



# WEEK 2 STUDY GUIDE

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# Monday, November 14, 2022

**Read:** John 5:1-11

**Scripture Verse:** *“Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. Here a great number of disabled people used to lie –the blind, the lame, the paralyzed.” John 5:3-4*

## Today's Thought:

In this chapter the author speaks of a pool in Jerusalem, near the sheep gate. This pool is called Bethesda. This name means: “House of Grace or house of mercy.” This place was a place of healing. There, a whole crowd of sick people came for healing. There were blind, lame, impotent, etc. Bethesda pool was very attractive because of a strange phenomenon. The water was agitated due to the action of an angel. When the water was agitated, the first of the sick people who jumped into the water came out healed.

At this pool, there was a condition to being healed: jump in first and come out healed. The condition was very simple, but it was not easy for everyone. First, because this was a crowd of disabled people. Second, not everyone was sick at the same level. We can say the most aggressive would have their chance to jump first.

The term “Disabled persons” means any person unable to ensure by himself or herself, wholly or partly, the necessities of a normal individual and or social life, as a result of deficiency, either congenital or not, in his or her physical or mental capacities.

It was those people who were by the pool of Bethesda, who were looking to get in the water first. Imagine, a crowd that only includes people with disabilities, there was no one to help them. It was a total mess! Apparently, there weren't even standards like “first come, first served”. It was every man for himself, God for all. Healing was to the most capable. The one who is much more aggressive, whose handicap was not too acute, it is he who will have the chance to enter the pool first and who will have the chance to be cured. Healing was possible but it was not accessible to all the disabled people there.

At the Bethesda pool, there were no human rights for disabled persons. No rights for the weakest. Like, “Disabled persons have the inherent right

to respect for their human dignity.” Like, “Disabled persons are entitled to have their special needs taken into consideration at all stages of economic and social planning.”

There were people who had serious health problems at the Bethesda pool. In the middle of all this appears Jesus. That is what should count to us in the story – not the disabled people waiting for the movement of the water to jump in hoping to be healed, but the presence of Jesus and his intervention for the hopeless.

Lord Jesus, in all that I find myself today, I have no one to help me through, but my eyes are on you. My hope is in you! I know that from you will come my deliverance. My Lord, come and help me in my mess as I hope in you!

- What was the condition to be healed at the pool of Bethesda?
- What class of people were by the pool of Bethesda?
- What is important to you in this story?

**Further Reading:** Acts 3: 1–6

## Tuesday, November 15, 2022

**Read:** John 5:1-11

**Scripture Verse:** *“One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?” John 5:5-6*

### Today's Thought:

John 5:5 said that there was a sick man there who had been paralyzed and suffering for 38 years. Apparently, the case of this hopeless paralyzed man was the worst of all. The author doesn't give details how this paralyzed man came to the Bethesda pool, if someone helps him or if he crawls to this place on his own. However, he had been an invalid for thirty-eight years, lying on the ground, his eyes fixed on the water, desperately trying to get in the water when it's stirred.

His health condition does not allow him to crawl fast enough to get to the water first. Someone else faster than him always gets to the water before him. He has known hopelessness after hopelessness. The man at the pool of Bethesda had lay there helplessly for years to see where his deliverance would come from. This man was exposed to all the bad weather.. Whatever the condition of the weather, he was there waiting for deliverance. Maybe he didn't even have a bed, maybe he slept on the floor, he couldn't afford to wash himself, to change his clothes which were perhaps in poor condition. He existed but he didn't live. He struggled to live.

For thirty-eight years, he suffered enormously without finding help. Perhaps to find something to eat, he lived at the mercy of other patients. He was abandoned and forgotten by everyone, even his relatives. Here he is lying, waiting for his death or the help of someone. Fortunately, God had a very special healing plan for him. He was waiting for God's time; indeed, God had not forgotten him. Everyone had forgotten him, but God saw his sufferings, cared about him and came down to deliver him from this total paralysis. Jesus saw him lying down and knew that he had been there for a long time. God set a time for him, and when the time had come, God sent Jesus to the Bethesda pool to redeem him under the weight of his sickness.

Each of us has our own Bethesda pool. We don't know how long you're

waiting there. A certain fact, you will not spend your eternity waiting by the pool. The day of your deliverance is fixed; Jesus sees you where you are. He sees your suffering, he hears your cries, he knows you have no one. Do not fix your eyes on the pool because your deliverance does not come there. You will be healed; you will be free from your troubles. Today is the day of your deliverance, do not be discouraged, don't look back. Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, only he can say get up, take up your bed and go.

Lord, you have searched me, and you know me. You know when I sit down and when I get up; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You know very well that I have no one. In your love, come hastily to my rescue at the poolside of Bethesda where I find myself with no one to help me. I cry out to you. In your love, answer me and save me and I will glorify you all the days of my life.

- How long was the man paralyzed?
- What did the paralytic expect?
- What did Jesus do for him?
- What do you expect Jesus to do for you?

**Further Reading:** Psalms 139:1-10

## **Wednesday, November 16, 2022**

**Read:** John 5:1-11

**Scripture Verse:** *“Sir, the invalid replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.”*  
John 5: 7

### **Today’s Thought:**

This study is for family members who are feeling discouraged, down, depressed, confused, tormented and traumatized. For people who are living with substance abuse, and with other problems and disorders. For people who believe that life is over. We want to tell you that there is hope. Life is not over. There is someone who can help you. He is not new to the subject; he is not inexperienced; helping people at all levels is his job.

The author said that there is a man who has been sick for thirty-eight years. His sickness seemed irremediable. In the race to jump into the water, this man was the big loser. He never got the chance to jump into the pool to win the healing grand prize he had so longed for. His life went from ruin to ruin, from bad to worse. He lost all hope of recovery because he lacked strength; there were other patients who were stronger and more aggressive than him. When the doctor par excellence asked him if he wanted to be cured, with great despair, he replied: “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred.” He was so desperate that he couldn’t answer the question directly and precisely. Jesus did not say to him: “Do you need help?” The question was: “Do you want to get well?”

But Jesus in his compassion, in his love, ignored the man’s inappropriate response. The man believed in the power of the pool water. He did not know the person who had asked him the question. He did not know he was in the presence of one who could give him the living water. He didn’t know that whoever was questioning him not only had the power to agitate the water in the pool but was also able to turn it into wine.

Brothers and sisters, it is this Jesus whom we present to you, it is in him that you must place your trust. It is on him that you must discharge your burdens, your worries, discouragements, confusions, depressions, traumas, addictions of all kinds. He is for those who trust him, a refuge and a support, a help that never fails in distress.

Lord Jesus, I come to lay all my burdens and worries at your feet. Take me as I am. I give you all my life; wash me and purify me in your precious blood. Transform me into your image and make me the person according to your heart.

- What question did Jesus ask the paralytic?
- What was his response to Jesus?
- What did Jesus offer him?
- What do you think Jesus can do in your case?

**Further Reading:** Psalms 46: 1-5

## Thursday, November 17, 2022

**Read:** John 5:1-11

**Scripture Verse:** *“Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk” At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. The day on which this took place was a Sabbath.” John 5: 8-9*

### Today's Thought:

In the previous study, we saw that if you think you have no one to rely on, no one to help you, we reassure you, someone is there for you. Just for you! His name is Jesus! Whatever the burden, whatever the weight on your shoulder, He can relieve you. What is important is that you are ready to accept his help; recognize his power and authority.

In verses 8 and 9 Jesus brought about a total and radical change in the life of the paralytic who had remained for thirty-eight years near the pool of Bethesda. He had no one to help him jump into the water to be cured. Fortunately, he who said, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” was there, and he is always there for us. He does not refuse anyone who comes to him. “All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.” (John 6:37) He has no favoritism. To you who are under the weight of despair he said come! Families, he said come! You who are tired with the pressure of life here, and think only of suicide, he said, come! Why does he say “Come” It’s just for you to give rest to your weary and contrite soul.

Jesus’ presence at the pool of Bethesda was no strange coincidence. He was there to bring about a change in the life of this man who lacked strength, courage and energy. He made a great difference in the life of this suffering, despised and humiliated man. He said to the paralytic: “Get up! Take up your mat and walk.” Jesus did an amazing thing in this man’s life. Imagine, he spent thirty-eight years paralyzed, humiliated, abandoned. In the eyes of the world, it was all over for him; but with Jesus he lived and had a living testimony.

What he did for the paralytic, he can do for you and for all of us. Perhaps you are waiting for this little phrase from Jesus: “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” Don’t worry, he’s here for you! He can say it, he can do it! He can give you a new testimony. He can not only give you a new testimony, but he can also change your identity. Jesus com-

pletely changed the life of this man and gave him a new identity. The author did not mention the name of the paralytic. It seems, the illness he suffered from changed his name. called the "paralytic", "the invalid". Because of his incurable disease, people forgot his name, they changed his identity using qualifiers related to his disease. We can tell you, with Jesus a new identity is possible. Jesus can give you a new life and a new identity that will amaze people.

Lord Jesus, I'm not worthy to be called a Christian. In your love, you left your throne to come to me for the sole purpose of changing my old identity and giving me a new one. Thank you for your love towards me. Help me keep this new identity until you come to take me home.

- What invitation did Jesus make to everyone at all levels?
- Why was Jesus present at the pool of Bethesda?
- How long have you been waiting for Jesus in your situation?
- Are you discouraged?

**Further Reading:** Matthew 11:27-28

## Friday, November 18, 2022

**Read:** John 5:1-11

**Scripture Verse:** *“And so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, ‘It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat.’ But he replied, ‘The man who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’” John 5:10-11*

### Today’s Thought:

We have seen that Jesus made a great change in the life of the paralytic. Jesus intervened at the right time; at the time he realized he had no one. In verse 8 Jesus said to him: “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” The man believed what Jesus said. He got up, he picked up his mat and he walked! It’s amazing! He did exactly what Jesus asked him to do. The paralytic put his faith in Jesus, he did what Jesus asked him to do, and everything changed in his life. Jesus set him free!

Satan imprisoned his life, he wanted to keep his body and soul captive; but Jesus freed him. Jesus took his perpetual uncertainty, disappointments and discouragement to give him a brighter future and hope. Jesus freed him from his sickness and filled his empty and withered soul.

When reading this text, here are the biblical passages that come to mind: *“So I say, “My splendor is gone and all that I had hoped from the LORD.” I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, “The LORD is my portion; therefore, I will wait for him.” The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD. It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young.” Lamentations 3:18-27.*

Jesus freed the paralytic from his sickness and filled his empty and withered soul. Instead of rejoicing and giving glory to God for the healing of the paralytic, the Jewish leaders sought to intimidate him and ask him awkward questions. Jewish religious leaders valued the law they claimed to observe more than human life. The Jews were emphasizing the Sabbath to try to condemn the man who was healed. According to them, it was not permissible to wear the mat on the Sabbath day, but it was normal for the paralytic to suffer with his illness for thirty-eight years. They ignored that the one who healed the paralytic on the

Sabbath day is the master of the Sabbath. What a misunderstanding of the law of God! They did not understand God's plan. The Sabbath is not eternal rest; but God has given us true rest in His Son Jesus Christ. Jewish leaders adhered to the law in form, not in substance. Claiming to keep the commandments of God without loving God and our neighbor is a complete aberration.

Like this paralytic without strength, without energy, helpless in the face of his disease, we too were helpless, dead in our trespasses and our sins (Eph. 2:1). Christ in his love died for us, to heal us from the disease of sin, to give us eternal life. He pulled us out of the pool of sin and washed us in his cleansing blood. Colossians 2:14 says: "having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross." What a favor! Our responsibility is to confess and forsake any sins we have committed. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9).

Lord Jesus, I'm so grateful for what you did for me on the cross. The weight of my sins paralyzed me and made me without strength and hopeless. In your love you died for me, you healed me of the disease of sin and gave me eternal life. Lord, thank you for freeing me from the bondage of sin.

- What did Jesus do for the paralytic?
- What was the attitude of the religious leaders towards the man who had been healed?
- Who is the master of the Sabbath?
- What is the greatest of the commandments?
- What did Jesus do for us on the cross to pull us out of the pool of sin?

**Further Reading:** Colossians 2:13-17

*"Today is Friday. As Saturday and Sunday are coming, prepare to meet your God. If you don't mind, don't forget to invite a friend with you."*

## NOTES







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