This time the check was for \$20,000. In response to her inevitable question, "Is it enough?" the pastor, swallowing the lump in his throat, gave his standard reply. This time with a smiling face full of joy, she replied, "Yes, pastor, this represents God's blessings to me."

She finally was willing to pick up her corner of the blanket.

Questions to consider

Do I believe that my church, through Jesus Christ, has the answer for a hurting world?
Am I willing to go the extra mile and lay aside my excuses so that people will come to know the healing, loving power of Christ?
Does the gift I am considering truly and fully represent how God has blessed me? Am I willing to pick up my corner of the blanket?

Prayer

Oh Lord, thank You for friends who in the past have carried me into Your healing presence. I name them now... Thank You for all of the blessings You have so richly poured forth on my family and me. Help me to now give back, give me the courage to do whatever it takes for me to pick up my corner of the blanket. In the name of Christ, Amen.