

Mar 2:1 When He had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home. (2) And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, not even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them. (3) And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men. (4) Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying.

(5) And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." (6) But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, (7) "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?" (8) Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, "Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts? (9) "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'?

(10) "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"--He said to the paralytic, (11) "I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home." (12) And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

(5) ... "Son, your sins are forgiven." ...

(9) "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic (sick of palsy – ASV; , 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'?

What kind of sin results in paralysis?

Gal 5:19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,

Sorcery – from the Greek *pharmakia*
from which we get pharmacy,
pharmacology, pharmacognosy – drugs
to foretell the future, cast spells.

Some of these drugs can cause physical
harm – One example is oleander which
grows on the hillsides of Israel and
contains cardiac glycosides which can
cause strokes (inducing paralysis).

If such an herb had been used to induce visions or cast spells, the result would be a sin with a physical result like the one seen in this man.

Don't let an atheist try to tell you that the Bible gives ridiculous stories about sin causing illness.

But consider the friendship these men had for this paralyzed man.

Someone knew Jesus could heal him.

Someone organized the others to take this man to Jesus.

Someone gathered the means necessary to get the man to the house.

None of them were willing to give up just because the crowd was standing room only and they couldn't get in.

Someone thought of an extraordinary way to get the man into the house.

Someone went to get the ropes to lower the stretcher and the ladder to get on the roof and the tools to take up the roof.

They didn't give up just because the dirt started falling on the crowd as they uncovered the roof.

They didn't give up when people might have criticized them for cutting in line or the homeowner asking what they were doing to his roof.

There must have been a lot of angry people in the crowd, but these men had a friend who needed Jesus.

But these men were friends – the kind we and our children need.

Not good time Charlies or party buddies but people the paralyzed man could count on.

The author of our VBS study thought of things “real friends” do.

They’re not there just in good times.

They help overcome difficult obstacles.

They understand the need for each other.

They make sure their friends know Jesus.

They're not there just in good times.

Pro 18:24 One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Pro 17:17 A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity.

They understand the need for each
other.

Pro 27:9 Perfume and incense
bring joy to the heart, and the
pleasantness of a friend springs
from their heartfelt advice.

They help overcome difficult obstacles.

Ecc 4:9 Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: (10) If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. (11) Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? (12) Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

They make sure their friends know
Jesus.

Joh 15:13 Greater love has no one
than this: to lay down one's life for
one's friends.

Rom 5:7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die.

True love for each other. Contrast righteous and good. Good implies that the person is a friend who has helped in times past.

“We need friends who are ahead of us on the journey.”

“I’ve been there before and here is what to expect.”

“Here is some advice.”

“We need friends who are ahead of us on the journey.”

Lev 19:32 'You shall rise up before the grayheaded and honor the aged, and you shall revere your God; I am the LORD.

1Ti 5:1 Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; (2) The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

“I’ve been there before and here is what to expect.”

Rom 15:4 For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

1Co 10:11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

“Here is some advice.”

Pro 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to counsel.

Pro 19:20 Listen to counsel and accept discipline, That you may be wise the rest of your days. (21) Many are the plans in a man's heart, But the counsel of the LORD, it will stand.

“How important is it to have a supportive group of people surrounding you?”

1Th 4:17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. (18) Therefore comfort one another with these words.

If your friends are not Christians, what comfort is there in their words?

Heb 10:24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, (25) not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Isa 40:1 "Comfort, O comfort My people," says your God.

What kind of friend are you if you're not encouraging your brethren to "continue in the faith?"

The best friend you could ever have is Jesus
– He died for you – to make you a part of
His church!

1Pe 1:18 knowing that you were not
redeemed with perishable things like silver
or gold from your futile (empty- NET; vain –
NIV, KJV) way of life inherited from your
forefathers, (19) but with precious blood,
as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the
blood of Christ.

Act 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ--this Jesus whom you crucified."

(37) Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" (38) Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.