

MIRACLES

WEEK 2 // HEALING THE PARALYTIC

HOST READS OUT LOUD:

Welcome back to our life group. I'm surprised you didn't bring your friends and extended family after how amazing last week was. Am I right? (give yourself a high five)

This week, we are talking about healing so let's start by sharing your most ridiculous injury story (think elevator trip length story not road trip length story).

- Does anyone want to start us off with their ridiculous injury story?
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HOST READS OUT LOUD:

Thanks for sharing all of your injury stories. It's amazing we've all made it this far!

We are in week two of our series on miracles. We have defined a miracle as any time God steps into our situation and does what we cannot do.

Today we are talking about healing. Jesus actively healed many during his ministry on Earth, and we believe He is able to still heal today.

- What are some different beliefs or assumptions people have about God as it relates to sickness and divine healing?
- Why do you think these different beliefs exist?

[Reading responsibility goes to the person sitting closest to the door or furthest from the screen.]

Why all the extra social distance? Trying to make a quick exit? You have to at least stay through this next question...

READ OUT LOUD:

This weekend Pastor Steve talked about some of the similarities between sin and sickness.

- We are typically more aware of our physical needs than our spiritual needs. Why do you think that is so often the case? (Make sure you give ample time for people to answer.)
- When Adam and Eve chose to disobey God, sin and sickness entered the world. What are some things that sin and sickness have in common?

[Once everyone has had a chance to answer the questions, reading responsibility goes to the first person who answered the question.]

Way to speak up! I can tell you're a natural born leader. Now you get to lead the next part of this discussion.

READ OUT LOUD:

We are going to read a dramatic account of a time when Jesus performed a miracle in a man's life by healing him and forgiving his sins. As we read this passage, we are going to have different people focus on the unique experiences of the four main characters in the story.

So we are going to count off by numbers 1 through 4, and each number will focus intently on the character for their number as we read. I'll start and we will go around clockwise. I'm a one...

[Once everyone has a number, reading responsibility goes to the person who brought the most stuff with them to the group (even if you're online).]

I bet you are an expert packer. I hope it wasn't emotional baggage though...

READ OUT LOUD:

If you are a one, you'll be paying attention to the Pharisees and the teachers of the law:

The Pharisees and teachers of the law were focused on a strict adherence to the Jewish laws and traditions and on maintaining a Jewish identity under Roman occupation. You will be focusing on the possible motivations for traveling such a far distance to listen to Jesus teach.

[Reading responsibility goes to the person who has traveled the farthest from home.]

READ OUT LOUD:

If you are a two, you'll be paying attention to the four friends of the paralytic man.

The gospel of Mark tells us there were four friends who went to great lengths to help their friend. You will be focusing on the motivations and experiences of the four friends of the man in need of healing.

[Reading responsibility goes to someone you think would lower you from a roof (not push you off one).]

READ OUT LOUD:

If you are a three, you'll be paying attention to the paralytic man:

Being paralytic in this culture meant you were a person with a stigma. As a result, issues of rejection and exclusion would be a regular part of a paralytic's life. His condition meant that without these close friends he would not be able to get to Jesus. You will be focusing on what the paralytic man might have been thinking and experiencing throughout this story.

[Reading responsibility goes to someone who hasn't read yet.]

READ OUT LOUD:

If you are a four, you'll be paying attention to Jesus. (This makes you the most spiritual in the group - way to be!)

It was still early in Jesus' ministry as He was still in the process of calling His disciples. Jesus was teaching in Simon Peter's home when this miracle occurred. You will be focusing on why Jesus performs this miracle and why He does it in the way that He does.

Everyone open your Bibles or phones to Luke 5:17-26. And once everyone is there, I'd like the first person who arrived tonight to read.

[After the passage is read, reading responsibility goes back to the host.]

HOST READS OUT LOUD:

Let's check in with each of our character groups. We'll start with the ones, and it's ok if you have a thought around a character that isn't your number. What did you notice from your point of view?

[Go around each number and character - as a reminder:

- **Ones - Pharisees - possible motivations for traveling to listen to Jesus**
- **Twos - the four friends - their motivation and experience**
- **Threes - paralytic man - what did he think or experience**
- **Fours - Jesus - why he does this miracle the way he does**

After each number has shared their point of view, hit next.]

HOST READS OUT LOUD:

A lifelong disability or a sudden, unwanted diagnosis can rock our world and remind us of how brief and fragile life can be. One of the mysteries of life is why God chooses to heal some people and others do not receive a miraculous healing.

Some teach that if you are not being healed, then the problem is you don't have enough faith. Pastor Steve said our healing is not dependent on how much faith we have, but rather it is God's grace that brings healing.

- In what ways is teaching that you don't have enough faith dangerous?
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HOST READS OUT LOUD:

While God has power over sin and sickness, there is still a reality that we battle both in our daily lives. God wants us to pray for healing and to trust Him regardless of what happens.

- Whether it is for healing or something else, how can we be praying for each other this week?