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“He is your friend who pushes you nearer to God.”
[Abraham Kuyper]

ENGAGE & CONNECT

Describe someone in your life who has been a friend through it all. What is one characteristic that defines the kind of friend they have been to you?

BEGIN WITH PRAYER

Spend a moment praying this passage, beginning your time together in humility and gratitude!

“Friends come and friends go, but a true friend sticks by you like family.”
[Proverbs 18:24]

BIG IDEA

However you and I define friendship, is how you and I will pursue and live out friendship.

PASSAGE

- Mark 2:1-12

DISCUSSION

1. How does the faith of the paralytic's friends inspire you?
2. In the sermon we heard, *“This moment happened because of the faith and efforts of these friends.”* Describe a time in your life when the faith and effort of your friend(s) accomplished something that brought you great joy or purpose.
3. What does Jesus' response tell us about His priorities?
4. What does the healing of the paralytic tell us about the relationship between physical and spiritual healing in Jesus' ministry?
5. How can we practice the kind of faith and determination shown by the paralytic's friends in our own lives?
6. In the sermon we heard, *“There will be chapters in your life that you simply won't get through without friendship.”* What has one of those chapters been like for you? (i.e. needed a friend to get through)
7. How do you think the paralytic felt when Jesus first forgave his sins instead of immediately healing him?
8. What does this passage teach us about the importance of community and intercessory prayer?

9. In what ways can we be more aware of the spiritual needs of those around us?
10. How does the reaction of the crowd to the healing encourage our own faith journey?

STEP OF OBEDIENCE

Jesus has placed you in the circle of people you are in for a purpose. His will for every one of us is that we have a circle of “open roof” friends! Based on the Holy Spirit’s prompting today, **what is a step of obedience that you can take?** Here are a few questions to consider ...

- Who is God inviting you to be an “open roof” friend to?
- Who do you need to forgive so that friendship can be restored?
- Are the friendships in your life defined as open, sacrificial, creative, and bold?
- How can your home become a place where people are welcomed to and invested in?

PRAYER FOCUS

“Open Roof” Friends

- Pray that we come before God with a humble heart, seeking His guidance and wisdom to be godly friends who reflect the love and grace of Jesus in every interaction.
- Ask God to empower us to be sources of encouragement, support, and joy to those He has placed in our lives. May He fill us with more of His Spirit, so that our friendships are a testament to God’s unfailing love!

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE *Optional*

Welcoming Prayer is an invitation to welcome everything, knowing that everything that happens to us is something we can learn and grow from. It also helps us consent to God’s presence and action in our physical and emotional reactions to anything that happens to us and around us. Give it a try!

- [Welcoming Prayer](#) or rockbridge.cc/welcoming-prayer