

THE PARALYTIC OF CAPERNAUM

Mark 2:1-12; Matthew 9:1-8; Luke 5:17-26

Theme: Faith in Action

Episode 3 of 7

Part 1: THEY MET THE MASTER SERIES

(STORIES OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO MET JESUS)

CTTW SHORT DRAMA PROGRAMS W/QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

CHRISTIAN RADIO DRAMA

“THE STORY WITHIN”

003



Writer: Diana C. Derringer
Editor: Dr. Art Criscoe
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Part 1: They Met the Master Series
Episode 3 of 7: The Paralytic of
Capernaum
Christ to the World Ministries

DIRECTORIAL INFORMATION

CAST OF CHARACTERS: (note voice quality required)

- **Each voice should be recognizably different from any other character.**
- **Some characters appear in multiple episodes of this series. Use the same voice for the same character.**

Eli: **The paralytic of Capernaum** (voice of a mature man)
Jacob: **Eli's friend** (voice of a mature man)
Asher: **Eli's friend** (voice of a mature man)
Jesus: **The promised Messiah** (voice of a mature man)
Voices: **For sound effects** (men, women, and children)

Notes to all readers:

- These are radio **dramas**. The actions and emotions are in the words. Remember that the listener will only hear these words once; speak distinctly with appropriate emotion; carefully observe all punctuation (i.e., pause at commas, stop at periods, intensify at exclamation points, and give special emphasis to words in **bold** type).
- Observe all **music** cues (bold/small print) throughout the script.
- Observe **sound effects** directions (bold print) throughout the script.
- Observe all **voice** instructions (bold print) throughout the script.
- When Scripture is used, the print is in *italics*, and it is the NIV (1984). Scripture references are given to aid the translators and should not be read as part of the script.

THE PARALYTIC OF CAPERNAUM

Scripture References: Mark 2:1-12; Mt. 9:1-8; Luke 5:17-26

(Music: Theme music begins, then gradually fades to underscoring during comments by Program Host. Note to producer: Limit theme music not to exceed 12-14 seconds.)

Program Host

Welcome to “The Story Within.” Today’s drama tells us about the paralytic of Capernaum, a man who “Met the Master.” It is based on an account in the gospels of Mark, Matthew, and Luke in the Bible. Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God, began His earthly ministry at about age 30. He traveled around the country teaching, preaching, and healing. Everywhere he went, He drew great crowds. Following Jesus’ return to His residence in Capernaum, people continued to gather around Him. The house became so full, no one could squeeze through the door. Friends of a paralyzed man carried him on a mat to see Jesus. Realizing they could not get through the door, they made a hole in the roof and lowered their friend to Jesus. When Jesus saw the extent of their faith, He pronounced the man’s sins forgiven.

Religious leaders in the crowd questioned Jesus’ authority to forgive sin and accused Him of blasphemy. Jesus then told the paralyzed man to get up, take his

mat, and go home. When the man did as Jesus directed, the crowd was amazed and glorified God.

Listen now as Eli, the name chosen for the paralytic of Capernaum, tells us his story.

(Music: swells to indicate change; then fades to soft underscoring)

(Eli – Storyteller)

I could not walk. I could not move my legs, arms, or body. I could do hardly anything physical on my own. I depended on others to feed me, bathe me, and change my clothes. Such utter helplessness weighed on me day after day. I wondered what possible purpose my life could serve. Why did God, if there was a God, allow me to live like that? What difference did it make if I lived or died? Some days I longed for death. At the same time I feared what death might be like. Without a few good friends, I would probably have died a long time ago. They came faithfully to attend to all my needs. I know they had better things to do, but they kept reminding me that was what friends do. They care for one another.

(Music: swells to indicate change; then fades to soft underscoring)

INSERT: (Sound effects: Jacob’s approaching footsteps)

Jacob: Ah, Eli, my friend. How are you today?

Eli: To be quite honest, Jacob, I am a bit tired. I know I have not done anything, but I believe I would sleep better and have more energy if I

could just move around a bit. You know, get outside and work in the dirt (**sad laughter**) or anything physical.

Jacob: I would say you are right about that. A little labor and a good dose of sunshine certainly do a body good.

Eli: Oh well, not much chance of that. But why am I whining? With a good friend like you, my needs are met, and I can talk your leg off every time you come.

Jacob: You do have a gift for conversation, Eli. You look at life in ways I never considered. We make a good team, don't you think? I keep your body working, and you work my mind.

INSERT: (**Sound effects: Eli and Jacob chuckle**)

Jacob: Tell me, Eli, have you heard about this new teacher and healer?

Eli: You mean the one called Jesus?

Jacob: Yes, Jesus.

Eli: I have indeed. When you move me near the door to beg, I hear all kinds of conversation. Jesus seems to be on everyone's mind these days.

Jacob: What do you think about Him?

Eli: I have not seen or heard Him, of course, but He certainly caught my attention. A lot of so-called teachers and healers turn out to be nothing but frauds, but I have heard nothing but good about Jesus.

Jacob: I think the synagogue leaders are a bit fearful of Him, since He focuses more on people's needs than their traditions. However, the common people seem impressed. He speaks with love and treats everyone with compassion. That is a hard combination to beat, if you ask me.

Eli: Some say He is the promised Messiah. Do you think it could be true?

Jacob: I don't know, Eli, but I have heard that talk too. Would that not be something—the Messiah coming in our lifetime!

Eli: I would love to meet Him to decide for myself, but I don't see that happening.

Jacob: **(laughing)** Well, Eli, today is your day! I thought you might want to meet Jesus. In fact, I was so certain, I invited Asher, Dan, and Joseph to help me take you to Him today.

Eli: **(bewildered)** What?

Jacob: **(laughs)** You heard me right. They should be here any minute. You, my friend, are going to meet Jesus. We know He will stimulate your mind. We hope He will heal your body as well.

INSERT: (Sound effects: Asher, Dan, and Joseph’s approaching footsteps)

Jacob: No sooner said than done. Here they come now.

INSERT: (Sound effects: Asher, Dan, and Joseph greet Jacob and Eli with backslaps and well wishes)

Jacob: Well, Eli, are you ready to travel?

Eli: (excited) I am more than ready. Let’s find Jesus!

INSERT: (Sound effects: Everyone laughs.)

(Music: swells to indicate change; then fades to soft underscoring)

INTERMISSION

Program Host: Thank you for listening to “The Story Within.” Eli was a paralytic unable to walk. He had heard stories about Jesus—how He spoke with love and treated everyone with compassion. He wondered if Jesus could be the Messiah. One day four of his friends arrived at his house to take him to hear Jesus for himself. Let us listen as the story continues.

(Music: swells to indicate change; then fades to soft underscoring)

(Eli continues his story)

Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined this opportunity. Here I was a cripple unable to walk or care for my basic needs without assistance. Although my good friends provided all I needed and more, I longed to live a normal life. I wanted to walk and work, to get married and have children. I wanted to go to the

synagogue to worship. I wanted to know my life served a purpose and had meaning.

I had heard about the teacher and healer Jesus. I knew some people thought He was God's promised Messiah. I wanted to meet Him to decide for myself. And, yes, I longed for His healing, if He truly possessed God's healing power. However, I was stuck at home with no way to meet Him until today.

I could not believe my ears when Jacob said he, Asher, Dan, and Joseph planned to take me to Jesus. Praise God! What wonderful friends who not only talk about showing God's love and serving Him. They showed it every day to me and others in need. I did not know if our little journey would make any difference or not. I prayed it would. At least we could decide for ourselves whether Jesus was who some say He was.

(Music: swells to indicate change; then fades to soft underscoring)

INSERT: (Sound effects: the crowd around Jesus whispering in awe at His teaching and healing power; a few people shoving, trying to get through; others shoving back and complaining about their rudeness)

Jacob: (amazed) Have you ever seen so many people?

Asher: Where in the world did all they all come from?

Jacob: Well, Asher, it appears they came from everywhere.

Eli: I appreciate all you men are doing for me, but there is no way under the sun to get through that mob. Just lower my mat, and we can listen to Jesus from here.

Jacob: No, Eli. That will never work. The crowd is too thick and noisy to hear much of anything from back here.

Asher: I don't see that we have much choice.

Jacob: Don't give up yet, Asher. There has to be another way.

Asher: I have no desire to start a fight by pushing our way through. Plus we could get Eli hurt that way.

Eli: And we certainly cannot go over the crowd. I cannot walk, and none of us can fly!

Jacob: **(excited)** That is it! We cannot get through the crowd, so we will go over it!

Eli: I think the heat and burden of carrying me has affected your mind, Jacob. Like I said, none of us can fly, and I have no desire to be thrown by the four of you. Who knows where I might land.

INSERT: **(Sound effects: All laugh.)**

Jacob: No. No. You don't understand. We will go through the roof!

Asher: Through the roof?

Jacob: Yes! (**excitement builds.**) Eli, will you trust that we will not drop you as we go up the stairs on the side of the house to the roof?

Eli: Certainly, but I still don't see how that will accomplish anything.

Jacob: Simple, my friend. The four of us will remove enough roof to lower you into the house in front of Jesus. We have rope to hold the corners of your mat until you reach the floor. What do you think? Are you up to it?

Eli: (**laughs**) That sounds just crazy enough to work.

Asher: Then, why are we standing here? Let's get to work!

INSERT: (**Sound effects: Jacob, Asher, Dan, and Joseph pick up Eli on his mat and walk away.**)

(**Music: swells to indicate change; then fades to soft underscoring**)

INSERT: (**Sound effects: Jacob, Asher, Dan, and Joseph ripping off pieces of roof**)

Jacob: (**whispers with excitement**) I think we have it, men. Let's get Eli down there before the owner of the house gets up here.

INSERT: (**Sound effects: All chuckle, then take pieces of rope from the four corners of Eli's mat and slowly lower Him before Jesus. They grunt as rope slides through their hands. The crowd inside the house murmurs in surprise, some laughing, others in anger, when Eli lands with a thud.**)

Jesus: (**laughs**) Shalom, good man. You certainly know how to make a dramatic entrance, don't you?

Eli: (**uncertain laughter**) With a little help from my friends.

Jesus: Ah, yes. Nothing like the love of good friends, is there? Now that you are here, what do you want from me?

Eli: I want to be healed, Jesus. I want to be made whole.

Jesus: True wholeness begins within. **(pause)** “*Son, your sins are forgiven*” (Mark 2:5).

INSERT: (Sound effects: Crowd murmuring increases, with growing anger among the religious leaders. Three say, “*Why does this fellow talk like that?*” “*He’s blaspheming!*” “*Who can forgive sins but God alone?*” [Mark 2:7].)

Jesus: “*Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins . . . (pause before speaking to Eli.) Eli, I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home*” (Mark 2:8-11).

(Music: swells to indicate change; then fades to soft underscoring)

(Eli continues his story)

I wish you could have seen everyone’s reactions when I stood on my once paralyzed legs, picked up my well-worn mat, and walked out of that house with no help from anyone. Amazement, disbelief, fear, and a myriad of other emotions played across their faces. They glorified God , saying, “*We have never seen anything like this!*” (Mark 2:12).

My friends tagged along behind me like puppies, still in shock over what had just happened.

In shock myself, I could hardly believe Jesus met the deepest desires of my heart and more. I wanted to walk, and I could walk. I wanted to know whether He was the Messiah, and now I have no doubt. I wanted to be made whole, and Jesus provided wholeness I never knew I needed. Jesus forgave me of my sins. He gave me a new life and a new vision. Jesus gave me purpose—to tell others His truth. To share His love and forgiveness. To enable them to experience the wholeness I now know.

(Music: Dramatic music swells; then begins reprise of Theme music; softly underscore comments of program host during Our Response to God)

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD

Program Host

Everyone suffers in some way. Whether physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual pain, or a combination of any or all of those, we suffer. Jesus came to earth in human form to identify with our suffering, and to conquer the ravages of sin and death.

However, like Eli and his friends, we must choose whether we allow Jesus to heal us of the sin and suffering in our lives. We must choose to go to Jesus. We must choose to accept His healing. We must choose whether to help those who suffer around us to find Jesus. We must move beyond desire to action.

Our healing may or may not look the same as Eli's. Some people who follow Jesus continue to endure suffering most of their lives. Yet, through faith in Jesus, they face each day, knowing Jesus has made them spiritually whole and that they will experience total healing when they eventually join Him in heaven. The pain of this life cannot compare to the joy that awaits all who give their lives to Jesus.

Now we come to the time when we can respond to God.

The Word of God makes clear that every person is a sinner. *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”* (Rom. 3:23). God is righteous and holy. Sin becomes a barrier between God and us.

Even though we are sinners, God still loves us. Nothing can separate us from the love of God. God is a God of forgiveness. He has made a way that sinful persons can be forgiven and restored to a right relationship with Him.

I'm going to pray a brief pray from my heart to God. Listen to my prayer, and then when I have prayed I will lead you to pray the same prayer.

Dear God, I know that I have sinned. Thank You that You have made a way for my sins to be forgiven. I want to know about that way. Amen.

Now repeat the prayer aloud after me. We will pray it a portion at a time. Make the prayer your very own to God. Mean it with all your heart as you pray.

Dear God, (pause for listener to repeat)

I know that I have sinned. (pause for listener to repeat)

Thank You that You have made a way for my sins to be forgiven. (pause for listener to repeat)

I want to know about that way. (pause for listener to repeat)

Amen. (pause for listener to repeat)

Thank you for praying that prayer. In the next program we will learn about the way God has made for our sins to be forgiven. The next episode will be a drama about “The Lame Man of Bethesda.”

(Music: swells to indicate change; then fades to soft underscoring))

Questions and Answers

The Questions and Answers below are designed to be used following the broadcast of the drama. They are questions a typical listener might have after listening to the drama. The number of questions used will of course depend upon the amount of air time available at the conclusion of the drama. It may not be necessary to use all of the questions provided. Voices used for the questions should include: male and female; young and old; believers and non-believers. The Program Host should give all the answers to the questions.

Try to make both questions and answers conversational in nature.

The questions should be asked in a forthright manner. Persons asking the questions should reflect different attitudes and positions. Most of the questioners should reflect an openness and honest desire for the truth; some should reflect deep concern; some should reflect anxiety; some could reflect sarcasm or unbelief; some could even reflect anger. Occasionally a voice antagonistic to Christ and the Gospel could ask one of the questions.

The Program Host should use warm and friendly language and tone of voice. He should never talk down to a questioner in a demeaning fashion regardless of the question asked. He should never express shock or surprise at the question asked.

He should speak in a manner that puts the questioner at ease. Some producers might want to use names. For example, a question might begin with: “My name is _____. Could you explain . . .” or “My name is _____. Here is my question: . . .” The Program Host could use the person’s name in answering the question. The use of names is at the producer’s option.

The Questions and Answers could begin by the Program Host saying: “Thank you for listening to this drama. Now let us go to some questions that listeners like yourself have about what we have heard.”

1. Question: Can Jesus forgive sin?

Answer: Yes, Jesus can forgive sin. He is the only One who can do that. Other people cannot forgive our sins; we cannot forgive our sins. Only Jesus can forgive sin. God’s Word says, *“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1:8-9).

2. Question: I thought the priest or the church could forgive sin. Can they?

Answer: No priest or preacher or church or any other institution can forgive sin. Only Jesus can forgive sin. Jesus is the way to God. God’s Word says, *“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”* (1 Tim. 1:15). *“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men”* (1 Tim. 2:5-6).

3. Question: Why did the religious leaders think Jesus could not forgive sin?

Answer: The religious leaders did not accept Jesus as the Messiah, the One sent by God to be the Savior of the world. They thought He was just another man. The religious leaders were correct when they said, *“Who can forgive sins but God alone?”* (Mark 2:7). Their mistake was in denying that Jesus was the divine Son of God with power to forgive sin.

4. Question: Why were the synagogue leaders fearful of Jesus?

Answer: Jesus upset many of their traditions and much of their traditional thinking. He spoke with authority and power; they were not accustomed to this.

5. **Question:** I have had physical problems since birth. Can God heal me like He did the paralyzed man?

Answer: God can certainly heal you, but that may not be His plan for your life. If you have prayed and asked God to give you healing, and you have not been healed, than ask God to help you bear your affliction and burden for His glory. He has promised to help us in our need.

6. **Question:** I am in constant physical pain. How can I have hope for the future when I hurt so much?

Answer: Pray and ask God to give you deliverance from your pain. Ask family members and others to pray for you. Also ask that God's will be done in your life. If it is His will for you to suffer, ask Him to give you the strength and grace to bear it for His glory.

7. **Question:** I want to give hope and assurance to my hurting friends. How can I do that?

Answer: Pray and ask God to help you be a good witness to your friends. Try to understand their hurts and pain. Be a real friend and help them in any way you can. Pray for your friends. Ask them if you can pray for them while in their presence. Tell them the story of the paralytic man who was brought to Jesus. Share with your friends what Jesus has done in your own life.

Thank you for listening and taking part in this program. May God be with you and keep you safe.

(Music: Theme music swells dramatically then fades as broadcast ends)

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