

*Then some people came, bringing to [Jesus] a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. 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.*

—Mark 2:3-4

Many biblical healing stories describe service offered on behalf of others.

In this case, a group of devoted friends carry a paralyzed man to Jesus. They refuse to be discouraged by a crowd filling Jesus' house. They are totally fine with removing the roof of the house. They care little about interrupting Jesus' presentation. They know Jesus can heal their friend, and they are single-minded in their determination to have the master make their friend whole again.

Many obstacles might deter us as we seek healing in our hurting world. The enormity of problems can overwhelm us. Mark's Gospel holds up these faithful friends as models of the persistent and audacious pursuit of healing. These friends couldn't heal the paralysis. But they knew Jesus could. Our beautiful and broken world needs healing. We can't do it on our own. Together as Christ's body we move toward healing. Today we must ignore the obstacles, take a first step and bring our hurting world to Christ's healing presence and power.

—Jay Sidebotham