



# Sermon Discussion Guide

## The Healing Model of Jesus Introduction to Life's Healing Choices Series

“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.” Psalm 147:3 (NIV)

There's a reason this verse from Psalm 147 resonates with everyone who reads it: we are all brokenhearted at one time or another. The good news is, we don't have to stay that way. Jesus heals. In this introductory lesson to the Life's Healing Choices series, we'll examine how Jesus heals people, and then how we can *be* Jesus for others through our small groups. We'll use the story of the paralyzed man whose friends brought him to Jesus for healing as our illustration.

**OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH A PRAYER. THIS IS ONLY A GUIDE – SELECT THE POINTS YOU WANT TO DISCUSS.**

### HOW JESUS HEALS PEOPLE

#### The Paralyzed Man - Matthew 9, Mark 2, Luke 5

(Begin this lesson by reading this story aloud from these chapters.)

#### 1. FIRST HE CALMS MY FEARS.

There was a pattern to Jesus' ministry. When someone came to him for healing, the first thing he would do was to offer a word of encouragement. Read Matthew 9:2. What did he say to the paralyzed man?

- What is it about a word of encouragement that is calming?

According to Hebrews 4:15, what quality does Jesus possess that connects him to us?

- How can we know Jesus cares about our problems?

#### 2. HE CONFRONTS MY FAULTS AND MY FAILURES.

The second thing Jesus did when people came to him for healing was to help them see their problems. Read Luke 5:20. What did Jesus say to the paralyzed man?

- How do you think this statement helped the man see his problem? What do you think the man's real problem might have been?
- What happens to our sin when Jesus forgives it?

How does James 5:16 instruct us to deal with the issue of sin? What does he promise us when we obey?

- Why is it hard for us to open up to one another in this way?
- Why do we tend to go to almost anyone else for healing before we'll go to God?

#### 3. HE CHALLENGES MY FAITH.

The third thing Jesus did when people came to him for healing was to encourage them to act in faith. What did Jesus tell the paralyzed man to do in Matthew 9:6-8?

- How did this challenge the man's faith? Why do you think Jesus tested him in this way?
- Has God ever asked you to do something that seemed impossible? What happened when you obeyed?

**Discipleship** – As disciples of Christ, he is our example in ministry. When it comes to healing, the good news is he wants to set us free. He wants us to get up from our mats and walk with him. Which of these three steps of faith do you need to take this week: 1) Admit I need help; 2) Believe Christ will help; 3) Do whatever he tells me to do? Share your choice with the group and commit one another's faith decisions to prayer. Be sure to hold one another accountable.



## 7 Marks of a Small Group That Brings Healing

1. COMPASSION: They became concerned for a hurting friend.

Read Romans 15:2. How do we know if we love?

- All of us are commanded to love God and love your neighbor. Discuss ways that your group have or can demonstrate love.

According to 1 Corinthians 10:24, what should believers actively promote?

- Share a time when you received compassion from someone and how you responded.

2. FAITH: They believed Jesus would heal their friend.

How does Luke 5:20 define how we are to function together?

- Why is it so important for small groups to demonstrate a united expectation?

What do Romans 1:12 and 1 Thessalonians 5:1 teach us about faith?

- What does it mean to mutually encourage one another?

3. ACTION: They didn't just pray; they took action.

According to Matthew 9:2, what did the paralyzed man's friends do that resulted in his healing?

- Discuss in your group the importance of growing better together?

What does it mean to 'go out into the byways' (Luke 14:23)?

- How is this being like Jesus?

4. PERSISTENCE: They didn't let difficulties discourage them.

What does God promises us if we continue in our efforts, even when they seem impossible? See Galatians 6:9.

- Share a time when persistence paid off for you.

According to 2 Peter 3:9, why is God patient with us?

- What does God's model of patience say to us?

5. INNOVATION: They dared to do something different.

What do Luke 5:19 and Hebrews 10:24 teach us about the value of creativity?

- Share when someone or a group "went through the roof" for you (or) when you or your group "went through the roof" for someone else?

6. COOPERATION: They worked together on their friend's behalf.

According to Luke 5:19, to what lengths did this group go to help their friend?

- Based on all three versions of this story, what can we learn from their example of teamwork?



**Fellowship-**We know and believe we are “better together” when we are united in our efforts to make a difference in the world. We’ve been commanded to think of others first and not be self-seeking. How can the example of your group model to those around you what it means to be a Christian (“... they’ll know we are Christians by our love”)?

*Take a moment to review any assignments/challenges made during the personal application and commitment section of your previous meeting. Seeing God at work in the lives of those who commit to him is essential for growth.*

#### **PERSONAL APPLICATION AND COMMITMENT:**

There are four ways your group can fulfill the mission to share Christ’s gift of healing with others:

1. Start a new group within your current group (be creative).
2. Sponsor a group by sending a leader for a season.
3. Serve within your group.
4. Send out members to start new groups.

The seventh way the paralyzed man’s friends brought him healing was through their shared sacrifice. They gave their time, their income, and their physical labor to bring their friend to Jesus. In the process, they learned that the load is too great for any one person to carry alone.

Being like Jesus always involves a cost. For our Lord, it was death on the cross. For us it might be time, energy, money—all three of these and more. But it’s through sacrifice that we discover joy. Because these friends gave of themselves, their friend experienced God’s healing touch.

As a group, what step will you take in order to bring life’s healing choices to others? Discuss what is on your hearts and try not to go home without making a decision for action.

“We work together as partners who belong to God.” 1 Corinthians 3:9 (NLT)



## Sermon Discussion Guide Leader Notes

### Goals for this Week's Study

- Share a childhood memory of going to your mother or another adult for a healing touch when you fell or were sick. How did that touch make you feel?
- Determine to challenge yourselves both individually and as a group to reach out as Jesus did to help others heal.
- Lay your fears and hesitations on the table about reaching out to help others heal. What might keep you from being a small group that brings healing to others? Confess those fears to Christ and watch him work through you.

### Preparing to Lead Your Group

- ✓ **PRAY** for insight as you begin to prepare for leading your group. Ask for God's wisdom, that the Holy Spirit will be the teacher and that you will be God's instrument to lead the group to greater understanding and a willingness to commit to becoming more like God. Prayer should be your primary source of personal preparation for leading your group.
- ✓ **PLAN** where you want to take your group in the next 60-90 days. Is your group strong in some areas and weak in others? How can you challenge the members to live more balanced Christian lives? Consider God's five purposes for the church: Fellowship, Discipleship, Ministry, Mission and Worship, and make a plan to encourage your group members to growth and commitment in their weak areas.
- ✓ **PONDER YOUR PROGRESS** after each session and at the end of a series. Reflect on what went well and what didn't. Re-evaluation is key to your growth as a leader. Consider whether your plan is being effective in moving the group to greater understanding and commitment. How are you doing with leading the discussion: is it stimulating, challenging, and meaningful? Are you able to keep the group on track? Do you need to make some changes?

### Using This Sermon Discussion Guide

- This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups there are too many questions to answer in one session together. After considering the needs of your group you may choose one of the following options:
  - One section of questions
  - One or two questions from each section
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, add Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.
- The questions relating to the five purposes are helpful to develop balance and spiritual maturity in our lives. You can bring your group to an awareness of their needs in these areas by using these questions as a regular part of each discussion.
- Personal application is key to everyone's growth and should be included in every discussion. When asked how he or she intends to apply a certain principle a group member may say, "I need to spend more time in the Bible and in prayer." It is important for you to help group members make applications that are more specific and commit to a specific plan of action by asking, for example, "How are you going to begin?" An example is to get up 30 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- As the leader your goal is to help bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their need for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.