I. Slide #1 Announce:
   A. Slide #2 Kosovo H.S. Mission Trip Fundraiser: (see bulletin)
      1. Slide #3 Last time Pstr Rick brought one; then Andrew submitted his.
   B. Slide #4 Questions: Paul & Suzanne Luciani missionaries on their way to Spain.
      1. (P) Explain your next grand adventure, what are you doing?
      2. Slide #5 (S) Why Spain?
      3. (P) The church understands, “church planting” or “starting a Bible College”...explain “Pastoral Care w/Latin Missionaries, working in the Muslim world.”
      4. (P) Regarding support, where are you guys at now regarding your $ target? Does this determine when you’re going?
      5. Slide #6 (S) Partnership? Define what you’d like to see if someone wants to come alongside & be a “partner”.
         a) Slide #7 The kids: Raquel (@ John Brown Univ); Gabe(16) & Priscilla(12).
         b) They will be in info booth after.

II. Slide #8 Intro:
   A. News swelled around Capernaum. Peter’s mother-in-law was healed; many others were healed, the demon possessed exorcised; even a leper was made spot free!
      1. Hope again washed ashore this little lakeside village of Capernaum...because Jesus was “in the house”!

III. Slide #9 PREACHING WITH DIVINE DISTRACTIONS! (1,2)
   A. What was he preaching? – Current events? 10 ways to be a better person? How to grow a successful business? Capitalism & Christianity? How to gather a crowd?...No, He preached the word to them.
      1. This word Preached isn’t one of the 2 most common Greek words used, “to proclaim, or to bring good tidings”. - Instead it is λαλεο “to speak”. It means a conversation, or a conversation kind of tone.
      2. Listen every Small Group Leader...The Jesus Style was simple, down-to-earth, an easy-to-understand conversational language!
   B. And right in the middle of Jesus teaching the word we are interrupted with a divine distraction(see vs.3)...

IV. Slide #10 GO IN OR GIVE UP? (3-5)
   A. Slide #11 A Paralytic – Life for him was pretty much reduced to a horizontal one.

   a) Life as he knew it was a 3’x6’ pallet prison! (bedroll, mat, poor man’s bed)

2. His life, in his culture & time period, could be summed up to “dependency, humiliation, confinement, boredom, loneliness, frustration, & despair.”…until this special day!

B. Slide #12 Four Men & a Brainstorm!

C. Ok they were latecomers…but faith brought them!

   1. Do we go in or give up?
   2. They weren’t put off by the crowd of people thronging the front door.
      a) How often I hear of people being put off coming to church because “the parking lot was full”…How sad!
   3. They didn’t use the excuse, “It must not be the Lord” when they couldn’t get in the front door.
   4. They could have said, “Well, we got him this far.” “We tried.”
   5. They weren’t put off by the crowd of people that shooed & shushed them away! - They thought hmmm…“The outside stairs!!!”
      a) Slide #13,14 auto Explain homes: Flat roof. Formed by beams & rafters, across which matting, branches, & twigs, were covered by earth, then packed hard.
      b) And so we have light starting to stream in. Eight hands digging through the roof. Dust everywhere. People coughing. Dirt particles fallin on the religious leaders Armani suits!

D. Slide #15 Jesus saw their faith! - Not the paralytic’s faith(that we know of), but the Faithful Fab Four’s Fantastic Phenomenal Faith!

   1. This was risky! They could fall. Worse, they could drop him.
   2. Jesus saw persistent, creative, & sacrificial faith!
   3. Jesus saw 4 sweaty men willing to put a shoulder to their faith!
   4. Jesus saw a faith that laughs at barriers!
      a) Slide #16 Philip Yancey, Faith is believing in advance what will only make sense in reverse
   5. But wait…they tore up someone’s roof, interrupted a home bible study, & inconvenienced everyone else that was listening.
      a) Well, Jesus did say, regarding his kingdom, “the violent take it by force.” Mt.11:12
      b) See, faith does these things. Faith is unconventional. Faith does the unexpected. And Faith gets God’s attention :)


6. Slide #17 What’s more important a roof or a man? (They weren’t asking, does he have homeowners insurance)
   a) Maybe they fixed it after. Actually, it would be pretty easy to do.
   b) Too many people are more interested in the place or the program instead of the people!
      (1) So, when they’re confronted with the decision Go in or give up? They take the later.

   a) Frank Faith said, “I believe we can get this man to Jesus.”
      Harry Hope said, “I believe there is hope for this man”
      Larry Love said, “I really love this guy. I hate his sin, but love him.”
      Dan Determination said, “Let’s roll!”

E. Slide #18 Who will Bring Them?
F. Many people will never come to Jesus unless somebody brings them!
G. The bible doesn’t say anywhere that sinners are to come to church, Everywhere in the bible it is clear the church is to go where sinners are!
   1. We are to be engaged in going out where sp cripples are & bringing them to Jesus!
   2. I love the fact that any morning down the street at Starbucks we have a number of people from church there. What a great opportunity to associate with our neighbors of our community.
      a) In our So Cal culture, this seems to be our “gate to the city” our “1st century well.” [Where people hung out, talked, caught up, & visited]
      (1) Strike up conversations with people.

H. Slide #19 Caring for Shut-Ins!
I. The paralytic’s friends provided a model for caring for shut-ins!
J. What are some practical ways we can follow their example?
   1. Do you know anyone that is bed ridden? Anyone in a convalescent home? Anyone in the hospital? Anyone lonely?
   2. Take them communion! Bring them Worship! Take them Prayer! Take them a Daily Bread devotional! Show them how to listen in on the radio or online! Take them a worship CD! Take them a short bible study!
   3. Go out & find someone to minister to. “But people are too busy!” Then go do Prison or hospital visitation; or to a Convalescent home.
      a) Just go to where people are! Find a need & meet it.
   4. We need to “raise some roofs” in order to get people to Jesus!
5. We need to do some difficult, out-of-the-ordinary, irregular things.
   a) May our Motto be... *No crowd too thick; no stairs too steep; no wall too high to climb; no roof too thick!* [Or sing... *There ain't no mountain high enough, Ain't no valley low enough, ain't no river wide enough To keep me from getting to you*]

K. Slide #20 The Prince meets the Paralytic!

L. The Prince meets the Paralytic & the face of God smiles & says, “Be of good cheer/courage!” (in Mt.9:2) then, “Son, your sins are forgiven you!”
   1. Doctors estimate that 50% of all physical sickness comes from emotional & spiritual problems: *bitterness in spirit, an unforgiving spirit, holding grudges.*
      a) The most easily identified is probably the “ulcer” which are *not* caused by what you are eating but by what is eating you!
   2. The problem you are facing today is *not* your wife or husband, *not* your boss, & *not* your parents. Your problem is *sin*.

V. Slide #21 SPECTATING SPIES! (6-12) [or Creepy Critics!]

A. Slide #22a Sitting there? – They could jumped up & lifted a hand. – Here were the real paralytics!

B. (8b) Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? - Imagine this morning here in church, the person in front of you...turns around right now & points to you & asks, “Why did you just think that thought?”
   1. How scary to have your mind & heart read! [further proof of who He was]
   2. But now Jesus is about to *trap the trappers!*
      a) No matter how many times Wile E. Coyote tried to trap the Road Runner in all his ACME traps...He always ended up in his own trap!

C. Slide #22b Their Reasoning went like this: If this Jesus claims the power to forgive sins. And, only *God* can forgive sin. Therefore, Jesus just claimed to be God!
   1. Precisely the point. Their reasoning was exact...but it didn’t bring them to Christ.
   2. “If that hole in the roof teaches us anything, it’s that faith is what brings a person to Jesus, not intellectual reasoning’s. *Curiosity* crowded the classroom, but it was *faith* that dug through the roof to bring the paralytic to the feet of Christ.”

D. Slide #22c Which is easier? – Both are easy to say. But both are equally impossible to do… unless of course...you are God!
   1. In that case one is *as easy* as the other!

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1 Ken Gire, Incredible Moments, pg.25.
2. Any Charlatan or snake charmer could say, “your sins are forgiven!”
3. Jesus does here, what NO mortal man can do…forgive sins!
   a) No person, no priest, no pastor, no denomination can do this!
4. Jesus, so moved by this faith, applauds it, if not with his hands, with his heart.²
   a) And you & I get to witness a divine loveburst!

E. Slide #22d What is Christianity? What is the distinctive thing that Christianity has to proclaim to men? – The forgiveness of sin!
1. The healing of the body is a great miracle, but it does not last.
2. The forgiveness of sin is God’s greatest miracle, for it lasts forever & accomplishes the greatest good!
   a) “God’s goal isn’t to do a patchwork job on our lives…He came to make us whole!”³
3. Spiritual healing is of much more value than a physical one. When Jesus heals a person’s spirit in salvation, there is also the healing of bitterness, hatred, lust, anger, gossip, & the like.
4. Physical paralysis is terrible, but worse yet is spiritual paralysis!
   a) We are all spiritual cripples.
   b) We are all Mephibosheth’s (Saul’s grandson) who was crippled!
      (1) His nurse was fleeing during war time with the baby & fell & dropped him.
   c) We are all spiritual cripples because of a fall. When Adam & Eve fell the whole human race fell.
      (1) For when we were still w/o strength[crippled], in due time Christ died for the ungodly.⁴

F. Slide #22e How do you picture them departing? - I picture 5 grown men, arm-in-arm, laughing, even skipping down the street, w/tears of joy streaming down their cheeks!

G. (12a) Note: he doesn’t wobble like a newborn colt. Showing not only was the paralysis gone, but muscles had been strengthened.
1. The crowd that refused him entrance, now parts like the Red Sea in amazement, to make way for his exit!
2. The bed that carried him, he now carried. Once the sign of his sickness, now the sign of his cure!
   a) Like the man who’s money was his life. It was his only interest. It was all he lived for. Money was the sign of his sickness. Then he gets saved & starts using his money to

² Max Lucado, Mark, pg.22.
³ Warren Wiersbe, pg.656
⁴ Romans 5:6
serve Jesus & get people to Jesus. The sign of his sickness is now the sign of his cure!

H. Slide #22f Has Jesus ever said to you, “Your sins are forgiven?”

I. A little boy had disobeyed his mother, he got out his slate chalkboard & wrote, “Mom, I’m sorry I was bad. If you forgive me, wipe this out.” The next time he came by, his mother had wiped it clean.

   1. Jesus has promised to do exactly that for you.
   2. Slide #23 Even better, Job says, My transgression is sealed up in a bag, And You **cover** *(plaster over)* my iniquity. (Job 14:17)