

THE THREAD

DISCOVERING THE THREAD OF THE GOSPEL THROUGH THE BIG-PICTURE STORY OF THE BIBLE

PART 3: THE GOSPEL COME TO LIFE

LESSON 5 || JESUS HEALS A PARALYTIC

SESSION SNAPSHOT

NARRATIVE PASSAGE: Mark 2:1-2

GOSPEL FOCUS: Colossians 2:13-14

STUDENT TAKEAWAYS:

- Understand that Jesus not only has the power to heal but the power to forgive sins.
- Understand that we were dead in our sins, but God chose to give us life through Jesus' death on the cross.
- Be challenged to express thanks and praise to God for bringing them from death to life.

OVERVIEW:

In one brief story in Mark, Jesus demonstrates His authority over both the physical and spiritual world. In doing so, He makes a bold claim about His divinity. He forgives sins, which is something only God can do. But then, He brings physical healing to a paralytic. As we dig into this passage, we'll see that it's only through Jesus that we can be brought from death to life. We'll learn what it looks like to praise God for the amazing gift of the forgiveness of sins.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO:

Each *Thread* lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These short videos are designed to help you grasp the lesson's main point as you prepare to teach.



BIBLE BACKGROUND

The Bible Background is designed to help you provide the basic context for the passages you'll be studying.

- **WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "CONTEXT"?** In every YM360 Bible study lesson, we encourage teachers to help students know *who* wrote a particular book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.
- **WHY TEACH CONTEXT?** Grasping the big-picture view of God's story of redemption is difficult for teenagers without understanding the context of the books and passages they're studying.

MARK

- *Author:* The Gospel of Mark was written by its namesake. Mark, also known as John Mark, is believed to have received most of his information for his gospel from Peter's firsthand accounts.
- *Time frame:* Mark is thought to have written his gospel in the mid-50s AD.

- *Purpose:* Mark was writing primarily for a non-Jewish audience. His gospel explains Jewish customs to non-Jews in an effort to get them to see the big picture of Jesus' identity.

COLOSSIANS

- *Author:* The Apostle Paul identified himself as the author of Colossians.
- *Time frame:* Most people believe Colossians was written sometime between 61 and 63 AD, during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome.
- *Purpose:* Ultimately, this letter's purpose is to emphasize the supremacy of Christ over everything else. Paul was writing to combat the spread of false teachings among the church at Colossae. The exact heresy being refuted is not certain and may have been a blend of multiple influences. The legalism, mysticism, and asceticism corrupting the faith in Colossae were moving attention away from Christ, placing it instead on self-discipline and the awe of other spiritual things.

LESSON PLAN

The Lesson Plan contains four elements:

- **GETTING STARTED**– An introductory activity designed to prepare teenagers to engage with God and the truth of His Word.
- **THE STORY**– A section featuring a narrative from Scripture that helps teenagers know God better through learning the story of the Bible.
- **THE THREAD**– A special emphasis where teenagers discover the Gospel thread coursing throughout the story of the Bible.
- **WRAPPING UP**– An application-focused segment helping teenagers ask the question, “How am I impacted by what I learned today”?

GETTING STARTED

- *Goal:* To get students thinking about forgiveness and who has the right to forgive.
- *Set-Up:* You’ll need two volunteers from the group.

BEGIN by asking for two volunteers to help you illustrate a point about the right to forgive others. Explain to the group that you all will imagine that these two students are in the middle of an argument because one of them has wronged the other. You can have some fun by letting the students decide what the fake argument is about. Remember, one of them has wronged the other. After the subject of the dispute has been decided, ask them a few questions. Ask the student that’s been hurt how they feel and what they want to happen to the other person. Ask the student who hurt the other one why they did what they did. Try and get the students to have fun with it and play along.

NEXT, ask the group something like:

- **What if someone random stumbled upon this argument and said, “Don’t worry, all is forgiven?” What would you think?**
 - *Answer:* That person has no ability to decide if anyone gets forgiven or not.
- **Who is the only person that can forgive the wrong that’s been committed?**
 - *Answer:* The only person that has the right to forgive is the person that’s been wronged.

Transition to The Story by saying something like:

- **When wrongdoing is committed, someone has to pay. Either the person who was wronged pays by taking on the cost of what was done to them, or the person who committed the wrong pays by making a payment for the wrong. In today’s lesson, we’re going to take a look at why Jesus has the right to forgive and what that means for us.**

THE STORY

- *Goal:* To get students to understand that Jesus not only has the power to heal but the power to forgive sins and to understand that we were dead in our sins, but God chose to give us life through Jesus’ death on the cross.
- *Set-Up:* Students will need a Bible or a Bible app.

FIRST, explain that in this lesson, you’ll be looking at this passage as an example of the many healings that Jesus performed throughout His ministry. In this passage, students will see that Jesus has the power to both heal and forgive sins. If you’d like, use the Connecting The Dots section below to review or fill in the gaps between your last lesson and this one.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

As you teach *The Thread*, there will naturally be some gaps in the story. This is an optional way for you to fill in some of the gaps between the last lesson you taught and this one. Use it to review or connect the dots to the events surrounding the passage.

- John the Baptist had prepared the way for Jesus by calling people to repentance and letting them know that another one was coming who would baptize them by the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus was baptized by John to inaugurate His public ministry and let it be known that He had come to identify with those He was coming to save.
- Jesus called the disciples to follow Him, and He began healing a number of people.

THEN, have your students turn in their Bibles to Mark 2. While they're finding it, provide some of the basic background for the book using the Bible Background. Then read or have a student read Mark 2:1-2. **Ask something like:**

- **Think about what Jesus had been doing. If you heard He was home, what would you do? Would you be curious and want to go check things out? Why?**
 - *Answers will vary.*

NEXT, read or have a student continue reading Mark 2:3-4. **Ask something like:**

- **This is a pretty bold move. What would you have done if you were one of the friends?**
 - *Answers will vary.*
- **What does this say about the friends?**
 - *Answer:* These were true friends. Can you imagine carrying one of your friends on top of a house? You don't do that for someone you don't care about.
- **What does it say about what they think about Jesus?**
 - *Answer:* They must believe Jesus could do something for their friend. They may have been making a last-ditch effort to help their friend, but they had some level of trust that Jesus could do something for him.

THEN, read or have a student read Mark 2:5. **Ask something like:**

- **Does Jesus' response surprise you? Why or why not?**
 - *Answers will vary.*
- **What do you think was going through the paralytic and his friends' minds when Jesus said that?**
 - *Answers will vary.*
- **What does Jesus' response say about sin and physical healing?**
 - *Answer:* It indicates that spiritual healing takes priority over physical healing.

NEXT, read or have a student read Mark 2:6-7. **Ask something like:**

- **Why are the scribes so upset?**
 - *Answer:* They knew only God could forgive sins. So, they believed Jesus was blasphemous by claiming to be able to do what only God can do.
- **What's wrong with the scribes' thinking?**
 - *Answer:* Jesus is fully God. That's why He had the ability and right to say that their sins were forgiven. The only person that can truly forgive someone is the person that was wronged. So, Jesus is saying that all sins are sins against Him, and that's why He can boldly proclaim that their sins are forgiven.

THEN, read or have a student read Mark 2:8-12 and ask something like:

- **So, what do you think? Is it harder to tell people their sins are forgiven or tell a paralytic to get up and walk?**
 - *Answer:* Initially, it would seem harder to tell a paralytic to get up and walk because if they didn't do it, you'd be proven to be a fraud right there on the spot. However, in reality, it's harder to say that someone's sins are forgiven because, as we said, only God has the right to do that.
- **What is Jesus doing by going ahead and healing the paralytic?**
 - *Answer:* He's proving His authority. He's backing up His claim that the sins are forgiven by establishing that He also has control over the physical world.
- **What do you think was going through the scribes' heads now? What about the former paralytic and his friends?**
 - *Answer:* The scribes were probably a little embarrassed and stunned. They were also probably starting to get a little concerned about Jesus and what He was doing. The former paralytic and his friends were probably ecstatic and blown away.

IF STUDENTS DON'T HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, TRANSITION INTO THE THREAD TO SEE THE CONNECTION OF THE GOSPEL TO THE BIG-PICTURE NARRATIVE OF SCRIPTURE.

THE THREAD

FIRST, instruct students to turn to Colossians 2. Say something like:

- **In today's lesson, we have seen how Jesus can forgive sins and heal a man who was paralyzed. As we look at how Jesus fulfills this truth in our lives, we realize that because of our sin, we are dead. We are much worse than the paralyzed man because we are spiritually dead. We all know that dead people can't do much of anything; they surely cannot bring themselves back to life. As people who are dead in our sins, we need someone to bring us from death to life. We need the spiritual healing that the paralytic man received from Jesus if we are ever going to truly live again.**

THEN, read or have a student read Colossians 2:13-14. Ask something like:

- **What does "the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands" mean?**
 - *Answer:* It's talking about the record of our debt, or sin, against God.
- **What happens to that record of debt when we trust in Jesus?**
 - *Answer:* For those who trust and follow Jesus, our record was taken and nailed to the cross, and our debt was wiped away!
- **How does your salvation being put in terms of going from death to life change the way you look at what Jesus has done for you?**
 - *Answers will vary.*
- **How should you respond to Jesus, knowing that He took your place and canceled your debt at the cross?**
 - *Answers will vary.* It makes sense that we would live a life of love and gratitude for what Jesus did for us, especially because we didn't deserve it.

THEN, say something like:

- **Let's wrap things up by talking a bit more about our response to God taking us from death to life through Jesus' work on the cross.**

IF YOUR STUDENTS DON'T HAVE ANY MORE QUESTIONS, TRANSITION INTO THE WRAPPING UP SECTION.

WRAPPING UP

- *Goal:* To challenge students to express thanks and praise to God for bringing them from death to life.
- *Set-Up:* None.

BEGIN by telling the students to imagine that they were the paralytic in the story. Ask something like:

- **Before meeting Jesus, what was your life like? What would a normal day have been like?**
 - *Answer:* Life wouldn't have been that great. You wouldn't be able to do much of anything, and you would have to depend on friends and family for everything. A normal day probably included begging for money since you wouldn't be able to work.
- **So, your friends decide that they're going to take you to go see Jesus. What do you think about it?**
 - *Answer:* You've heard stories of Jesus healing people, so you're probably a little hopeful. You're probably thinking, "It can't hurt to try. It's not like things will get worse."
- **Now, think through what happened. Your friends lowered you down through a roof, Jesus told you that your sins were forgiven, and He healed your physical condition. How would you respond? What would you have done when you left the house? Would you have a problem striking up a conversation with people?**
 - *Answer:* You would have been overwhelmed. You would have thanked Jesus over and over again. When you left the house, you would have told everyone you saw what had just happened. There wouldn't be a dull moment because you'd have the best story to tell. You probably wouldn't shut up about what happened.
- **Do you think that what God has done for us, taking us from death to life, is just as miraculous as what He did for the paralytic? Why or why not?**
 - *Answer:* Yes, it's just as miraculous. Even though we don't have the same physical condition as the paralytic, our overall condition is actually worse. We're dead in our sin and unable to save ourselves.
- **Do you respond to what God has done in your life the same way you said you would respond if you were the paralytic? Why or why not?**
 - *Answers will vary.*
- **What are some ways we can challenge ourselves to regularly express joy, thanksgiving, and praise for what God has done for us?**
 - *Answer:* The students may have some good ideas to share. One of our biggest problems is that we take God's forgiveness for granted. The idea of it has become routine for us. When we are regularly confronted with the fact that we were sinners destined for eternity apart from Him, it reminds us how much we have to be thankful for.

FINALLY, wrap up the lesson by encouraging the students to come up with two to three practical ways they can consistently remind themselves to express praise for what God has done for them. Some examples could include reading Colossians 2:13-14 every morning or taping a notecard with those verses on their mirror or dashboard. Challenge them to put one of those things into practice this week.

If there are no more questions, close your Bible study in prayer.

- If you've purchased the corresponding devotional journal, remind students they'll be working through Week 31 this week. Encourage them to keep up with the daily devotions and to give memorizing this week's verse their best shot.
- If you're utilizing the digital devotions included in the Thread curriculum, remind students how you'll be making them available, i.e., Instagram, Facebook, etc.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well that you want to share?
- Something that didn't work that you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns at feedback@youthministry360.com.