

A Walk of Faith



Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk."

Read John 5: 1-9

Don't you just love that Jesus isn't afraid to live His life on the edge?

As chapter five opens, we see that Jesus is once again in the middle of a group of people who aren't the up and comers of Jerusalem: they are all blind, lame, or paralyzed (v 4). Can't you just picture Jesus walking by the Sheep Gate and being drawn to the crowd of helpless people lying by the pool? Jesus always has the poor, the orphans, the helpless, and the sick on his radar, and I can just imagine Him making a beeline for the worst one there. Verse six tells us that Jesus learns that one of the men has been sick for 38 years.

Jesus then asks him what seems to be an obvious question: "Do you want to get well?"

Why would Jesus ask this question when the man has been lame for 38 years? Surely the answer has to be yes. I wonder if Jesus did this because the man has lost hope, accepting this affliction as his permanent reality. Perhaps Jesus needs to reawaken in this man his dreams of a normal life and a healthy body.

You'll notice that the man doesn't directly answer Jesus' question with a yes or no. He instead offers an explanation as to why he hasn't received healing—he has no one to help him in the pool when the water is stirred, so someone else always

gets there first. If that's the case, it's no wonder the man is discouraged.

Probably every day a friend or family member on his way to work carries the lame man to the pool and then picks him up on the way home. All day the lame man simply waits and watches the water—we don't even know how often the Spirit stirs the water. Every day, week, or month? At the first ripple of water, the man desperately tries to crawl or roll to the pool, but for 38 years, someone else always gets there first.

I can just imagine that Jesus stays quiet until the lame man stops talking. **Jesus locks eyes with the man and tells him "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk."** And just like that, he does. Thirty-eight years of atrophy gone in one second.

What can our friend from the pool of Bethesda teach us?

- **A vibrant faith reawakens hope in our lives.** When the lame man meets Jesus, he sees the power of God in Jesus. This ignites his faith, and Jesus heals him.
- **A vibrant faith sometimes requires us to make a move.** The lame man has to act on that faith. He takes Jesus at his word, picks up his mat, and stands up.

Where has hope died in your life? Jesus is trying to get your attention, look you in the eye, and shake you out of your

spiritual paralysis.



What is he asking you to move out of and on to in your life? Like the lame man did, we need to pick up our mats and leave behind the years that crippled us. Faith flies in the face of years of bad habits, patterns, and stagnation and moves us toward health and healing and possibilities.

Jane

*This is the first blog in our faith series. Please leave a comment below on your thoughts, feelings, or experiences in growing your **faith**.*

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