

"Strength in Community"

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'?" But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all.

This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!" Mark 2:1-12

Series Theme Verses: Romans 12:1-2 MSG

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. ***You'll be changed from the inside out.*** Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

1. Community is a catalyst for courage.

Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. Mark 2:4

a. Fear cripples courage.

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear...

1 John 4:18

b. We need each other.

When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Mark 2:5

2. Spiritual growth happens best in community.

So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. Mark 2:4 NKJV

a. Jesus is concerned with the heart first.

But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. Mark 2:10

b. Jesus does the transformational work.

So He said to the man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." Mark 2:11

3. Jesus-centred community creates amazement.

He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!" Mark 2:12

a. Carry each other's burdens.

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. John 13:35

b. Use your gifts.

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:7

c. Celebrate all that God has done.

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"Consequently, the one really adequate instrument for learning about God is the whole Christian community, waiting for Him together."
-C.S. Lewis

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