



Our newsletter devotion this month is about Jesus and is entitled "The Big Let Down." Who doesn't love a good mystery? We turn to Chapter 2 of Mark's Gospel, as he recounts an unusual incident from the early days of Jesus' public ministry. The setting: Jesus is teaching and preaching in a private home in the city of Capernaum, near the Sea of Galilee.

Jesus' fame had begun to spread far and wide. In the previous chapter alone, Jesus had called four new disciples "to become fishers of men." He had also "rebuked" an unclean spirit, had healed Simon Peter's mother-in-law as she "lay sick of a fever," had "cast out many devils," and had been "moved with compassion" to heal a leper (Mark 1:16-41, KJV). All fitting preludes to our adventure.

So when word leaked out that Jesus was in the house, a standing-room-only crowd quickly gathered. In fact—and this is integral to our story—the crush of the crowd overran the small house to the point that the front door and entryway were completely blocked. The locals' interest was thru the roof. Anyway, at some point in the service, four men in the crowd, using a makeshift stretcher, attempted to carry in a man "sick of the palsy" (Mark 2:3). Poor fella, crippled and apparently 100% dependent on the goodwill of others. Now if this had been the regular Wednesday night Bible study in the synagogue fellowship hall, their mission might not have been so difficult. But on this day, with the front door of the house blocked off by the over-zealous crowd, the initial plan of the would-be rescuers was frustrated.

Thankfully however, these men were persistent. And determined. Here in the deep south, some might call it "cracker engineering," but the men quickly revised their plan and climbed up on the roof. They removed some roof tiles and chopped a big hole in the thatched roof. Yes, it probably is best that we do not know exactly what the homeowner had to say as he watched from the front yard. But now with the hole in the roof, the four strongmen slowly lowered the bed of the palsied man to the feet of Christ Jesus. "The Big Let Down" had been accomplished.

We all remember how this dramatic episode turned out. Interestingly, Mark does not indicate whether the paralytic spoke a single word and thus we know nothing about his faith. But the Great Physician knew—He knew that the man's obvious physical problem, paralysis, was not his deepest need. And so, the Lord Jesus gently whispered, "**Son, thy sins be forgiven thee**" (Mark 2:5b). And after a short pause to allow the scribes enough time to generate evil thoughts about the Lord, Jesus continued, "**Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way . . .**" (Mark 2:6-7, 11). No longer afflicted in body or spirit, the man picked up his mat and walked out to enjoy the best day of the rest of his life.

But we have saved the best for last. Listen carefully to what Mark discerned in his spirit as he wrote,

"When Jesus saw their faith . . ." (emphasis supplied) (Mark 2:5).

In a bizarre twist, we realize that the lesson du jour was not the healing of the crippled man, as miraculous as that was. And we see that it was not by chance that the front door of that house was blocked. That was the providence of God, nothing less. A greater lesson was in the making. At the heart of this entire episode is the faith of the four men who lowered the stretcher. This is a case study in *vicarious faith*. Here, the strong and mighty faith of the four men provided the platform and served as the sacred authority for the special blessing for the crippled man. Though often over-looked, vicarious faith—your faith and mine—can favorably impact others, and is a fundamental principle of Christian practice.

We conclude our devotion with a personal testimony. For years, our local Sunday school class has maintained a written log of prayer requests. Our teacher has kept the many notebooks with literally thousands of prayer requests of class members going back more that twenty years. And though we have not damaged a single thatched roof, every class begins with prayer as we figuratively "lower" the class members and their needs to the feet of the Lord Jesus. "When Jesus saw their faith . . ."

Blessings to all, Mike Rider, Volunteer

From our Spanish school, Joel from Minnesota: I have finished the Bible Study course that you sent me in December and I am waiting for them to send me another study to continue learning more in the Word of God.



The truth is that the study is very interesting and I was very entertained and not only that, also in the knowledge of the Secret is about creation. The truth is that I did not know several things, but today I have learned what I did not know before. Thanks for this study, I have learned a lot in understanding and in the Holy Spirit who teaches the way to the truth that is the light and the walk towards the Father. For that I thank you because I have risen higher in the knowledge of the truth. Thank you. I gave the ministry of John and Eileen Sala thank you and wait for your response. May God be with you always. Joel, Mn.

Little Lambs Inc.

Hello. My name is Anthony. I am presently incarcerated and will be spending the rest of my life in jail. However, Christ has no boundaries and has saved me. My old sinful ways died on the cross with Christ and I have been Reborn (Romans 6). I am like a newborn baby growing and yearning to be raised and taught by my heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. There is so much to learn but I will seek God's perfection everyday and try to be like Jesus as much as I can. So I am writing to ask if you could please send me a d bible correspondence course in English, a bible and any other literature you can. I thank you . May God bless your ministry and everyone who helps to run it. Antony, Ca

Dear Little Lambs Inc. Hello to you again. I pray that God and Jesus' blessing stay in your life. I really enjoyed your Bible Study . I got it on January 22nd. I got done January 25th. Could you please send me 7 more lessons to do? I do them fast. I am in the hole. Got nothing to do but that! I love staying in God's Word and I love doing your Bible Study. I don't get much money in but I trade my coffee I get for breakfast to get stamps (self-addressed envelopes are not allowed in Federal Institutions) to write but please send me then 1 lesson at a time. Thank you. I have two questions. 1) when I die do I go to heaven or sleep in the grave until Jesus comes back? 2) What day is the Sabeth?..... I don't have no black pen, all they give me is a plastic pencil cause I'm in the hole. Thank you. Robert, FL *We did answer Robert right away and sent him lots of material on the death and the sabbeth and encouraged him while he is isolated. Please pray for him.*



Little Lambs Inc. Celebrates 27 Years This March

In March of 1997, Little Lambs Inc. was incorporated in Bradenton, FL. After a year of John and Eileen Sala ministering in prisons and jails and starting the Correspondence Bible Study, Little Lambs Inc was formally named and legally constituted. We moved to Sebring, FL., in 1998 and began ministry out of our home. In 1998, we were joined by several volunteers, two of which remain with us today, Jan Ryan and Ruth Esposito. In 2003 we moved into our current home on South Eucalyptus St. Celebrate with us!

Dear Partners,

Excitement is in the air this morning as Joey from 2nd Chance Ministry arrived with a huge U-Haul truck and parked it on our drive. The men will be off later today with the truck headed for Lakeland, FL. 2nd Chance's Aldo Guzman was gifted furniture by a legal office closing and he has promised Little Lambs a large conference table. Our current tables were used in my own home and a friend's home when we started the ministry in 1997! This March we will be celebrating 27 years of Ministry as Little Lambs Inc. Our thanks to all of you for your love, support and prayers as we continue in our mission.

As always, we get excited when we hear from our students telling us of their successes. Just this month I received an email for one of our graduates. Brett let me know that he was released and is now living in Tallahassee. He had corresponded with us throughout the course of this studies with his testimony. Brett said he would start a ministry and call it ' Scrambled Egg Ministries', I think because of the effects of his lifestyle on his brain. In his email, Brett said that he had started his ministry and was due to be at Wakulla Correctional Institution in Crawfordville, FL. He was asking for our enrollment forms to share with the brothers there. We sent English and Spanish enrollment forms and tracts to him. He let me know that he only uses his KJV Graduation Bible from Little Lambs when he's ministering.

We feel like our lambs are our family, our Little Lambs, sons and daughters. " The children which you shall have, after you have lost the other (grown up and moved away), shall say again in your ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell. Then shall you say in your heart, who has begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? And who has brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these where had they been?" Isa 49:22-21 These children are a gift from the Lord. Amen. Thank you for your prayers and support these 27 years, although it only seems like yesterday!

Your servant,
Eileen Sala