

# The Healing Power of Jesus Christ

*Reflections on Mark 2:1-12 in application to pastoral counseling of teenagers*

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Mark 2:1-12 is an amazing account of the healing power of Jesus. What impresses me about this passage is not the healing that takes place, though any healing is miraculous. The thing that impresses me most is all the circumstances that brought the paralytic man into the presence of Jesus.

**The scene:** Jesus is teaching in a house. So many people want to hear him that they crowd into the house and spill through the door to the outside. Nobody else can get in. Five men show up, one being carried on a stretcher because he cannot walk himself. They are determined to do whatever it takes to get their wounded friend into the presence of Jesus. They realize that they are personally not capable to heal their friend.

**The problem:** Their original plan fails and they can't get in through the door, the easiest way to get in the presence of Jesus. There are just too many people crowded around.

**The solution:** The men decide they are going to lower their friend through the roof of the house. Now, this wasn't a small task. It took hard work, collaboration, and determination. They really needed to communicate and plan to be able to cut a hole in the roof - it was probably some sort of concrete material they were cutting through. It

wasn't easy and it certainly was disruptive to what was going on in the house. It was messy, dirty, ugly, and difficult. It didn't go unnoticed by anyone. Yet, these men were determined. They had faith that Jesus could help their friend in ways they couldn't, so they did whatever it took to get their friend into His presence. They worked together and cooperated in such a way that their friend was able to be present with Jesus and receive healing from Him.

**Jesus's response:** He healed the man because of their faith. He did it in such a way that it was a testimony to many others.

### **Reflections**

**The scene:** The young people we encounter on a daily basis cannot be whole without a transformational encounter with Jesus Christ. No matter who the person is, Jesus is the one they need. A youth worker on his or her own cannot provide a young person with everything they need in life. Similarly, a youth worker cannot be the only influence in the life of a young person.

**The problem:** There are so many other factors going on in the lives of young people and we need to do whatever it takes to bring them into the presence of Jesus Christ. It's noisy and it's messy. Every young person needs to encounter Jesus Christ for the sake of their eternity and their wholeness here on earth...to be set free from the bondage of sin. Every young person needs to encounter Jesus to understand their purpose and mission in life. In fact, we all need an encounter with Jesus.

**The solution:** It takes more than just a youth worker to meet the needs of a teenager. It takes family, school, friends, the church (meaning everyone, not just the youth ministry), medical professionals, mental health professionals, extra-curricular activities...every activity, every person that touches the life of a teenager. The day of the youth minister super-hero is over! Every person who impacts a teenager plays a role in guiding that young person into the presence of Jesus in order for Him to meet all of their needs. Youth ministry professionals and volunteers need to collaborate with teens' families and all the services in their lives in order to encourage a holistic encounter with Jesus instead of compartmentalizing Jesus into youth ministry programs. We are not capable ourselves to transform the lives of teenagers, that's the Lord's job. We are one member of the team of influences that God gives the responsibility to direct a teenager to the Lord. When other members of the team are not doing their part (school, psychologists, parents...whoever), we are responsible to solicit the Lord on behalf of the teen, not to replace these parts of their lives. We guide them to the truth and allow Jesus to do the rest of the work. It's messy, dirty, ugly, and difficult. BUT, it comes with eternal rewards.

**Jesus's response:** *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

*Matthew 11:28 - 30 (NIV).* This response is for you, the youth worker, parent, pastor,

counselor, teacher AND for the student. Jesus promises to be in control if we will let him.

**Application:**

Jesus alone has the power to heal the teenagers we encounter in youth work. He is the one that is in control of how he works in the lives of teenagers. Youth workers need to depend on the Lord to keep his promises in the lives of teenagers even when things seem to spin out of control. Youth workers should also be ready to partner with parents, other church members, and secular services when it comes to determining what is best for a teenager in need. Youth workers also need to be ready to let go of a situation and commit it to prayer when there is nothing else that can be done from a youth ministry perspective. It does not help a teenager in crisis to only have you as a confidant. We need to let go of our control and trust the power of the Holy Spirit through our Lord Jesus Christ to meet the needs of the teenagers in our ministry. Ultimately only He knows how to truly meet their needs!

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