"FAITHFUL FRIENDS" **Mark 2:1-12**
CWBC – 10/27/19
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INTRO – "I Need a Friend" video

Best friend – Scot Nixon – inseparable. Still stay in touch.

Nothing like having a good friend by your side when you're walking through life. Reminds me of the theme song from the movie "Toy Story":

[Verse 1]
You've got a friend in me
You've got a friend in me
When the road looks rough ahead
And you're miles and miles from your nice warm bed
You just remember what your old pal said
Boy, you've got a friend in me
Yeah, you've got a friend in me

[Verse 2]
You've got a friend in me
You've got a friend in me
You've got troubles, and I've got 'em, too
There isn't anything I wouldn't do for you
We stick together and we see it through
'Cause you've got a friend in me
You've got a friend in me

In this message today, we are going to see how the actions of some friends made a huge difference in someone's life.

EXPLANATION – Jesus was just doing "Jesus stuff" in this encounter.

- He was at home in Capernaum (v. 1) – You might be thinking, "I thought He lived in Nazareth." That's where He grew up & spent a good portion of His life, but Matt. 4:13 says, "And leaving Nazareth He went & lived in Capernaum by the sea…"
    - Beautiful, picturesque town on the Sea of Galilee. Rolling, lush hills.
    - He established his ministry base here in Capernaum. One person said, "I've been to Capernaum 5 times…I've thought, "If I were Jesus, I would have picked it for my ministry headquarters, too."
- He was preaching the word (v. 2)
- He was healing sick people
- He was battling w/ the scribes
- He was forgiving sins
- He was providing opportunities for people to glorify God – Always pointing people to God.

- John 5:19-20 - "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does. **20** For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing. In fact, the Father will show him how to do even greater works than healing this man. Then you will truly be astonished."

In the midst of all of this activity on this day in Capernaum, these faithful friends show up w/ their paralyzed buddy. That's where we are going to focus on attention.

APPLICATION – Faithful friends want their friends to meet Jesus.

Do I get this excited about getting to hear Jesus? – v. 1-2 – The house was packed w/ people who were there to see Jesus & hear Him preach. Could have been up to 50 people crowded inside the house w/ the rest trying to see & hear Him through the windows from the outside.

I believe we would be more excited about others hearing Jesus if we were more excited about hearing Jesus.

- If we were more excited about church
- If we were more excited about the Life Group we were involved in
- If we were more excited about seeing lives changed
- If we were more excited about witnessing & leading others to Christ

How long has it been since you were truly excited about what God was doing in your life?

- He's still speaking
- He's still moving
- He's still healing
- He's still saving
- He's still changing lives forever

That's something to get excited about! If you & I want to be faithful friends, we need to get excited about hearing Jesus & obeying Him when He speaks!

Am I this serious about getting my friends to Jesus? – v. 3-4 – Look at the determination & commitment of these friends! They knew

that if they could get their paralyzed friend to Jesus, Jesus could change his life.

The same is still true today! If we will get our friends to Jesus, there is the very real possibility that He will change their lives!

Chuck Lawless, prof at SEBTS, recent blog post:

This post is really simple. I've been thinking about people I've known over the years who were dramatically changed by the gospel—and I want you to know some of their stories. I've chosen to use only their first initials, but they know who they are.

1. **C.** He was my dad. We prayed for him for 30+ years, and God grabbed his heart when my dad was in his early 70s. Words cannot adequately describe how much he was changed.

2. **M.** She was really young when she got saved, but her persistent faithfulness over 50+ years is evidence of God's saving and sustaining power. Today, she's a pastor's wife.

3. **T.** Saved out of the background of another world faith, T made a life-changing commitment when he heard about Jesus and saw Him modeled in others.

4. **G**. He was one of the hardest, harshest men I'd ever met until the Spirit of God melted him. He became one of the most faithful members of my first church.

5. **C.** I met her long after she became a believer, but she modeled for us what it means to be fully committed to Christ. Her servant heart was unbelievable.

6. **L.** As a kid, he seemed almost out of control during church services. When the Lord saved him, though, he threw his enthusiasm into honoring Him. "Redeemed energy" is cool to behold.

7. **T.** I still remember the night he surrendered his heart to Jesus. In his living room talking with an evangelist, he said "yes" to Jesus. Everything changed for him then.

8. **A.** Drugs and alcohol couldn't stand in the way of God's grace in his life. Freed from addiction, he now regularly leads others to know Jesus.

9. **M.** His girlfriend invited him to church, where he heard the true gospel for the first time. His life would never be the same after God pursued him.

10. **R.** In one of the few instances I've seen like this, she called the church to see if someone would come tell her about Jesus. Eventually, she led her entire family to follow Christ.

11. **C.** He was a college student when God intervened in his life, saved him, and gave him victory over lusts and addictions that had consumed him.

12. **A.** He turned to Christ when a missionary told him the gospel. His faith cost him, but he pressed on with perseverance.

13. **N.** All of his plans changed when he met Jesus and gave him his life. Today, he's a missionary in Asia.

What's my point today? It's simply to offer encouragement, hope, and prayers for all of us who are seeking to lead others to Jesus. He still changes lives.

Is my faith in Jesus as deep as these friends? – v. 5 – These faithful friends were deeply concerned about their friend & his debilitating

condition. They had the faith to believe that Jesus could & would meet his needs. They didn't just simply "pray about it" – they put feet to their prayers.

Faith in the Lord Jesus is what drives us forward in our life.

- It is what motivates us to take risks like these guys took.
- It is what moves us to do things that others may think are dumb.
- It is what makes us step into waters that are deep, storms that are raging, & situations that seem hopeless.

Listen to these verses & see if they characterize your life:

- Heb. 11:6 – "Without faith, it is impossible to please God."
- 2 Cor. 5:7 – "We walk by faith & not by sight."
- Rom. 10:17 – "Faith comes by hearing, & hearing through the word of Christ."
- Mark 5:36 – "…Jesus told him, 'Don't be afraid; just believe.'"
- 1 Cor. 2:5 – "…that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."
- Matt. 21:22 – "…whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith."
- 1 Cor. 16:13 – "…Stand firm in the faith…"
- Prov. 3:5-6 – "Trust in the Lord w/ all your heart. And lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, & He will direct your paths."

Am I this amazed at the work of Jesus when I see it? – v. 12 – Jesus did an amazing work in this guy's life! And when the paralyzed man jumped up, grabbed his mat, & walked out, the crowd of people there rightfully praised God b/c that's what you do when Jesus changes a person's life!

Kanye West – rapper who has lived the worldly life that so many celebrities live. But he has recently given his life to Christ & is now boldly proclaiming his faith to a watching & listening world. I'm sure there are many who are saying, "We've never seen anything like this!" Jimmy Kimmel interviewed Kanye & asked him, "Are you now a Christian rapper?" Kanye's anwer: "I'm a Christian everything!"

When you & I step out in faith & bring our friends to Jesus, we will get to see amazing things & glorify God for His awesome work!