# Monday Bible Study—Care for Others

***Scripture Reference:*** Mark 2:1–12

***Memory Verse:*** “Dear friends, let us love one another, because love comes from God”

(1 John 4:7 NIrV).

**Learning Outcome**

Campers will learn how the paralyzed man’s friends cared about him. They will be challenged to show God’s love by caring for others.

**Background**

Jesus had just returned to Capernaum, probably the “home base” for His ministry, after a preaching tour through Galilee. Word spread around town that He was back, and a crowd gathered in and around the house He was in to hear Him preach.

Houses in that region typically had stairs on the outside that led up to a flat roof. The roof was used for storage and as a porch for relaxing above the dust of the street. Roofs were made of poles stretched from wall to wall, with smaller sticks and reeds across the poles. Covering that was a layer of hardened clay, sometimes shaped into tiles. It would have been easy to open a hole in the roof, and easy to repair it later. The four were not being destructive. But they had a higher purpose—they wanted their friend to be healed. Write in the margin two or three words you would use to describe these four friends.

These four did all they could to help their sick friend. Because they cared, they didn’t give up when faced with an obstacle (the crowd). They were smart to come up with an unusual plan and worked hard to carry it out (lowering the mat meant they’d had to find ropes of some sort).

Read in verse five the quality that Jesus saw in the group of friends. Note that it was not the faith of the sick man alone that led to his healing, but also the faith of his friends on the roof. Jesus honored their faith by meeting the man’s needs, both spiritual (forgiveness) and physical (curing his paralysis).

The “faithful four” are good examples for us, and for our campers, of living our faith out loud. They didn’t just sit in their houses and believe in Jesus, nor did they just listen to His teachings and praise Him. They showed their faith by caring for another person and taking specific actions to help him.

**Preparation**

1. Obtain 14 inexpensive, dessert-sized paper plates. On the back of each plate, write one of the following letters: *a, e, e, e, o, o, o, h, l, n, n, r, t, v.*
2. Obtain enough play dough or modeling clay for each camper to have a golf-ball sized (or larger) lump.
3. Make a copy of “Four Who Cared” (Activity Sheet 7) for each camper.
4. Obtain pens or thin markers for each camper.

**Introductory Activity**

Give each camper a lettered plate and a lump of play dough. Tell them to read the letter on the back of their plate, and then turn the plate right-side up to use as a work surface. Have them shape the dough into the form of their letter. If you have fewer than 14 campers, some will need to make more than one letter.

Once the letters are formed, give hints to help the children arrange the letters into a phrase from the Bible. Say: *The first word has four letters. The second word is less than two. The third word means a person other than yourself.* Give further clues if necessary and acknowledge the children’s correct responses. Lead them to read the phrase together: *Love one another.*

Comment that loving and caring for others are ways we can show them that God loves them. Today’s Bible story is about some people who cared for another person.

**Bible Study Activity**

Direct campers to open their Bibles to the second chapter of Mark as you hand out “Four Who Cared” (Activity Sheet 7). Say: *Today we’re going to think about the Bible story in four parts as we look at the Scripture.*

1. Say: *You’ve heard of musicians going on concert tours. Well, Jesus had been on a teaching tour. He traveled from town to town, healing people and teaching before large crowds. Let’s see what happened when He went back home to Capernaum. Read to yourself Mark 2:1–2.* (If you have campers who do not read well, ask a volunteer to read the verses aloud to the group throughout the Bible study time.)

After campers have finished reading, lead them to describe the scene.Ask: *If you had been in Capernaum that day, would you have gone to hear Jesus? Why or why not?*

Instruct campers to draw a crowd around the door of the house in the first block of their Activity Sheet. Allow a moment for this, and then tell them to put down their pencils.

1. Say: *Because word had gotten around that Jesus was healing people, the crowds that gathered always included sick people hoping to be cured. On this day, a paralyzed man needed healing, but his handicap, and the crowded house, kept him from getting near Jesus. Read Mark 2:3–4 to see who helped him and how.*

Lead campers to describe what happened. Ask if anyone knows how they got onto the roof and how they could have made a hole in it. As necessary, clarify or provide information from the background material above about the houses and roofs of that day.

Instruct campers to pencil in the four friends with the man on the mat in the second block (upper right) of their Activity Sheet. After a moment, have them put down their pencils.

1. Say: *Jesus did two things for the sick man. Read Mark 2:5–7 to see what the first thing was.* Lead campers to state that first Jesus forgave the man’s sins. Explain that Jesus knew the man’s spiritual need was greater even than his physical need. Ask: *Was everybody happy about this?* (No, the teachers were upset. They didn’t know who Jesus really was or that He had the power to forgive sins.)

Direct campers to draw Jesus and the man on his mat in the Activity Sheet’s third block. After a moment, have them put down their pencils.

1. Say: *What do you think Jesus did next?* After campers reply, direct them to read Mark 2:8–11. Explain that there was no way for the onlookers to check to see if the man’s sins were really forgiven, but it would be obvious whether he was healed or not! Healing the man’s physical sickness would prove that Jesus had the power to forgive him.

Ask: *What do you think the crowd thought when Jesus healed the man? What do you think the teachers of the law thought?*

1. Say: *Read Mark 2:12 to see how the story ends.* Guide campers to summarize the verse. Point out that the man was so completely healed that not only could he walk, but he could also squat down, gather his mat, and straighten back up!

Direct campers to draw the scene from this verse in the final block of their sheet. After a moment, have them put down their pencils.

1. Ask: *Remember the four people on the roof? What do you think they felt and did when they looked down through that hole and saw their friend get up and walk?* (Accept campers’ answers, pointing out that the Bible doesn’t say what they did, but we can be sure they were happy for their friend.) Ask: *What would you do if God healed one of your friends?*

**Bible Learning Application Activity**

Point out that the Scripture lets us know that it was not just the sick man’s faith that led Jesus to heal him, but it was also the faith of his four friends. Read aloud verse five, emphasizing the word *their*. Say: *These four people had faith in Jesus, and they lived that faith out loud by caring for another person. What action did they take to show they cared?* (brought the man to Jesus)

Tell the campers that we can also show our faith and share God’s love by caring for others. Ask them to name some things they can do to care for others. Remind campers that these could be things they do personally, like take the newspaper to the house for an elderly neighbor. Or they could be things they do with a group, like serve in a soup kitchen with their family or church.

After hearing several responses, have each child get their plate and play dough. Instruct them to use their dough to make an object representing a way to care for, or show love to, another person or group. (For example, a child could shape their play dough into a musical note to represent singing in a nursing home.)

When campers have finished with their sculptures, let them share with the group what they’ve created. Then collect the play dough and store it.

**Memory Verse Activity**

Ask: *What was the phrase our play dough letters spelled out?* (Love one another.) Help campers find and read 1 John 4:7 in their Bibles. Have them close their Bibles with the Activity Sheet marking their place, and practice saying the verse, opening to look if they need a reminder.

Ask: *What are some ways you can* love one another *this week at camp? How can you show God’s love by caring for others?* Let campers share their ideas.

**Prayer Activity**

Instruct campers to write a prayer on the back of their Activity Sheet, asking God to help them show His love to others like the four friends did.