

TUESDAY MORNING: Interacting with Others

INTRODUCTION

- Today, we'll start to settle into our routines, start getting to know the people around us a little bit more as we become more familiar with the living and working environments.
- This provides us the opportunity to be aware of our interactions with the person/people around us.
- In today's scripture story, we see a number of different ways that people could interact with others.
- Let's see what happens.

READ Mark 2:1-7

1 When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. 2 So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them. 3 Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. 4 And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6 Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

ASK (answers in parenthesis)

- In verse 2, how many people are gathered around Jesus (so many that they are crowding OUTSIDE of the house – people can't even get to the door, much less through it)
- In verse 4, why do the four friends dig through the roof? (because the crowd of people won't make way for them – they've become an obstacle)
- In verse 6 and 7, are the scribes offering Jesus any help? (no, they are judgmental about what Jesus is doing)

TELL

- So in today's story, we see five different ways people can interact with each other.
 - One way is like the crowd: They are only aware of their own selves, about satisfying their own curiosity. And because of this, not only do they not help the four friends, they actually obstruct the four friends
 - Another way is like the paralytic: He allows others to help him.
 - A third way is like the four friends: They work together to overcome physical obstacles to get their friend to Jesus.
 - A fourth way is like Jesus: To be aware of what's internally happening for people – Jesus' words of forgiveness to the paralytic addresses an internal concern, not an external/physical concern.
 - A fifth way is like the scribes: They think they are superior and know the right way to do things – yet they do nothing.
- At any moment, we can embody/live out any of these 5 ways.
- Challenge of the Day: Keep your eyes and ears open about how you are interacting with others – are you like the crowd, the paralytic, the four friends, Jesus or the scribes? *Extra Challenge of the day:* Who do you WANT to be like?

CLOSING PRAYER *Recommended format:* Adult Leader asks for prayer requests and then leads the prayer (start to finish) in a pretty succinct matter that mentions the named prayer requests, maybe mentions something from the scripture story and then asks/invites God's help and guidance and blessing into the work day. Amen.

TUESDAY EVENING: Interacting with Others

(45 minutes total)

DECOMPRESS

- We're going to go around the circle, now, and share with each other one thing that you did today that you keep thinking about, that surprised you or that made you uncomfortable.
- When it's your turn, start by saying your name.
- **RECOMMENDED FORMAT:** Adult leader starts. Then proceed around the circle. Everyone is expected to share. If someone can't think of something, pass them by and then come back.

REFLECT

- This morning, we read and briefly discussed the story of four friends bringing their paralyzed friend to Jesus – they actually had to dig through the roof of Jesus' house just to get him there!
- Our challenge for the day was keep our eyes and ears open about how we were interacting with others – were you like the crowd, the paralytic, the four friends, Jesus or the scribes? *Extra Challenge of the day:* Who did you WANT to be like?
 - So...did you ask for help? Did you find yourself being judgmental? Did you forgive someone? Did you help others overcome physical obstacles? Did you find yourself feeling confused/in the way at certain points?
 - **RECOMMENDED FORMAT:** This is meant to be more of an open discussion format. No need to go around the circle. And people might respond to what is shared. Other questions/topics might be raised. As the leader, there might be experiences that you'll want to raise and ask for responses about.

TELL

- In the same way that Moses inspected his environment, so too can we inspect ourselves and our actions.
- And when we do this, it can help us to be more in-tune with what is happening.
- But it can also make us angry at ourselves, or frustrated with others.
- Which is why the Jesus part of today's story is so important: When we're in the middle of storms, we're going to make mistakes – as individuals and as groups. And the thing that helps best with mistakes is forgiveness. It is a healing thing.
- So as you think through this day, ask God's help to forgive those who made things harder for you. And, ask God to help you forgive yourself if you're beating yourself up about not working hard enough or getting something right, today.
- Let's close with (song and) prayer.

MUSIC/SINGING (optional)

CLOSING PRAYER

Recommended format: Adult leader will start the prayer, and then say something along the lines of, "At this time, God, we lift to you our joys and concerns both outloud and silently." This then provides opportunity for everyone in the group to pray. When it feels like enough time has passed, Adult leader then closes the prayer. **NOTE:** The introductory part of the prayer by the Adult leader can be pretty succinct – some naming of joys and thanksgiving. The closing part of the prayer can be a place where the Adult leader can lift up the concerns of the group that were raised in the sharing time. The closing part of the prayer can also be a good place to give thanks to God for the individuals in the group.