Session 12

Four Friends Help a Paralyzed Man

Mark 2:1-12

Worship Theme:
- God is a forgiving God.

Weaving Faith Into Life:
- Children will worship God as they experience his forgiveness.

Session Sequence | What Children Will Do | Supplies
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Let’s Praise God! (up to 25 minutes) | Sing
- “And You Love Me” (Psalm 139:1-3) (track 20)
- “To God Be the Glory” (track 15)
- “The Power!” (track 7)
- “God So Loved the World” (John 3:16) (track 11)
- “Thankful” (track 10) | KidsOwn Worship Kit: Songs From FaithWeaver, Disappearing Ink
Classroom Supplies: Marker, newsprint, gross item in a box (see p. 153), wrapping paper, scissors, tape, white towel, CD player

Let’s Learn the Point! (up to 25 minutes) | Forgiveness Makes Us Clean
Wash dirty hands, and talk about God’s forgiveness. | Classroom Supplies: Dishpan of soapy water, towels, newspaper

* Clean Inside and Out
Play with egg people, and see how sins make us dirty on the inside. | Classroom Supplies: 1 plastic egg, set of googly eyes, and sticker per child; washable markers; baby wipes, glue

* Bible Story Skit
Act out the story of the paralyzed man and his four friends. | Classroom Supplies: Blanket
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| **Let’s Learn the Point!** (up to 25 minutes) | **A Man Is Forgiven**  
Hear and act out the Bible story. | **Classroom Supplies:**  
Bible |
| | **Disappearing Sins**  
Consider their sins, and see how they disappear when they’re forgiven. | **KidsOwn Worship Kit:**  
Disappearing Ink, *Songs From FaithWeaver:* “Thankful” (track 10)  
**Classroom Supplies:**  
White napkins, CD player |
| | *“East From West”*  
Watch a video that explains how God removes their sins from them as far as the East is from the West. | **KidsOwn Worship Kit:**  
*KidsOwn Worship DVD:* “East From West”  
**Classroom Supplies:**  
TV, DVD player |
| 3 | **Let’s Pray!** (up to 10 minutes) | **The Offering**  
Give their offerings, and praise God for forgiveness. | **Classroom Supplies:**  
List of sins from *Let’s Praise God!*

**Taking Out the Trash**  
Throw away sins, and thank God for forgiving them. | **KidsOwn Worship Kit:**  
*Songs From FaithWeaver:* “If We Confess” (1 John 1:9) (track 22)  
**Classroom Supplies:**  
CD player, trash can, list of sins from *Let’s Praise God!*

**Closing Prayer**  
Pray spontaneously. |

* Starred activities can be used successfully with preschool and elementary children together. Customize your session to fit your needs. You can separate preschoolers and elementary children for Section 2. Or, if you keep the children all together for the entire worship session, we suggest you choose from the starred activities.
From this passage and others, it is apparent that Capernaum was Jesus’ home base for much of his ministry. Some believe that Mary and her other children had moved there from Nazareth and that Jesus’ family home was now in Capernaum.

Jesus was now drawing a crowd everywhere he went, and Capernaum was no exception. Even though Jesus had just arrived, no one was turned away and everyone was welcomed until the house was filled and people were standing outside the door!

At least two different types of roof were placed on houses in that area at that time. One was built by placing something akin to rafters across the top of the walls and then attaching cross-members between them. Then tree branches were laid across the cross-members and covered with dirt and mud. Once baked in the sun, this became a hardened, reliable roof. The other consisted of tiles laid across the rafters. Whichever roof was on this house, an opening could not have been made without everyone noticing that something was going on.

The persistence the four friends demonstrated in getting the paralytic before Jesus demonstrated their faith that Jesus could heal him. Some suggest that it was their faith alone that prompted Jesus to heal the man and forgive his sins. However, that seems inconsistent with the rest of Scripture, which consistently emphasizes personal repentance and faith. Instead, it’s likely the paralytic’s faith was similar to that of his friends and that his faith simply wasn’t mentioned here—his friends probably wouldn’t have done what they did without their paralyzed friend’s consent. And it’s possible that the paralyzed man was unable to speak clearly enough to express his own faith.

At any rate, everyone in the house (and on the roof!) was likely shocked when Jesus first forgave the paralytic’s sins. The skeptical teachers of the Law who were present didn’t have to say anything for Jesus to know what they were thinking. He clearly intended to force them to face head-on who he really was. Evidence that sins are forgiven by God was not immediately visible, but healing the man’s paralysis was. When Jesus healed the man, he demonstrated that he had the power to do both. Had he first healed the man and then said his sins were forgiven, his message to doubters would have been weakened. And by the order he chose, he also demonstrated that in his priorities the forgiveness of sins is more important than physical healing.

This passage says the people were amazed. In Matthew’s and Luke’s accounts of this incident (Matthew 9:2-8; Luke 5:18-26), we see that people also were filled with awe, the Greek word for which can also be translated as “fear.” They had never seen anything like this, and the realization of who Jesus was began to remind them of the sin in their hearts. They went away praising God, knowing that forgiveness is available in Jesus.

**Devotion for Leaders**

A relationship with Jesus satisfies all our needs. Jesus provides help, comfort, healing, and forgiveness. “What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!”

**Weaving Faith Into Your Life:** Look what friendship did for the paralyzed man. Because of his five friends, this man found health, healing, and forgiveness! Friends go the extra mile. Friends love. Friends see our needs and help meet those needs. Praise God for the forgiveness you’ve received, and thank God for the friends who helped you find Jesus and his forgiveness. Who can you be a friend to today?
**Why We Worship for Leaders**

Throughout the Old Testament and New Testament, we read of God’s eagerness to forgive and restore his people when they’re sorry and turn from their sinful ways. Scripture tells us that God is patient with us; he doesn’t punish us as we deserve but gives us time to come to our senses, see our need for him, and ask for forgiveness. Scripture also tells us that God doesn’t want any of us to die because of our sins.

God loves us dearly and wants each and every one of us to come to him for the forgiveness he’s so eager to grant. God wants all of us to live with him eternally. God wants a relationship with each person on the earth. Our God is good! Our God is loving! Our God forgives us! Let’s worship him!

**Easy Prep for Leaders**

**Let’s Praise God!**—Choose a gross item—such as dirt, worms, or a moldy piece of bread—and place it inside a box. Wrap the box so it looks attractive and appealing.

**“East From West”**—Set up a TV and DVD player. Set the KidsOwn Worship DVD to the segment titled “East From West.” Watch the segment at least once before the children arrive.

**Preschool Activities**—Refer to the preschool pages for preparations.

**Web Help:** Get bonus leader tips and ideas at kidsownworship.com!

1. **Let’s Praise God!**

Play *Songs From FaithWeaver, Winter 2011-2012* as children arrive. Ask some children to stand at the door and welcome everyone who comes into the room. Ask the greeters to smile, shake hands, and say, “Welcome!”

**Say** Hello, everyone! I have good news for you! The Lord loves you just the way you are this morning. God is with us here today. Let’s stand and begin worshipping him.

Sing “And You Love Me” (Psalm 139:1-3)

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

**Say** Jesus really is God! The song says, “Lord, you have searched me and you know me.”

**Ask**
- What do you think when you hear that God knows us? (God knows everything we’ve done and he still loves us; it makes me feel good to know God knows me.)
- What are some ways God shows his love for us? (He helps us; he takes our fears away; he forgives our sins.)

**Say** Let’s share God’s love with one another. Shake hands with your neighbors on both sides of you and say, “God loves you.”

Pause while the children greet each other with handshakes.
Today our worship session is going to focus on an important way that Jesus loves us. Listen as I read 1 John 1:9 and see if you can figure out what that way is. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

**Ask**  
*How does Jesus help us according to this verse?* (He forgives us; he makes us pure.)

**Say**  
Jesus forgives us. He came to forgive you and me for all the wrong things we do.

**Ask**  
*What are some of the wrong things people do?* (Lie; steal; cheat; do things out of selfishness.)

Write kids’ ideas on a sheet of newsprint. Display the newsprint on a wall.

**Say**  
He wants to make us feel free inside and out. I don’t know about you, but that makes me feel great! I don’t want to go around feeling guilty all the time. And God doesn’t want that for us either.

Let’s worship God now and thank him for his love and forgiveness. Let’s stand and sing “To God Be the Glory.” As we do the motions, let’s really lift up our hearts to praise God.

Sing “To God Be the Glory.”

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

When the song is over, have kids sit down.

Hold up the wrapped box you prepared before the session.

**Say**  
I have a gift here for all of you. Isn’t it pretty? We can all share it. Who wants to open it for us? Choose a volunteer to open the gift.

Wait while the child opens the gift. Have him or her show the class the yucky item the box contains.

**Say**  
It’s [name of the item]! Thank you, [name of child]. You can sit down now.

**Ask**  
*How did you feel when [name of child] opened the box and it didn’t have anything good in it?* (I was disappointed; I felt like I was tricked; it made me sad.)

**Say**  
Sometimes our lives are like this box. We get all dressed up and look good on the outside. But inside we have hateful feelings or bad attitudes. Or maybe we’ve done some of the wrong things we put on our list earlier. That’s the bad news: We all have sinned. But the good news is that God wants to forgive us! He wants to make us clean and pure on the inside.

Let’s stand together and sing our next song. It’s called “The Power!” No matter how big and awful our sins might be—they can be as yucky as the [name of wrapped item]—God will forgive us if we’re sorry. He can wipe the sin completely away from our lives.
Sing “The Power!”

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

God can do anything, and he is so good to us.

Have a helper hold up a large white towel. Have the bottle of Disappearing Ink at hand.

Our lives are like this clean towel. Every time we do something wrong or make wrong choices, we sin. Sin messes us up.

Quickly name some wrong things kids might do, and squirt some of the Disappearing Ink on the towel each time you mention something. You’ll have about 30 seconds from the first squirt to finish these remarks before the ink disappears.

But when we choose to believe in Jesus and ask God to forgive our sins, he is always faithful to do just that. God forgives us and makes us clean again.

Don’t look at the towel as you wait for the ink to disappear, but continue to talk to the kids. When the kids call your attention to the fact that the ink has disappeared, look surprised.

Wow, look at that! Forgiveness works!

Why does Jesus want to forgive us? (He wants to have a friendship with us; he loves us; he wants to make us clean.)

Why do you need forgiveness? (Our lives are full of sin; when I sin, it makes me dirty inside; so I can be with God forever.)

God loves us so much that he wants us to be with him in heaven. That’s why he sent Jesus to die for our sins. All we have to do is believe it. That makes me happy! Let’s stand and sing a song from John 3:16. It says that if we believe in Jesus, we can live in heaven forever with God. It’s a joyful song, so let’s really put our hearts and our bodies into it as we sing to God.

Sing “God So Loved the World” (John 3:16).

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

Yes, we’ve been talking about sins, the wrong things we do—the bad news. The good news: God wants to forgive you for those things today! Let’s sing our last song and worship God for his great love and forgiveness.

Sing “Thankful.”

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

Let’s thank God for his wonderful promise of forgiveness.

Jesus, thank you for coming and dying for us. Thank you that we can be forgiven for all our sins just by asking you. We know that no matter how bad our sins are, you’re ready to forgive us. Help us to be sorry and to turn away from the wrong things we do. Most of all, thank you for loving us so much. We love you, Jesus. Amen.
Let’s Learn the Point!

Preschool Activities, pages 157-158

At this time, have the preschool leader invite the preschoolers to go to their own room for this section of activities. Tear out the Preschool Activities page, and give it to the preschool leader. Have the preschool leader bring the preschoolers back to participate in Let’s Pray! with the older children. If you prefer to keep all the children together, do the starred (*) activities. They will work well with both elementary and preschool children.

Elementary Activities

A Man Is Forgiven

Open your Bible to Mark 2, and show kids the story.

Say

Today’s Bible story is about a man who was paralyzed. That means he couldn’t walk. Instead of telling the story to you, I need you to act out the story.

Many years ago, there was a man who couldn’t walk; in fact, his legs didn’t move at all. Let’s see what that would be like. Everyone sit on the floor and stick your legs out straight. Move yourself to the other side of the room and back without moving your legs at all. Give kids time to do this.

This man had four friends who cared about him a lot. These four friends watched their friend struggle to do things. They loved their friend very much, and it hurt them to see their friend struggle so much.

One day, these men heard that Jesus was coming. They decided to take their friend to see Jesus. Now let’s see what this would be like. Form groups of five. Pause while kids form groups. (It’s OK if there are some groups of three or four.)

Now choose one person to be the “paralyzed man.” Everyone else is a friend. The friends need to figure out a way to safely and gently get the paralyzed man across the room and back. Give groups time to help one member get to the other side of the room and back.

Say

When the four friends got to the house where Jesus was, they found that it was very crowded. There was no way they could get their friend anywhere near Jesus. Then someone got an idea. The friends carried the man to the rooftop. They dug a hole in the roof and lowered their friend down through the roof until he was lying on the floor next to Jesus.

Jesus was impressed with the faith of the man and his friends. Jesus said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

(continued on page 159)
Preschool Activities

Four Friends Help a Paralyzed Man

Session 12

Mark 2:1-12

Worship Theme:
God is a forgiving God.

Easy Prep for Leaders

Forgiveness Makes Us Clean—Set a dishpan of warm, soapy water on a table along with some paper towels or hand towels. You’ll also need a fresh newspaper.

Clean Inside and Out—Scribble with a washable marker on the inside of each plastic egg (one per child). Glue two googly craft eyes to each egg to make it represent a person. If you don’t have craft eyes, use a permanent marker.

Using Theo

Consider using Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet today in these ways:

• Have Theo lead the preschoolers from the main worship area to the preschool room.
• Have Theo play the role of the paralyzed man.
• See the KidsOwn Worship Kit for a puppet skit created to tie in to this week’s worship session.

Forgiveness Makes Us Clean

Have children form a circle and sit down. Spread newspaper in the center of the circle.

Say > Today we’re going to have fun learning about forgiveness. This newspaper is going to help us understand what happens when we’re forgiven. Sometimes we do things that are wrong.

Ask > • If your mommy or daddy tells you to pick up your toys and you run away and hide instead, is that wrong?
Say > • Yes, it is. When we disobey, that’s called a sin.
Ask > • What other things do we do sometimes that are wrong?

Say > When we sin, we feel yucky inside. Let’s rub our hands on this newspaper. Rub them all over. Now look at your hands; they’re all yucky! What do we need to do? Let’s wash them to get them clean.

Help children clean the black ink off their hands in the pan of soapy water. Then have the children sit in a circle again.

Say > Show me your nice clean hands. They look so good now! Smell your hands. They smell so good and clean and fresh.

Ask > • How did your hands get all clean?

Say > When we sin and feel yucky inside, God’s forgiveness is like soap and water. His forgiveness washes our sins away and makes our hearts all clean and fresh again. Let’s clap with our nice clean hands and tell God thank you for forgiving us.
**Preschool Activities**

* Clean Inside and Out

Show the children the “egg people” you made before the session.

**Say**

Let’s pretend these little eggs are people. They’re the egg family. They’re a special family, but they’re like us in many ways. Sometimes they fight and argue with each other. Sometimes they don’t share their things. Sometimes they disobey their parents. I wonder what’s on the inside of this egg person. Open an egg, and show children the inside.

**Ask**

- What do you see?

**Say**

This egg person is all dirty inside. What could we do to make the egg clean and pretty on the inside? We could wipe off the marker and clean up the egg. Use a baby wipe to remove the marker. Sometimes we’re like this egg person. We look all clean and pretty on the outside, but our insides are not so pretty. God’s forgiveness cleans us up. When I call your name, say, “God forgives me.” Then I’ll give you an egg person. Call all the children’s names until everyone has an egg person.

**Say**

God forgives us when we’re sorry. Let’s open up our egg people and clean them up with forgiveness!

Distribute baby wipes. Give children time to wipe out the insides of their plastic eggs and put the egg pieces back together.

**Say**

When God forgives us, it makes us clean on the inside just as we made our egg people clean on the inside. I have something else for you to make your egg people pretty. You can put a pretty sticker on your egg. When you take your egg person home, remember that God forgives you.

Give children each a sticker or two with which to decorate their egg people. Set aside the eggs for children to take home later.

* Bible Story Skit

You’ll need a blanket.

Gather the children around you.

**Say**

I’m going to tell you a Bible story about God’s forgiveness. This is a true story. One day lots of people came to hear Jesus teach. So many people came that the house was soon full. No more people could get in.

Along came a man who couldn’t walk. Four friends were carrying him on a mat to see Jesus. They were hoping Jesus would heal the man.

When they got to the house, they couldn’t even get inside the door! Now what would they do? They thought and thought. Then they had a great idea! They would make a hole in the roof above Jesus and lower their friend through the hole. So they did.

When Jesus saw what the man and his friends had done, he saw how much they believed in him. He looked at the sick man and said, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

Some people in the crowd heard Jesus say that. They didn’t like it. They said, “Only God can forgive sins.”

But Jesus said to them, “I want you to know that the Son of Man has power to forgive sins.”

Then Jesus spoke to the man who couldn’t walk. Jesus said, “I tell you, get up. Pick up your mat and go home.” The man got up and took his mat. He walked away while everyone watched. The people were amazed. They praised God and said, “We have never seen anything like this!”

**Ask**

- What did the man want Jesus to do?
- What did Jesus do for the man?

**Say**

Jesus loved the man so much. Jesus knew how important it is for our sins to be forgiven, so he did that first. Then he healed the man.

Let’s act out our Bible story. We need someone to be Jesus, someone to be the man who couldn’t walk, some of you to be his friends, and the rest of you to be the crowd. We’ll take turns doing the parts.

Fold a blanket or sheet in half or thirds, and have a child sit or lie on one end of the blanket. Have the “friends” hold the other end of the blanket and drag it around the room to “Jesus.” After each child is delivered to “Jesus,” have “Jesus” say, “I forgive you,” and “Stand up and walk.” Then have the child walk back to the group and sit down. Have everyone say together, “Thank you, Jesus, for forgiving us. Thank you for healing us.”

Make sure every child gets a chance to ride on the blanket.
Then Jesus said, “Get up, take your mat and go home.”

And the paralyzed man jumped up and walked out in full view of everyone. Everyone who was there praised God and said, “We’ve never seen anything like this!” Let’s celebrate the ending of this story by hopping or skipping to the other side of the room and back. Give kids time to do this.

**Ask**

- What did the man and his friends want Jesus to do? (Make him better; help him be able to walk again.)
- What was the first thing Jesus did for the man? What was the second thing Jesus did? (He forgave him first; after he forgave him, he told him to walk.)
- Why do you think Jesus forgave the man before healing him? (We need forgiveness more than anything; it’s important to be forgiven; he wanted to show that he has the power to forgive sins and heal.)

Jesus loved the man so much. He knew how important it is to be forgiven. So he forgave the man first. Then he healed the man. What’s on the inside of us is more important to God than what’s on the outside. But because Jesus loved the man—and to prove to the people that he was God—he healed the man, too. Our next activity will teach us more about how great it is to be forgiven.

**Disappearing Sins**

**Say**

We’ve talked a lot about sins and forgiveness today. Now let’s experience it. I’m going to give you each a white paper napkin. Then we’re going to pass around the bottle of ink. Each of you may squirt just a drop on your napkin. Please be considerate of the group and only use a small amount of ink. It’s a small bottle of ink, and there are many people here who need to use it.

Then we’ll all be very quiet and think about the sins we’ve committed that we need to ask forgiveness for. Consider your sins while you watch the ink on your napkin.

Then ask for God’s forgiveness. Keep watching your napkin until the ink disappears. Then thank God for his forgiveness.

Hand out paper napkins, and pass around the bottle of Disappearing Ink.

Play the song “Thankful.”

After a minute or so, get the children’s attention.

**Ask**

- How did you feel when you asked God for forgiveness and the ink disappeared from your napkin? (It was amazing; I felt like my sins were taken away; it felt good to be forgiven.)
- What happens to sins when we confess them to God? (They’re taken away from us; God forgets about them.)
The Bible tells us that God is completely faithful to forgive our sins. The Bible also says that when God forgives us, he makes us as clean as newly fallen snow.

God will purify us, or clean us, when we ask him to forgive us. It’s a promise we can count on. And when God forgives us, we are completely forgiven. Forever!

God knows that what we need most is forgiveness of our sins. We need forgiveness more than we need healing. We need forgiveness even more than we need food, clothes, or oxygen. Let’s thank God for forgiveness.

Thank you, God, for forgiving us. We give you all our burdens, all the things we’re sorry for. We thank you for forgiving us. We love you, God. In Jesus’ name, amen.

*“East From West”*

Show the DVD segment titled “East From West.” It explains that when God forgives our sins, he removes them from us as far as the East is from the West.

- **Ask**
  - **What happened in this video?** (When the boy got mad, he committed some sins; the boy asked Jesus for forgiveness, and his sins were taken away.)
  - **How do you think the boy felt when he kept doing the wrong thing?** (Guilty; he felt bad for what he was doing.)
  - **How do you feel when you sin?** (I feel awful; I’m sad for hurting God and people; I feel guilty.)
  - **How do you think the boy felt when God forgave him and got rid of all his sins?** (He felt like new; he was joyful and happy again; he felt free from his sin.)
  - **Why do you think it’s so important to God to forgive us?** (We can’t be near him when we have sin in our lives; forgiveness lets us be with God forever; it makes us clean.)
  - **How does it make you feel to know that your sins have been completely wiped away?** (Happy; excited; I feel like a new person.)
  - **Why is forgiveness a good thing?** (It helps us grow closer to God; it makes us clean again.)

- **Say**
  - We are God’s creation; we are God’s children. Sin gets in the way of our friendship with God. God wants to forgive us so that he can create a good, solid friendship between us and him. God doesn’t hold grudges against us. When God forgives us, he forgives us completely. He doesn’t even remember what we did wrong. Isn’t God great? Let’s praise him with our prayers.
Let’s Pray!

The Offering

Pass the offering bowls, and invite children to give their offerings to God.

Then have children form two groups. Place the list of sins made during the Let’s Praise God! section near you.

**Say** Let’s use this list of sins, or wrong things we do, to remind each other that God forgives us when we’re sorry.

Have the groups alternate saying parts of a prayer. Group 1 will say, “For the times we [choose a sin from the list].” Then Group 2 will answer with, “God will forgive our sins.” Then have both groups say together, “We praise you, God.”

**Say** Isn’t God good? God promises to forgive you no matter what you do. All we have to do is confess our sins—that means tell God what we’ve done and say we’re sorry. Then we ask God to help us turn away from that sin.

Taking Out the Trash

Have kids gather in a circle, and put a trash can in the center. Take the list of sins made during the Let’s Praise God! section and hold it up.

**Say** Our sins are like trash—we need to get rid of it! I want everyone to come and tear off a piece of our list of sins.

Wait while everyone tears off a piece of the list.

**Say** Our sins are like trash, and forgiveness gets rid of that trash. Let’s sing “If We Confess” (1 John 1:9). As we sing together, we’ll take turns going to the trash can and throwing our pieces of paper away. As you throw your piece away, thank God in your heart for forgiving you.

Sing “If We Confess” (1 John 1:9).

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

When children have thrown away the pieces of paper, they can listen to or sing the song again. Encourage children to close their eyes and worship the Lord.

Closing Prayer

**Say** Listen to these words from the Bible one more time: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Say it with me. Repeat the verse together.

That’s an awesome promise. When we have a friendship with Jesus and ask for his forgiveness, we can have forgiveness for our sins. Let that sink into your hearts and minds; you are forgiven.
Pray

Lord Jesus, thank you for forgiving us. We give ourselves to you and ask you to help us make right choices and do things that are pleasing to you. Thank you for accepting us just as we are. Amen.

Give the children an opportunity to pray their own spontaneous closing prayers if they want.
Encouragement for Leaders

Set aside time to pray for the children in your class this week. Know that your prayers are just as valuable as the lessons you teach them.