

7 SIGNS

JESUS REVEALED IN
THE BOOK OF JOHN

SESSION 3: JESUS HEALS THE MAN WHO COULD NOT WALK



In this series, we discover seven signs of Jesus in the gospel of John. Water turns into wine, one lunch feeds 5000 hungry bellies, people are healed, and a man four-days-dead is raised to life! Are these random miraculous acts, or do they point to something more? Together we will explore what these miracles tell us about who Jesus is. Today, Jesus heals a man who could not walk, by the pool of Bethesda.



Share

- This week, what is one thing that made you smile and one thing you found challenging?
- When you face a problem, how do you usually respond? Do you tend to figure it out on your own, ask for help, or something else?



Pray

This passage shows that Jesus has God's power, because he is God. He heals, restores and gives life in ways we might not expect. We are reminded to trust him, even when his ways are surprising.

Before we read it, let's pray together.

Thank you, Jesus for the opportunity to discover more about you through the stories in the gospel of John. We pray that the Holy Spirit speaks to us through this Scripture passage today.



Read

Read John 5:1-20.

You might like to read it in a couple of different translations.

Jesus Heals a Man Who Could Not Walk

¹Afterward Jesus returned to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish holy days. ²Inside the city, near the Sheep Gate, was the pool of Bethesda, with five covered porches. ³Crowds of sick people—blind, lame, or paralyzed—lay on the porches *waiting for a certain movement of the water*, ⁴*for an angel of the Lord came from time to time and stirred up the water. And the first person to step in after the water was stirred was healed of whatever disease he had.* ⁵One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years. ⁶When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, “Would you like to get well?”

⁷“I can’t, sir,” the sick man said, “for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me.”

⁸Jesus told him, “Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!”

⁹Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking! But this miracle happened on the Sabbath, ¹⁰so the Jewish leaders objected. They said to the man who was cured, “You can’t work on the Sabbath! The law doesn’t allow you to carry that sleeping mat!”

¹¹But he replied, “The man who healed me told me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’”

¹²“Who said such a thing as that?” they demanded.

¹³The man didn’t know, for Jesus had disappeared into the crowd. ¹⁴But afterward Jesus found him in the Temple and told him, “Now you are well; so stop sinning, or something even worse may happen to you.” ¹⁵Then the man went and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had healed him.

Jesus Claims to Be the Son of God

¹⁶So the Jewish leaders began harassing Jesus for breaking the Sabbath rules. ¹⁷But Jesus replied, “My Father is always working, and so am I.” ¹⁸So the Jewish leaders tried all the harder to find a way to kill him. For he not only broke the Sabbath, he called God his Father, thereby making himself equal with God.

¹⁹ So Jesus explained, "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing. In fact, the Father will show him how to do even greater works than healing this man. Then you will truly be astonished.

(New Living Translation)

Jesus Heals a Sick Man

¹ Later, Jesus went to Jerusalem for another Jewish festival. ² In the city near the sheep gate was a pool with five porches, and its name in Hebrew was Bethzatha.

³⁻⁴ Many sick, blind, lame, and paralyzed people were lying close to the pool. *They were waiting for the water to be stirred, because an angel from the Lord would sometimes come down and stir it. The first person to get into the pool after that would be healed.*

⁵ Beside the pool was a man who had been sick for 38 years. ⁶ When Jesus saw the man and realized that he had been crippled for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to be healed?"

⁷ The man answered, "Sir, I don't have anyone to put me in the pool when the water is stirred up. I try to get in, but someone else always gets there first."

⁸ Jesus told him, "Pick up your mat and walk!" ⁹ Right then the man was healed. He picked up his mat and started walking around. The day on which this happened was a Sabbath.

¹⁰ When the Jewish leaders saw the man carrying his mat, they said to him, "This is the Sabbath! No one is allowed to carry a mat on the Sabbath."

¹¹ But he replied, "The man who healed me told me to pick up my mat and walk."

¹² They asked him, "Who is this man that told you to pick up your mat and walk?" ¹³ But he did not know who Jesus was, and Jesus had left because of the crowd.

¹⁴ Later, Jesus met the man in the temple and told him, "You are now well. But don't sin anymore or something worse might happen to you." ¹⁵ The man left and told the leaders that Jesus was the one who had healed him. ¹⁶ They started making a lot of trouble for Jesus because he did things like this on the Sabbath. ¹⁷ But Jesus said, "My Father has never stopped working, and this is why I keep on working." ¹⁸ Now the leaders wanted to kill Jesus for two reasons. First, he had broken the law of the Sabbath. But even worse, he had said God was his Father, which made him equal with God.

The Son's Authority

¹⁹ Jesus told the people:

I tell you for certain the Son cannot do anything on his own. He can do only what he sees the Father doing, and he does exactly what he sees the Father do. ²⁰ The Father loves the Son and has shown him everything he does. The Father will show him even greater things, and you will be amazed.

(Contemporary English Version)



Share

- Have a go at retelling the story as a group.
- The man had been unable to walk for 38 years. Have you ever had a need or deep desire that has been unmet for a long time? How did that feel? How do you think the man might have felt?
- In verses two and three, we read that this pool in Bethesda was believed to have special healing powers, so it attracted many people with physical needs. Who do you usually turn to when you have a serious need?
- Read verses seven to nine again, out loud. The man is focused on getting into the water so that he can be healed, but Jesus heals him with two words: "Get up!"¹ Have you ever had a time when Jesus met your need in a way that was different to what you expected?
- In verse six Jesus singles this one man out of the crowd of sick people. He knew this man had been sick for a long time and still asks him if he would like to be healed. Why do you think Jesus asks him, rather than assuming? What do you think this tells us about Jesus?
- In verse nine the man follows Jesus' instruction – he gets up and walks. What do you think he was feeling and thinking in that moment?

¹ John 5:8 (NIV)

- This healing takes place on the Sabbath day, which makes the religious leaders angry. Read verses 17-20 again to see Jesus' response. What is Jesus saying here?
- How does Jesus describe his connection to God here?
- How do you think you would have felt if you were there on that day, hearing Jesus make this claim?
- In verse 14 Jesus says, "You are now well. But don't sin anymore or something worse might happen to you."² Why do you think Jesus said this? What kind of tone do you imagine him saying it with?
- Based on this story today, how would you describe Jesus?
- What is your personal 'takeaway' from this story today?
- Does anyone have a particular prayer need they would like to share with the group?



Pray

*Spend some time in silence listening to the Holy Spirit.
Then pray for anyone who requested prayer.*

² John 5:14 (CEV)

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.