

Playtime

The Paralyse d Man



Storybook for
toddler groups

WE'RE GOING TO FIND JESUS!

Here are some ideas for your toddler group based on the Bible story of the paralysed man and how his four friends brought him to Jesus. It might fit in well with themes such as 'I don't feel very well', 'homes' and 'not giving up'.

You might even like to invite a health visitor along to answer questions or start a bookshelf of useful books and leaflets.

Items needed for the story:

- Large cardboard box
- Shoe box lid or tea towel
- Black paper or card
- Paint, glue and string
- Straw or yellow raffia
- Building bricks
- A doll to represent Jesus and one to be the paralysed man

READY

- Paint the sides of the large cardboard box and stick on black rectangular shapes for the windows.
- Cut out a door big enough for your Jesus doll to fit through.
- Glue yellow raffia or straw onto the top box flaps for the roof, but make sure that you can still open it.
- Use building bricks as steps to the roof.
- Attach some string to the four corners of the shoe box lid and place the paralysed man doll on top.

TEDDY

Put a bandage on Teddy. Explain that he is feeling sad because he has hurt himself. Encourage the children to talk about any experiences they have had of feeling unwell or hurting themselves and needing to wear a bandage or plaster. Remind them that we can ask Jesus to help us when we or someone we care about are unwell.



GO

Parents are often worried about their toddlers' development or health. Try to make sure that your group is a place where they can share concerns and receive reassurance. Think about how welcoming your group might seem to someone with a disability and make sure that your environment is inclusive.

STORYTELLING TIP



Place your house on the floor and build the brick steps. Ask the group to walk in a big circle around it (encourage everyone to join in with the footsteps sounds).

Quietly ... *tiptoe, tiptoe* (walk on tiptoes),

Through mud ... *squelch, squelch* (lifting feet as if they are stuck in mud),

Through water ... *splash, splosh* (jump as if you are jumping in puddles),

Loudly ... *stamp, stamp* (stamp feet),

Upstairs ... *steppity, step* (lift your feet as if walking up steps),

Through grass ... *swishy, swashy* (wave hands back and forth as you walk).

Now sit close to the house for the story, leaving four helpers sitting at the back who will bring the doll lying on the 'mat'.

THE STORY:

WE'RE GOING TO FIND JESUS!



Leader:

Look! Here comes Jesus! (*Someone brings the Jesus doll.*)

What is he doing?

He's telling everyone that God loves them! (*The doll says, 'Hello! God loves you' to all the children.*)

What a beautiful day!

Everyone smiles when Jesus comes to stay! (*All smile.*)

Look! Jesus is going into the house (*place the Jesus doll inside door*).

Lots of people follow him ...

People who are feeling sad and lost – or not very well.

(*Shout together*) 'Let us in, let us in!'

They know that Jesus will make them feel better.

Uh, oh!

So many people want to see Jesus.

The house is filling up.

It's bursting at the seams.

No-one else can fit through the door.

They just have to stand outside like us and peep through the windows.

(*Shout together*) 'Let me see, let me see, let me see Jesus!'

Who's coming? (*The four approach with the doll on the mat.*)

It's four friends with a heavy load.

All:

Stumble trip, stumble trip, stumble trip!

Leader:

Who are you carrying?

Reader 1:

We are carrying our friend who is lying on this mat.
He can't move his legs.
So we are bringing him to Jesus.
Jesus will make him well.

Reader 2:

Uh, oh!
Look at the crowd! (*Gesture to group.*)
A big squishy, squashy crowd.
We can't push through it.
We can't tunnel under it.
We'll have to go over it, up the stairs and onto the roof.

All: (*The four stand behind the house and mime climbing the steps.*)

Steppity, steppity, steppity, step!

Reader 2:

We're bringing our friend to Jesus.
He's going to make him better.
What a beautiful day when Jesus comes to stay!

Reader 3:

Uh, oh!
Look at the roof!
It's made of straw and mud.
Squelchy, squelchy mud.
We can't get under it.
Oh, well! We'll have to dig through it!

All: (*The four mime digging with their bare hands!*)

Scrabble and dig, scrabble and dig, scrabble and dig!

Reader 4:

Hooray!
We've made a hole (open flaps).
A big beautiful hole.
Now we can see Jesus inside the house (let the children peep in).
We can lower our friend gently down.
Careful, now!

All: *(They lower the doll on the mat.)*

Bumpity, bumpity, bumpity, BUMP!

Reader 4:

Right at Jesus' feet! *(Lift the house away.)*

Leader:

Look! Jesus is smiling.

He is SO pleased with his four kind friends!

They didn't give up, did they?

They carried their friend, along the road ...

All: Stumble trip, stumble trip, stumble trip!

Leader: Up the stairs ...

All: Steppity, steppity, steppity, step!

Leader: Through the roof ...

All: Scrabble and dig, scrabble and dig, scrabble and dig!

Leader: And lowered him down to Jesus ...

All: Bumpity, bumpity, bumpity, BUMP!

Leader: Jesus looks at the man who cannot move.

'It's all right. God loves you very much', he says.

'Pick up your mat and go home!'

Well! The man stands up *(stand doll upright)*.

He picks up his mat *(push mat under doll's arm)*.

And he sets off home SMILING and WAVING at the crowd! YAY!

Then he skips and dances all the way home *(everyone waves as the doll dances away)*.

All: Skippety, skippety, skippety, skip,

SKIPPETY, SKIPPETY, SKIPPETY, SKIP!

HOSPITAL GAME

Encourage toddlers to work together to carry Teddy or a doll on a blanket to a 'hospital' area set up with a doctors/nurses play set.

SONGS

Miss Polly had a dolly
Jesus' hands were kind hands

PRAYER

Give out small rectangular pieces of paper, or cut out and use the bed from the craft sheet. Invite parents to chat to their toddlers and write the names or draw pictures of anyone they know who is unwell. Place the Jesus doll somewhere visible and invite people to place their piece of paper at Jesus' feet.

Dear Jesus,
Thank you for caring about us so much, especially when we are feeling sad or unwell.
Today we want to bring to you the people we have named here. Please will you help them to feel better.
Amen

ACTIVITY SHEET: WE'RE GOING TO FIND JESUS!



JUST FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Read Mark 2:1-12

The four men had such faith in Jesus that they went to a lot of trouble to bring their friend to him. By healing people physically Jesus showed his great compassion and love towards his children.

As loving parents it's natural to worry about our children's health and development. It's easy to forget that we can always bring our families to Jesus by saying a simple prayer.

Toddler groups are places where we can share concerns with other parents and toddler group leaders. It can be reassuring to know that other parents and carers have similar worries – and that we are not alone! Other people may have helpful advice or be happy to pray for us. And if we encourage our children to listen to the Bible story at story time and model how to pray, we are helping them to know that they can come to Jesus too.

STORY TIME

Retell or act out the Bible story with your toddler using a doll's house, or simply a shoebox with dolls or Duplo figures. Mention all the obstacles the four men had to overcome – carrying their friend, the big crowd, the steps onto the roof, and making a hole in the mud roof. Remind them how Jesus said, 'God loves you. Pick up your mat and go home.'

- ➔ I wonder how the man who couldn't move felt.
 - ➔ How do we feel when we are sick?
 - ➔ I wonder why the men wanted to bring their friend to Jesus.
 - ➔ I wonder if they felt like giving up when they saw the crowded house. What did they do?
 - ➔ I wonder how the man felt when Jesus made him better.
 - ➔ I wonder what the crowd thought when they saw the man get up and walk.
 - ➔ What is your favourite part of this story?
-

OUT ON A WALK OR IN THE PARK

Put on wellies and walk with your toddler along the pavement – pit pat, pit pat, through grass – swishy swashy, through puddles – splash splosh, through mud – squelch squelch, under a bridge – tiptoe tiptoe, over gravel – scrunch scrunch, etc. Keep going! Mention all the people who walked to see Jesus because he was so kind. Chat about what you would like to ask Jesus.

EYE SPY

When you are out and about, look out for hospitals, doctors' surgeries and ambulances. Explain their purpose. Link this with the idea that Jesus made people well.

GET WELL CARD

Involve your toddler in making or buying a card or gift for someone who is not well. Chat about how that person might be feeling. Do you think the card/gift might cheer them up?

BEDTIME PRAYER

Cut out a circle of white card or use a paper plate and draw a sad face on one side and a happy face on the other. Talk about any people you know who are not well or struggling. (*Look at the sad face.*) Say, 'Lets bring them to Jesus.'

Dear God

Thank you for sending Jesus to love us and care for us. Please help ... to feel better.

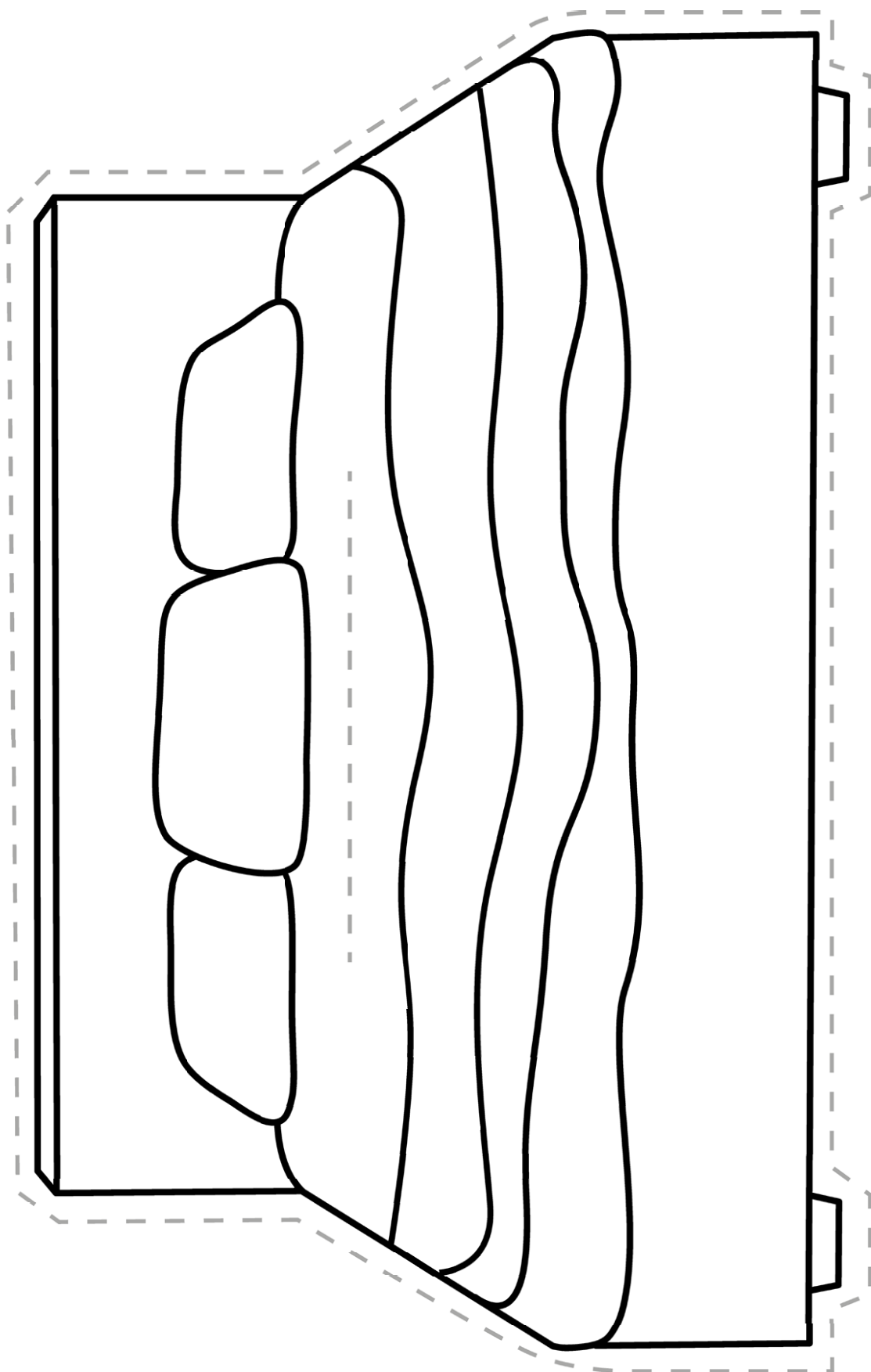
Amen (*Turn over to show the happy face.*)

CRAFT SHEET

Jump out of bed and say, 'Thank you, God, for this wonderful day!'

Tuck me into bed at night and be with me as I get up in the morning!





About Care for the Family

Established in 1988, Care for the Family is a charity based in the UK, but with an increasing reach internationally. We support parents, couples and those who are bereaved, through events, courses, podcasts, volunteer befrienders, books and other evidence-based, accessible resources.

For more information

 cff.org.uk

 029 2081 0800

 mail@cff.org.uk



© 2022 Care for the Family.

All rights reserved.

Written by Vicki Howie.

Care for the Family is a Christian initiative to strengthen family life.
A registered charity (England and Wales: 1066905; Scotland: SC038497).
Registered office: Tovey House, Cleppa Park, Newport, NP10 8BA.

