

## **“ONE PARALYZED FRIEND”**

**Luke 5:17-26**

**CWBC – 1/13/19**

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**INTRO** – Driving down a street in downtown Jackson area. Saw these letters on side of building: WIT. Underneath them were the words, **“Whatever It Takes.”**

Thought that would be a good name for a church. I believe that ought to be our attitude when it comes to sharing the Gospel w/ those who are lost. Are we willing to do whatever it takes to get the Gospel to them? Are we willing to do whatever it takes to bring them to Jesus? This morning, we will be looking at some men who did just that – they did whatever it took to get one broken, hurting friend to Jesus. J.D. Greear, pastor of The Summit Church in Raleigh-Durham, NC, & the president of our SBC said this: “On any given weekend, there are more than 5 million Southern Baptists gathering to worship around the country. Can you imagine the impact we would make if every one of them asked God to let him or her lead one person to Christ next year?”

**EXPLANATION** – Open your Bibles or your Bible app to Luke 5:17-26 (page \_\_\_\_ in pew Bible).

After His healing encounter w/ the leper, Jesus had pulled away from the crowds for a time of

spiritual replenishment & refreshment w/ His Father (v. 16). Of course, Jesus was God in the flesh, which meant that He always had the power He needed to do the work that His Father had given Him to do. But as Jesus the man, His practice of drawing away from His ongoing ministry in order to pray teaches us the importance of that same thing for our lives. If we want the power of God to be evident & active in our lives, we must regularly draw near to Him in prayer.

This story of the friends bringing their paralyzed buddy to the Lord is one of my favorite stories of healing all of the Gospels. It embodies so much of what you & I need to be about when it comes to seeing & experiencing the transforming work of Jesus. As we continue our focus on “Who’s Your 1?”, this is an awesome story of what can happen to 1 paralyzed friend when folks don’t give up.

- 4 people saved at Mission Byram this past week. Glenn Pilgrim shared through his tears that 1 of the ladies who was saved has been coming to Mission Byram since it opened – over 4 years ago. So she has been exposed to & heard the Gospel on multiple occasions. And finally she came to faith in Christ this week! Just like these men didn’t

give up in bringing their friend to Jesus, we can't give up either! What a testimony!

**APPLICATION** – So let's take a look this amazing story of 1 paralyzed friend who was forever changed when he met Jesus. I want us to notice:

**THE POWER – v. 17** – There's a sentence I want you to notice at the end of v. 17 – “And the power of the Lord was w/ Him to heal.” Why was the power of the Lord w/ Him?

- **First, b/c He was & is God. Remember what Isaiah said about Him in his prophecy? “...He shall be called...Mighty God...” (Isa. 9:6). Plain & simple: The Mighty God is a powerful God!**
- Secondly, b/c the Holy Spirit had come upon Him. Luke 3:21-22 – “...when Jesus had also been baptized & was praying, the heavens were opened, & the Holy Spirit descended on Him in bodily form, like a dove...” – What did Jesus say to us in Acts 1:8 about the power of the Holy Spirit?
- **Third, b/c HE was there – Jesus, the Savior – the very embodiment of the Gospel. Rom. 1:16 – “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes...” – The Gospel in**

**human form was standing right in front of them.**

- Finally, b/c of the faith of those who were there – v. 20 – “And when Jesus saw their faith...” There were times in Jesus' ministry when He could not heal b/c there was such little faith. Mark 5:5-6 – “And He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people & healed them. And He marveled b/c of their unbelief.”

That same power is present here for us. That same power is present here in us. The power of God that Jesus used to heal is the power that you & I can use to share the Gospel w/ those who are lost. Question is: **Do we have the faith to believe that God can & will use us?**

**THE PARALYSIS – v. 18a** – Don't know anything about the cause or the duration of the man's paralysis. May have been a lifelong condition – birth defect or something that developed in childhood. May have been due to an accident, or something he had done. May have been the direct consequences of sinful behavior. Whatever the case, it was a debilitating condition & he needed the healing that only Jesus could give him.

Our “1” person also needs the healing from their spiritual paralysis that only Jesus can give them.

**THE PLAN – v. 18b** – His friends “were seeking to bring him in & lay him before Jesus.” What a great plan! Would to God that that would be OUR plan, too – that we would have a passion to bring those who are in need of salvation & lay them before Jesus!

**THE PROBLEM – v. 19a** – These friends desperately wanted to get their paralyzed friend to Jesus, but the huge crowd of people was in the way. They could have just given up & turned around & gone home. Could have looked at each other & said, “This is just too inconvenient, too much trouble, too much work, too much embarrassment, too much potential for failure.”

I wonder how many times we do that in witnessing? How many lives go untouched b/c we let problems & circumstances turn us around? How many times the Gospel does NOT get shared b/c it's just too inconvenient, too much trouble, too much work, too much embarrassment, too much potential for failure?

**THE PERSEVERANCE – v. 19b** – But, thank God, these men didn't let the problem of the crowd divert them from their mission of getting their friend to Jesus! They just kept pressing on b/c they knew that Jesus was the only hope for their paralyzed friend.

“It was a very singular action which the bearers performed. Who would have thought of breaking up a roof? Nobody but those who loved much, and much desired to benefit the sick. O that God would make us attempt singular things to save souls. May a holy ingenuity be excited in the church; a sacred inventiveness set at work for winning men's hearts. It appeared to his generation a singular thing when John Wesley stood on his father's tombstone and preached at Epworth. Glory be to God that he had the courage to preach in the open air. It seemed an extraordinary thing when certain ministers delivered sermons in the theatres; but it is matter of joy that sinners have been reached by such irregularities who might have escaped all other means. Let us but feel our hearts full of zeal for God, and love for souls, and we shall soon be led to adopt means which others may criticize, but which Jesus Christ will accept.”  
(Spurgeon)

**THE PURPOSE – v. 20-24** – Jesus' work in this paralyzed man's life was much greater than just his physical healing, which He did for him. Jesus purpose was to forgive his sins & save him. How awesome that God can use something as difficult as being paralyzed to do an eternal work of salvation in his life! I love Romans 8:28 & how its truth applies to every situation in life!

"The men who brought the paralyzed man to Jesus are an example of the right attitude leading to the right action, resulting in a great move of God – a sinner saved and healed by Jesus."  
(<https://sermons.faithlife.com/sermons/59197-whatever-it-takes-luke-517-26-062407>)

**THE PRAISE – v. 25-26** – The end result of the work of Christ in this paralyzed man's life was that God was glorified & praised by everyone who saw what had happened. Charles Spurgeon – "The whole Christian church is full of sacred praise when a sinner is saved; even heaven itself is glad."

And isn't that what the Christian life is all about? That's the ultimate reason that you & I serve the Lord & tell others about Him. Our purpose for living is to bring praise to the Lord & glorify God w/ our lives in every way.

- Psalm 115:1 – "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give glory..."
- John 15:8 – "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, & show yourselves to be my disciples."
- 1 Cor. 10:31 – "Whatever you do, whether you eat or drink, do all to the glory of God."

**CONCLUSION** – I LOVE this story! And I hope you love it, too, now.

- I love the powerful meaning of it – Jesus loves changing people's lives.

- I love the practical implications of it - Concerned friends bringing a hurting friend to Jesus.
- I love the personal applications of it – He will use YOU & ME to bring lost people to salvation, if we will trust Him & do whatever it takes to get them to Him.

So, the invitation this week is basically the same as the invitation last week: **Who here today will make a commitment today to do whatever it takes to bring 1 person to faith in Jesus Christ this year?**