

Aim of lesson

To see that Jesus has the power and compassion to answer all our needs.

Bible background

Matthew 8; 9:1 -13

Outline of lesson

1. Ask the young people to open their workbooks at today's lesson. Explain that you are going to look at eight short incidents in Matthew 8 and 9 to see what you learn about the problems Jesus can solve.
2. Read the passages together and get the class to complete all the squares.

- 1st square** Help them to appreciate what it would mean to this man who was an outcast, whom no-one else would touch. Bring out the fact that no illness is beyond the reach of God to heal and no-one is untouchable to him. He reaches out to touch us whatever we are like.
Matthew 8:1-4.
- 2nd square** A foreigner. Jesus is not limited by nationality, he is not prejudiced and we learn that Jesus does not have to be present to heal. He may not be physically present now but he can answer all our needs.
Matthew 8:5-13.
- 3rd square** An old woman. She was not important in the social world of her day. Such people are often overlooked and deemed unimportant nowadays but God cares about the unimportant. None of us is unimportant to God.
Matthew 8:14-15.
- 4th square** The words in the workbook are intended to be from one of the disciples. Jesus' power and authority extends even to the sea and wind, and to all the circumstances of our lives.
Matthew 8:23-27.
- 5th square** Mental illness is often feared by people who have little understanding or experience of it. People suffering mental health problems are rarely locked away or confined any more. It was not long ago however when institutions and residential homes were filled with the mentally handicapped and mentally ill. In Jesus' time the mentally ill were outcasts and this family were forced to live in the graveyard. Jesus healed this condition too. He could do more than people wanted him to do. They didn't have his compassion and so asked him to leave. His compassion will not let bad things stay in our lives.
Matthew 8:28-34.
- 6th square** The forgiveness of sins is obviously important to the man here since Jesus brought it to the forefront. Jesus can forgive sins too, even now.
Matthew 9:1-8.
- 7th square** Matthew here records what, to him, was greater than all the other miracles. Jesus called him! He had come to call sinners. We cannot always be reading of what Jesus does for others. One day we must accept what he wants to do for us.
Matthew 9:9-13.
- 8th square** Jesus even has power over death. This square could be written by the mother or father of the child who was raised. Even in despair, when we think it is too late, Jesus can bring life out of death. There is nothing that can defeat him or those who are his.
Matthew 9:18-26.

There is no place to include the woman with the haemorrhage, although she could be included in the discussion if you wish. There are several questions on the second page for you to work through with the young people. Take a look at them before the lesson.

Digging deeper

Mark and his gospel

This section looks at Mark, the gospel writer – who he was, and a little about his gospel.

Relevance to our lives

Ask the class if they can think of someone who is ill or lonely to whom they could show Christ's compassion in some way this week.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you that you care so much about us. Help us to show your kindness to others. OTHER

Other suggestions for activities

- Any of these incidents could be dramatised. If you have a large class, groups of two or three could choose one to dramatise or mime to the others.
- Each member of the class could draw one of the incidents and it could be put together in the form of a frieze.