

LESSON 4

THE PARALYZED MAN IS HEALED

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Feasts of the Jews

Every year, Jewish males were expected to make three pilgrimage feasts, all of which were at Jerusalem. The feasts were the Passover, the Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles (or festivals of booths).

Sheep Gate

The city of Jerusalem was surrounded by a huge wall with many gates. One gate was called the Sheep Gate (Neh 3:1) because it was at this gate that sheep were washed for the sacrifice in the temple. Next to this gate was the pool of Bethesda. Stairways at the corners of the pool descended into the water. Water for the pool likely came from underground drainage, probably supplied by natural springs. Archeologists have excavated a site near the Sheep Gate of the old temple that does indeed contain five covered colonnades and two pools that verify the accuracy of what John had written here.

The Paralyzed Man and the Power of Jesus

This paralyzed man had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. We don't know the cause of his suffering. We just know that he suffered for a very long time and probably experienced frustrations and failures that were far beyond his own control.

Spiritual Teaching

The deeper question Jesus asks is, "Do you really want to be changed?" When God asks a question, it is never in vain. It is not idle chitchat. Jesus is challenging us to see if we really want to get out of our comfortable lifestyle. This is a true picture of all of us. He is asking, "Do you prefer your pain to change? Are you comfortable in your complacency?" The teaching is that we must recognize our own utter helplessness apart from God. Too often, we want to be made well but we resist the change that is necessary to find healing and wholeness. Miracles happen when we surrender our will and submit to God's power. Therefore, the question that Jesus asked is a question that we all must answer: "Do you really want to be made well?" To take up our mat and walk takes courage and risk. It requires us to see beyond the challenges and obstacles before us. The only one who can give us meaning, understanding, truth, and healing is Jesus.

BIBLE TEXT

John 5:1-9

BIBLE TRUTH

Jesus is all-powerful.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To seek Jesus' power to overcome the most difficult situations.
2. To know that Jesus will always be there to help.
3. To always give thanks to God for all that He has done for us.

MEMORY VERSE

"Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite."

(Psalm 147:5)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Lord Jesus, thank You for protecting us through another week. Today, we will be hearing about how You healed a man when it seemed impossible. Lord, we know that You can solve all our problems. Please help us overcome our difficulties and strengthen our faith in You. Praise the Lord. Hallelujah! Amen.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

Jesus is a miracle worker. His miracles include healing the blind and the paralyzed and even resurrecting the dead. Your students know many of these great stories. However, do they understand the significance of these miracles when they encounter difficulties?

Whenever your students encounter a huge problem, they may think that Jesus cannot help them. People often react this way during times of great hardship. They think nobody understands them and, therefore, no one can ever really help them. Remind your students that if Jesus can make the dead come alive again, He can certainly solve their problems. The opposite extreme is also true.

Sometimes your students may face what they consider to be a minor issue, such as an upcoming math test. They may not even bother to pray to God and ask Him for help because they think it is too trivial. They may think that God does not listen to small requests. Remind your students that He is always there for them, no matter what the situation may be. No task is too large or small for the almighty God. As long as they believe and have a heart of prayer, God will help them find a solution. When they develop such an understanding, they will be able to rely on God at all times and give Him glory in all things.

VOCABULARY

infirmity: physical or mental weakness

paralyzed: unable to move

invalid: a sick person, most likely someone who is lame

frustration: a feeling of being upset or annoyed

desperation: a feeling of despair

despair: a complete loss or absence of hope

bed-mat: mats people slept on in biblical times; they were rolled up when no one was sleeping on them

REVIEW

Last week, we learned about how a demon-possessed man was healed by Jesus. There were many evil spirits living inside this man. What was his name? (Legion.) When the demons recognized Jesus, they begged Him to let them live by sending them into a herd of what? (Pigs.) Did Jesus grant them permission? (Yes.) But once they entered into the herd, the pigs ran down a steep cliff into a lake and drowned. The people who lived in the nearby towns came to see what had happened. When they saw the man, was he completely healed or still demon-possessed? (He was healed; he acted normally and was wearing clothing.) They were so afraid that they asked Jesus to leave right away. The man wanted to go with Jesus to help Him but Jesus had other plans for him. What were they? (To go home and tell others what the Lord had done for him.) We learned that Jesus is all-powerful. We can also follow the example of the man and testify for God about His saving grace.

BIBLE STORY

The Pool of Bethesda

During the time of Jesus, there weren't many doctors. Even when there were, they did not know as much as doctors today. That is why it was hard for someone who was sick to get well. However, there was a place that many went to for help—the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem. Everyone believed that this was a special pool because the first person to dip themselves in the water at a certain time would be cured. Therefore, many sick people came and lay on their mats near the pool, waiting for the right time to go in. It would be difficult to get into the pool if you were crippled and couldn't walk, like a lot of the people there.

A Very Sick Man

Among the sick were the blind, the lame, and the paralyzed. They all came to the pool because they had no one else to turn to. In particular, there was a man who had suffered for thirty-eight years. For all those years, he was unable to walk. Every day, he lay on his mat hoping for a chance to go into the pool. It is hard to imagine not being able to walk for such a long time.

Boys and girls, as this man lies paralyzed beside the pool, what do you think is going through his mind after all these years? He probably feels completely helpless. The waters that can heal him are close by, but he can't reach them. He can't move. He is cut off from the source of healing and totally paralyzed. Do we know what he is feeling? We can imagine anxiety, frustration, desperation, even despair—all those painful, negative feelings that are stirred up when we feel helpless and alone. [Perhaps include an activity that demonstrates the difficulty of having an infirmity. For example, ask the students to try moving around the classroom without moving their legs at all, or to try picking up some materials without using their hands, to appreciate the suffering of the invalid.]

Jesus Heals the Man

One day, Jesus went into the city of Jerusalem and visited this very pool. He knew that many people came here, hoping to be cured. He saw them lying down, desperate to be well again. When Jesus saw the invalid among the big crowd and found out about the poor man's condition, He had compassion on him. Jesus wanted to help him, and so He walked over to the man's bed-mat.

Jesus asked him, "Do you want to get well?"

Students, what do you think Jesus was doing here? Was He just chatting with the man? For thirty-eight years, this man had been living by the pity of others; if he were healed, he would lose all of this. If he were healed, he would have to venture out into the unknown and be responsible for himself. He would have to find work and live among different people.

Yet, he replied, "I don't have anyone who can help me get into the water. Every time I want to get in, someone

else goes down ahead of me."

So, Jesus said, "Rise, pick up your mat and walk."

We see that Jesus quickly cut right to the heart of the matter: "Stand up, take your mat and walk." The man was healed, but he was not healed by the water. That illustrated the awesome power of God's healing and the compassionate heart of our Lord Jesus. The man didn't heal himself; he obeyed what Jesus had told him to do. He could have just lay there thinking, "Nothing has changed. I'm still crippled." Instead, he had faith in Jesus, got up, and began to walk.

Class, do you know what it means to have faith in God? It means that we trust in God and believe that He will always be there for us when we need Him, even when we don't realize it!

God had made him well! He could not believe what had happened. After thirty-eight years of lying down, he was suddenly able to walk again. Something that he thought would be impossible was now a reality! He felt free and happy. He did not have to wait for anyone to help him to the pool anymore because Jesus had healed him.

Conclusion

Jesus commands us to do many things that are impossible to do on our own, but He heals us and empowers us to do them. What are some of the things He tells us to do? Love God, love one another, love our neighbors, love our enemies—the list is endless. As children of God, we must not be afraid and respond with faith, just as this crippled man did.

There are many testimonies in our church of God's awesome healing powers and love for us. There was an elderly sister who was very sick and had to go to the hospital. She had cancer. She was very worried because her husband's faith in God wasn't very strong yet. So, the church fasted and prayed together for a few weeks. Very soon she was made completely well and now continues to worship and praise God—she serves God at all times to ensure that God did not heal her in vain.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Fill In the Blank/True or False/Short Answer

1. The man had suffered for _____ (thirty-eight) years. He could not _____ (walk).
2. He and many others waited near the _____ (pool) of Bethesda, hoping to be cured.
3. When Jesus saw the man, He wanted to _____ (help) him because He had compassion on him.
4. Many others had tried to help the man get into the pool but he was unable to get well. False; no one helped him get into the pool.
5. Everything is possible with God. True.
6. Why did Jesus choose to heal the paralyzed man? He had compassion on him because he knew that he had been sick for a long time due to his condition.
7. a. Even after thirty-eight years, the man was not discouraged. When Jesus asked him whether he wanted to get well, what was his answer? "I don't have anyone who can help me get into the water. Every time I want to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me."
b. Would you have given up in his situation? Answers may vary.
8. How did the paralyzed man show his faith? He didn't hesitate when Jesus commanded him to get up, take his mat, and walk.
9. Can you think of other Bible stories where people faced impossible situations but God provided a miraculous way out? Some examples could include Abraham saving Lot, the Israelites crossing the Red Sea, and Joshua entering the land of Canaan.
10. Jesus can overcome all difficulties. Do you have faith in Him? How would you show your steadfast trust? Answers may vary.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite." (Psalm 147:5)

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. A
2. B
3. B
4. False; Jesus came to the man.
5. True
6. made well
7. no man; another; before
8. walk
9. Answers may vary.

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

1. We must seek Jesus' power to help us overcome the most difficult situations.

Today, we learned about the paralyzed man who faced a very difficult situation—he could not get into the water to receive healing! To him, it was simply impossible. He had been this way for thirty-eight years! He had tried for many years, but he was never able to get into the water. No one was willing to help him. Students, have you been in any situations where you felt as if there were no one you could ask for help? (For example, when no one wants to talk to you at school; when you don't know how to do a really easy homework assignment and are embarrassed to ask your friends for help; or when you feel sad because you have lost something you really like.) How did you feel? [Let students answer.] Fortunately, the Bible tells us that we don't have to feel this way! It says in Isaiah 41:10, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." God has the power to help us overcome any difficult situations! When people feel lonely and helpless, they don't know what to do. But as God's children, we have Jesus with us. There's always help from above. All we have to do is to get down on our knees, tell God that we're willing to accept His ways for us, and ask Him to reach out His merciful hands to help us.

When Jesus saw the paralyzed man, He asked him, "Do you want to be made well?" Today, Jesus also asks us the same question when we want His help. Do we want His help? Are we ready for the change after He helps us—the change to become a living testimony for Him? We should never take Jesus' help for granted. Imagine that you ask your dad for help, and he helps you. But as soon as he does so, you immediately begin doing things that make him angry. How would your dad feel? And then the next time you ask your dad for help again, he replies, "Do you really want my help?" What do you think he means? [Let students answer.] He means, "Are you ready to be a good child? Will you start doing things that will make me mad all over again? If you want my help, can you promise me that you will behave?" Students, Jesus loves us and He is willing to reach out His powerful hands to help us overcome any difficult situations. We just need to obey Him first, and then ask. God will never leave us lonely and helpless. Let's read this testimony.

Jasmine is originally from Taiwan. When she was 18, she traveled to the United States to attend college. At that time, she didn't speak much English and was having difficulty adapting to her new life in a foreign country. Even though she put great effort into studying and had an English tutor, she was still falling behind in her studies. She didn't have any friends at school since she was too shy to speak to other people. Many times, she couldn't find partners for her school projects and ended up experiencing many troubles. In her first year at college, she felt very lonely and lost. Not only was it difficult to find friends, it was also difficult to find any confidence in herself to finish her degree.

A few years later, Jasmine shared a testimony at church. She said, "I am very thankful for my first year in college." Everyone who knew her was surprised that she said that. She continued, "That year, I had no friends from school and I felt a lot of academic pressure. But because of that, I found my most faithful friend—one who truly loves and cares about me. Jesus! Every day, I came home very tired from school, and I didn't want to touch any work on my table. I would kneel down and start praying to Jesus. I prayed that He would give me strength to finish my degree. When no one was there to encourage me, Jesus was always there. He listened to my every prayer and helped me in everything I asked. I felt loved and well taken care of, even though I constantly faced many new challenges. The Bible gave me strength and comfort on a daily basis so that I could keep going with my studies. Four years have passed and I finally graduated from school. It was indeed a very difficult process, but I thank God every day for His company and friendship. My college experience has drawn me so much closer to Him and now I cannot imagine what would have happened if I hadn't turned to Jesus at that time. Would I have quit school? Would I have left and gone back to my own country? Looking back, I know that God has a wonderful plan for me. He allowed me a chance to experience His wonderful presence in my life. May all the glory be unto His name!"

Reflection Questions

1. What did Jasmine do when she felt lonely and lost? (She turned to Jesus.)
2. After she turned to Jesus, what did she find? (She found strength and comfort through praying and studying the Bible. She found company and true friendship in Jesus.)

3. Why was Jasmine thankful for her experience in college? (She saw that God had a wonderful plan for her. God gave her a chance to turn to Jesus and experience His grace during a difficult time.)

2. To know that Jesus will always be there to help.

John 15:7 tells us, “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.” Jesus is always here listening to our prayers. We can ask Him for help at any time, and He will be there. When Jesus saw the paralyzed man, He had compassion on him. Jesus didn’t just walk by, or turn away and pretend that He had never seen the paralyzed man. Rather, Jesus healed this man. He didn’t reserve His power to help. Today, when we face situations with which nobody can help, where is Jesus? He is not far, He is close—He’s right here! He is not walking away, nor is He turning His head away. He is right here, waiting for us to answer Him. Let me share a story with you!

Many, many years ago, Janice’s husband passed away from liver cancer. At that time, she was living in China. She had five children, among whom the youngest was only a 6-month-old baby. Without a breadwinner in her family, Janice was unsure of how to raise her children all by herself. With her income, she could barely feed her whole family, not to mention she had to pay rent, buy clothes for her children, and send them to school. During that time, she cried every night. She missed her husband very much. She was very worried for her children and their future. Janice thought, “What should I do? Even if I work 24 hours a day with a few other part-time jobs, I still won’t be able to make enough money to raise my children. Who’s going to take care of them? Winter is coming... How can I keep them warm? If they don’t go to school, how are they going to be able to find a job in the future?” The more Janice thought about the future, the more distressed she became. She had no relatives other than her 70-year-old mother who was visually impaired. She felt alone and helpless.

A few days passed and Janice hadn’t slept for even one night. She had tried knocking on her neighbors’ doors to borrow money, but no one was willing to help her. One day, Janice found out that her mother’s eyes had been healed. Janice was shocked, so she asked her mother, “Your eyes had been the same way for years. Who healed you? Where did you get the money to see doctors from?” Janice’s mother explained to her that she had been going to a church called the True Jesus Church. She had been truth-seeking for a few months, and God healed her during one of her prayers. She also mentioned that she wanted to get baptized. She said, “Janice, would you like to come to this church with me? Your situation now is very difficult, but I think God can help you just like He helped me!” Janice thought for a moment and she agreed to go to the church with her mom.

That Saturday, Janice shared her situation in tears with a few other church members. In turn, they shared many healing testimonies with Janice and taught her to pray. That day, Janice prayed for her first time and she was touched. She said, “Finally, someone cares for me. Finally, there’s someone I can turn to!” From that day on, Janice prayed every day whenever she could. No matter how tired she was after working for hours after hours, she would still kneel down to pray.

A few months later, Janice made the decision to get baptized along with her mother and all her children. In her testimony, she said, “I believe in Jesus—He helped me, He helped me! After my husband passed away, I was torn and heart-broken. But Jesus came and had compassion on my children and me. He brought my family to this church at the right time, and He listened to all my prayers. Everything just started falling into place ever since I started praying to Him. My oldest daughter found a job, and she is able to help make money now. A church sister offered to babysit my children when my second youngest daughter is at school. When she comes home from school, she takes good care of her little brothers and sisters and feeds them. I have been offered a better job. Jesus has blessed me with so much already! He helped me, and I will follow Him and make Him the head of my household. May all the glory be unto Jesus’ name!”

3. To always give thanks to God for all that He has done for us.

Today, we are already in Christ and have received many blessings from God. Every day, God watches over us, guides our every step, and protects us from danger. When we need help, He answers our prayers and reaches out to us. God does all these things for us unconditionally. In turn, what we can do for Him? [Let students answer.] There are many ways we

can repay God's love for us. But the most important is to give thanks to God on a daily basis. We shouldn't thank God only for the obvious, or for things that surprise us and make us happy. Rather, we should recognize God's blessings in our everyday lives and give thanks to Him for everything. The Bible says, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28). God makes everything work around us, allowing us to live such beautiful and sufficient lives today. Everything He has done for us is a blessing. Now, I have a challenge for you. In one minute, each of us will make a list of things for which we are thankful. How many can you come up with? [Give students a minute to write and ask them to share their lists afterwards.]

Today, we learned that Jesus performed yet another miracle—He healed a man who had been paralyzed for thirty-eight years! Today, we need to have faith that Jesus can help us overcome any difficult situation, even when it seems impossible. We already have Jesus with us—when we need help, He is beside us. But do we have the same faith as the paralyzed man to be able to listen closely to what Jesus says to us? When Jesus told him to pick up his mat and walk, he did it without second-guessing. If we have faith like this paralyzed man's, there is nothing Jesus cannot do for us!

ACTIVITIES

1

God Is Powerful and Loving

Objectives: 1. To help the students identify a time in their lives when they had to seek God's help.
2. To remind students that Jesus is always there, ready to help them.

Materials

- Blank paper
- Colored pencils
- Construction paper
- Markers

Instructions

God's power and love are shown all around you every day of your life. His power and love can be seen in His protection, in the church, and in our family and friends. Draw a picture to illustrate a time when you experienced God's power and love. Give your drawing a title. Now share your drawing with your classmates so that they may know how God helped you.

2

Action Hymns

Objective: To remind students of the infinite understanding and absolute power of God.

Instructions

Provide a list of about ten hymns. Choose some with the theme of God's wonderful grace and healing powers and some with other themes. Have the students work in groups of two to three to find which hymns concern God's wonderful grace and healing powers.

Have them share which hymns they found to have the theme of God's wonderful grace and healing powers. Then, have each group pick one hymn and make up actions that they can teach the rest of the class.

3

Thank You, Jesus!

Objective: To always give thanks to God for all that He has done for us.

Instructions

Look at the pictures in the puzzle below.

Write down the names of the items to fill in the crossword puzzle.

Remember to thank God for all the wonderful things He has done for us.



E1 Year 2 Book 4 Lesson 4—The Paralyzed Man Is Healed

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truth: Jesus is all-powerful.

- Lesson Objectives:**
1. To seek Jesus' power to overcome the most difficult situations.
 2. To know that Jesus will always be there to help.
 3. To always give thanks to God for all that He has done for us.

Bible Reading: Please put a check mark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

Prayer: Please put a check mark in the space provided on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Psalm 147:5)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

Multiple Choice

1. _____ : Where did Jesus go to visit the pool?
 - a. Jerusalem
 - b. Bethlehem
 - c. Israel
2. _____ : What was the name of the pool that the sick people waited by?
 - a. Siloam
 - b. Bethesda
 - c. Beersheba
3. _____ : How long had the man whom Jesus healed been afflicted by the infirmity?
 - a. 42 years
 - b. 38 years
 - c. 15 years

True or False

4. The man called out and asked Jesus to heal Him. _____
5. Sick people were healed at this pool because an angel went down at a certain time and stirred up the water. _____

Fill In the Blank

(before, no man, made well, walk, another)

6. When Jesus saw the man lying there, He said to him, "Do you want to be _____ _____?"
7. The sick man answered and said, "Sir, I have _____ _____ to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, _____ steps down _____ me."
8. Jesus said to the man, "Rise, take up your bed and _____."

Life Application

9. Remember that you must pray and ask God to help you when you face difficult situations. If you are at school, you can say a silent prayer because God will still listen to you. Do not forget to thank God for helping you through your rough situation. Write down one time this week when you prayed to God and He helped you through a rough situation.
