

come and see

Week 4: Get Up and Walk

John 5:1-15

Summary

History tells us that at the pool of Bethesda many people with physical disabilities routinely gathered in hopes of being healed “when the waters are stirred”. Jesus meets a man who has been unable to walk for 38 years and asks if he wants to be healed. Jesus’ questions often push a person to search themselves. On a surface level, his direct questions seem obvious. As always, Jesus has intentions. His question prompts this man to explain his struggles in reaching the pool. Next, Jesus tells him to get up, pick up his mat, and walk. Miraculously, the man is healed instantly—restoring this man’s body and standing in the community. Jesus’ healing ministry liberates people on the margins.

Jesus’ ministry often collides with the religious order of the day and this healing at Bethesda is no different. The Jewish leaders “harass” Jesus for breaking the Sabbath rules. There’s a power struggle here. The law has no power by itself (except the Spirit of God in the life of a person). Jesus, however, has this restoration power which he uses to free people—regardless of the letter of the law. The religious leaders’ control is challenged by Jesus himself.

The gospel writer John records a remarkable moment when Jesus later finds the man in the temple (evidence of that community restoration) and encourages him to sin no more (putting a highlight on the importance of spiritual well-being alongside physical healing).

For you

- Read the story again and imagine you are on a mat awaiting healing. In your life, what is it you need Jesus to touch and heal?
- Jesus is asking you if you want to be healed. What is your answer? Do you want to be healed?
- Reflect on your faith life. What might be some religious “lines” or “sacred cows” that you hold dearly that only serve to limit the freedom and restoration that Jesus wants to give you?

For your work

- Sometimes God uses us to accomplish Jesus’ work of healing, restoration, and inclusion. Who around you—like the man at Bethesda who couldn’t walk—is in need of advocacy, inclusion, or even healing? What are some opportunities you might have to be part of Jesus’ work?
- The question of “religious rigidity” can be tricky. Ask your coworkers what their church experience has been like. (Even a team of people who all grew up as “Christians” can have vastly different religious experiences because of differences in families, denominations, and churches.)
- Have any of your co-workers experienced healing—themselves or someone they know? What was that experience like? (On the other hand, has anyone prayed for healing and healing wasn’t provided?)

For Students (questions to have in your ‘back pocket’)

- Where are you interacting with the Gospel of John (if anywhere)?
- How were you impacted by the Bethesda healing story?
- How do you feel about the idea of healing? Have you ever experienced Jesus’ healing in some way? Have you been frustrated or disappointed by not being given healing?
- If Jesus asked you if you wanted to be healed, what would you say? (And what part of your life is most in need of healing?)
- What do you think this week’s passage tells us about people or yourself?

How is this resource working for you? How is God using it to form you? Are there ways we can improve it? How can we pray for you? If you’ve got questions or thoughts, we invite you to be in touch with us. Send us an email at campus-ministries@bethel.

[click here for the week 4 discovery bible study](#)



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