

Group discussion Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for “the big question.”

Read Mark 2:1-11 aloud.

1. Describe the relationship between Jesus and the crowd.
How did the crowd respond to Jesus?

How did Jesus treat the crowd?
In what ways was the crowd a challenge for Jesus?

In what ways did he enjoy the crowds?

What can we learn about God from how Jesus interacted with the crowd?

2. Describe the relationship between Jesus and the teachers of the law.

How did they feel about Jesus at the beginning of this story?

How did they feel about Jesus after this exchange?
Mark 2 doesn't say, but 3:6 says that events like this one led them to plot his murder.

How did Jesus feel about the teachers of the law?

What did Jesus do to reduce their anxiety?
Absolutely nothing! He intentionally increased their anxiety.

How would the story be different if the question in verse 7 was “could this be the messiah”?

How should we deal with critics?
When is it best to challenge them? When is it best to ignore?

3. Describe the relationship between Jesus and the paralyzed man.
What did this man need/desire from Jesus?

How did Jesus treat this man?

Why was Jesus' response to this man so different from his response to the teachers of the law?

4. Describe the relationship between the paralyzed man and the crowd.

How was the crowd a problem for the paralyzed man?

How was this man different from others in the crowd?
He was part of the crowd.

What crowds out your connection with God, and in what ways have you contributed to those disconnects?

5. Describe the relationship between paralyzed man and the teachers of the law.

How did they feel about this man?

What might be wrong when we don't notice people in need?

6. Describe the relationship between this man and his friends.
How many men were involved in getting him to Jesus?

What characteristics did these five men show?

† **The big question** If you ask only one question, let this be it. Allow at least 20 minutes. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It's okay if they pass, but at least they get a chance to respond.

Who are the friends you would call to carry your stretcher?

Who might call you to carry his or her stretcher?

Resources

Bible notes

- This is the fifth of five healing stories in Mark 1-2, as well as the first of five conflict stories in Mark 2-3:6.
- The healing stories establish Jesus' authority, and they set the stage for conflicts with the Jews in Mark 2-3.
- "Son of man" (2:10) was used in Ezekiel and Daniel. By Jesus' time it carried messianic implications (Dan. 7:13). Jesus occasionally claimed the phrase (Lk. 19:10, Mk. 14:62).

Prayer ideas

Thank God for friends who have stood by you through difficult times. Ask God to provide faithful friends in the future. Pray for us to be faithful friends in the future.

Kid-friendly activity. *An activity designed to help kids and adults grow in faith together. Do this first, then dismiss the kids so the adults can talk.*

Act out the story in Mark 2:1-12. Ask the kids to use their imagination on letting the man down through the roof.

How did these four men contribute to the man being healed?

What are some situations where you need friends?

What characteristics make a good friend?

If you want to have good friends, what steps should you take?



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LIFE Group Guide

Mark 2 – Friends

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme: **We need friends to help us.**

Kevin is continuing the sermon series on healing stories in the gospels. This week's text is Mark 2, where Jesus heals the man let down through the roof by his friends. We all need friends like that.

Since the sermon is looking at relationships, this LG guide focuses on the relationships in Mark 2. Anytime we meet someone, there is a possible new friend. Unfortunately, many relationships are less than friendships.

Fun service opportunity: in the past, LIFE Groups have made ice cream and brought it as a treat for Hearthside residents on a LG Sunday. Hearthside can grill hamburgers & hot dogs for the group & residents and serve the homemade ice cream as dessert. You can have the Activity Room to meet in or outside in the gazebo. Dinner is at 5:00 pm.

If you are interested, call Robert Springer at 443-1994.

Leadership tip: Buddy Bell is coming to Nashville, and we have set up a meeting with him and College Hills LG leaders. Details are not final, but plan to join our chat with Buddy at Lipscomb on July 3 at 11 a.m.

Relate *Use a few to introduce the theme, check everyone's spiritual pulse, and "break the ice." No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage through these questions.*

- ❖ Who was your best friend in first grade? In high school?
- ❖ Often we do not realize how our lives impact one another. How has this group made a difference in your life?
- ❖ How are you blessed by being part of a strong and healthy church family?