

A NOTE TO PARENTS

The scribes are saying that Jesus must be in league with Satan—exactly the temptation that Jesus has already faced and rejected in the wilderness after his baptism. After such deep wrestling with the spiritual forces that rebel against God, he is confident that his miracles are not stunts, performed in order to bully people into acknowledging his status as Messiah. Rather, they are confirmations of that status—they are displays of the nature of his power (a power to heal and restore)—for those who already believe in it. But for those who will not look and listen with an open heart, they are threatening. They arouse suspicion. They lead to murmuring, accusations and slander.

His extended family shows up to try to coax him back home and out of the fray. Even those who have every reason to love and trust him are suspicious, if not that he is in league with Satan, then at least that he is “out of his mind,” which would have been understood as being *tormented* by Satan. And Jesus draws a line in the sand: *Whatever your preconceptions—whether they arise from fear or from love—if you will not look and see what I am doing, you have no claim on me.*

These nuances are difficult to present to children. But we can talk about the importance of looking closely—of seeing things the way they really are, and not the way they used to be or the way we are afraid they must be. No learning and growth, and especially no spiritual growth, are possible if we will not at least try to look and listen and see God’s world, and other people, for what they are.

People and things we see every day may be quite different from what we think. Ideas and events may be much less scary than we feared at first. People—especially children!—grow and change. Practice looking closely at things with your child. Talk about the way we may misjudge people and situations if we do not look and listen closely.

The eight differences between the two pictures are: 1) eyebrows on bald man at left; 2) hand of bald man at left; 3) expression on face of the formerly paralyzed man; 4) motion blur lines around woman’s hand; 5) details in halo around Jesus’ head; 6) frayed end of rope extending from stretcher; 7) beard of man at right rear; 8) stripe on sleeve of man at right.

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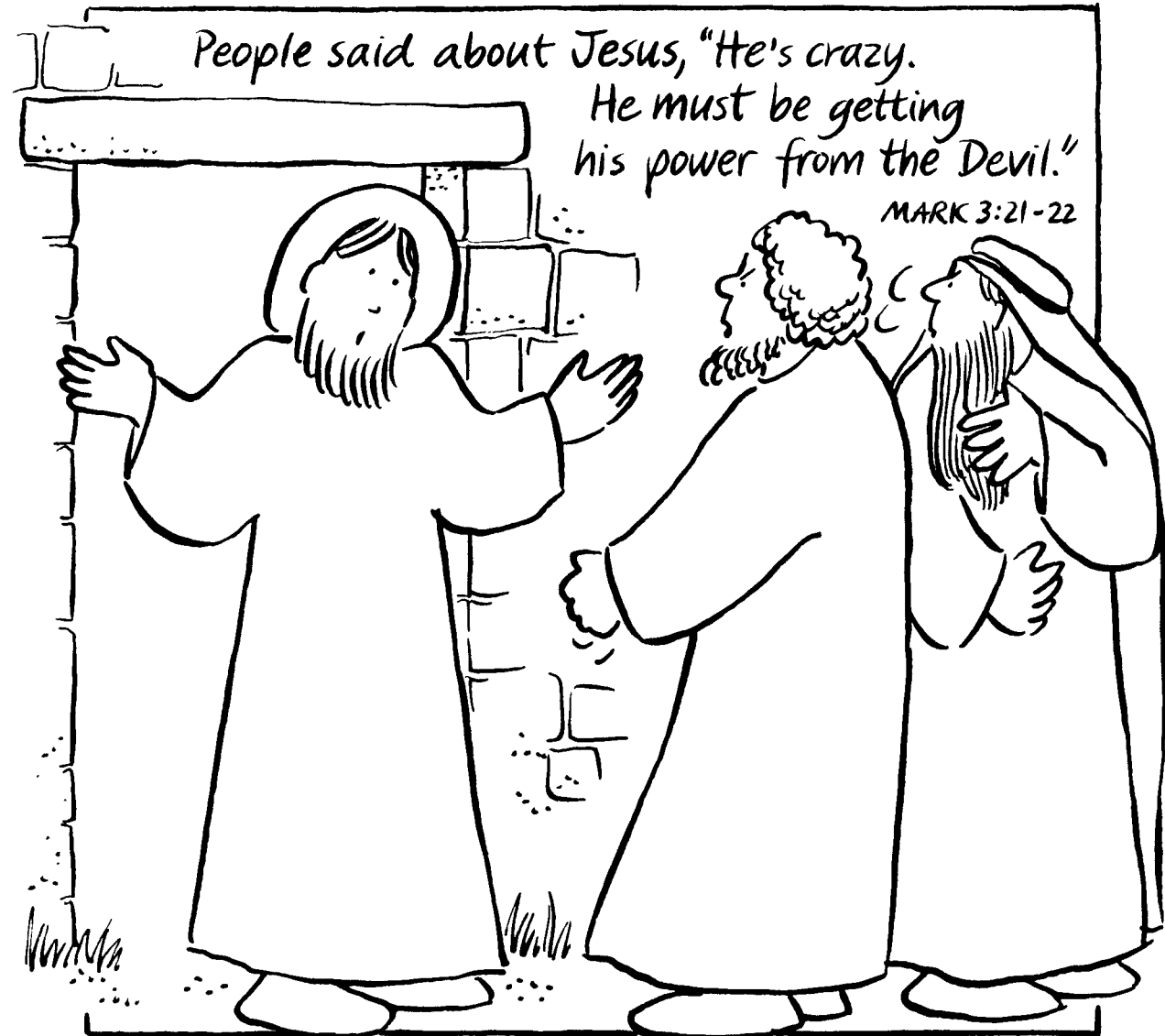
THE SUNDAY PAPER, 19 Colony Road, New Haven, CT 06511, USA

203 - 624-2520 • www.the-sunday-paper.com



THE SUNDAY PAPER JUNIOR

Year B
PROPER 5
TRACKS 1 and 2



Jesus was famous! He was famous because he could heal sick people...



... and he went everywhere, talking about God's Kingdom.



People were amazed at the way he talked. He seemed to know so much about God!



But some people said, "How does he do all this? He must have a secret power from the Devil."



When Jesus heard people say that his power must have come from the Devil, he told them, "Can't you see? The Devil is evil. The Devil would never want to do the good things that I do."

These people were scared of Jesus because he did such amazing things. They didn't believe that he would only want to do good. They did not really look or listen, or they would have seen how different and special he was.



These pictures look alike. But there are eight differences between them. Look closely. Can you find them all?