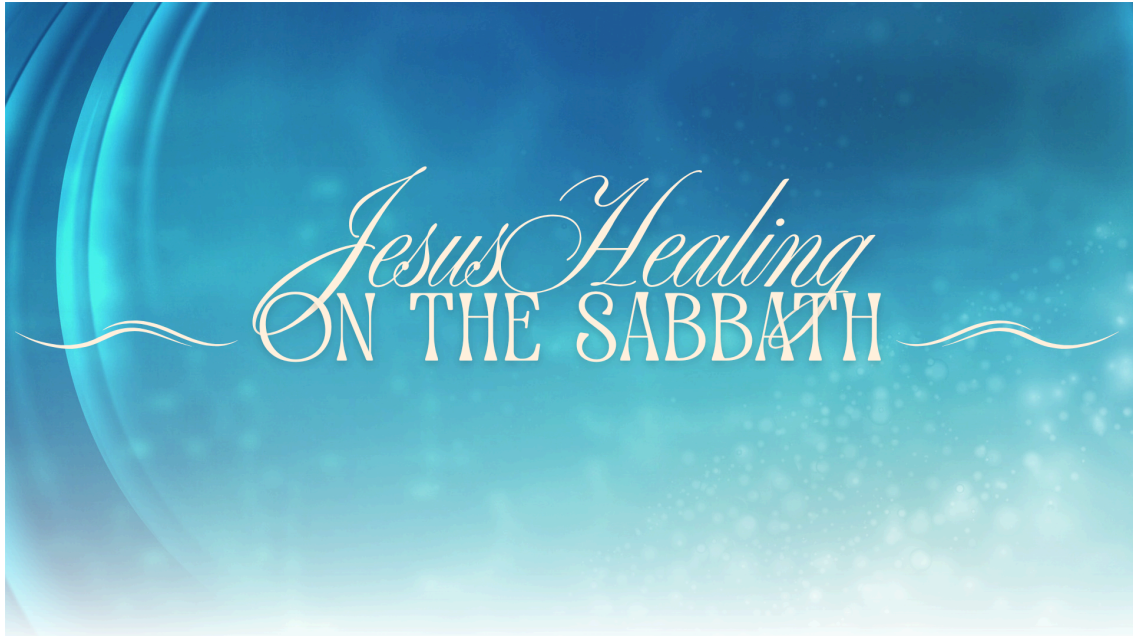


WEEK OF APRIL 12, 2026

**5-Day Devotional
based on Sunday's message:**



Jesus Healing on the Sabbath
John 5:1-18

Provided by



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John 5:1-18

Afterward Jesus returned to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish holy days. Inside the city, near the Sheep Gate, was the pool of Bethesda, with five covered porches. Crowds of sick people—blind, lame, or paralyzed—lay on the porches. One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, “Would you like to get well?” “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.” Jesus told him, “Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!” Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking! But this miracle happened on the Sabbath, so 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!” But he replied, “The man who healed me told me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’” “Who said such a thing as that?” they demanded. The man didn’t know, for Jesus had disappeared into the crowd. But 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.” Then the man went and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had healed him. So the Jewish leaders began harassing Jesus for breaking the Sabbath rules. But Jesus replied, “My Father is always working, and so am I.” So 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.

Day 1: Do You Want to Be Made Well?

Devotional

Imagine living with the same struggle for 38 years. That's what the paralyzed man at Bethesda experienced. Nearly four decades of waiting, hoping, and eventually accepting his condition as permanent. When Jesus asked him a simple question, "Do you want to be made well?", the man's response was telling. Instead of saying yes, he explained why healing seemed impossible. This reveals something profound about how we handle our own brokenness. Whether it's a broken relationship, a persistent habit, or a spiritual struggle, we often become so accustomed to our limitations that we stop believing change is possible. We develop explanations for why things can't improve rather than surrendering our situations to God. Jesus' question cuts through our excuses and gets to the heart of the matter. Sometimes we're more comfortable with familiar brokenness than unknown wholeness. The predictable pain feels safer than trusting God with our healing. However, Jesus stands before us today, just as He stood before that man, offering genuine transformation. The beautiful truth is that Jesus doesn't wait for us to have perfect faith or all the right answers. He meets us in our helplessness and offers hope when we've given up on change. His question isn't meant to discourage us, but an invitation to honest surrender.

Bible Verse

"When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, "Would you like to get well?" - John 5:6

Reflection Question

What area of brokenness in your life have you learned to explain rather than surrender to God?

Quote

Do you actually want to be made well? Is that what you want, deep down inside, to get past the [brokenness], and be made well again?

Prayer

Jesus, help me to honestly examine the areas where I've settled for brokenness instead of seeking Your healing. Give me the courage to say yes to Your transformative work in my life. Amen.

Day 2: When Brokenness Becomes Identity

Devotional

The man at Bethesda had been paralyzed for so long that his condition became his identity. He wasn't just someone who happened to be paralyzed. In his mind, he was "the paralyzed man." His limitation defined him completely, shaping not only how he saw himself but also what he believed was possible for his future. This happens to us more often than we realize. We begin to identify ourselves by our struggles, "I'm just an anxious person," "I'm not good with relationships," or "I've always been this way." When we live with brokenness long enough, it reshapes our expectations and erodes our hope. We stop believing that real change is possible. However, the incredible truth is Jesus sees beyond our limitations to who we really are. He doesn't see us as defined by our brokenness but as beloved children created for wholeness. When He looks at us, He sees not just who we are but who we can become through His transformative power. God never intended for us to be defined by our struggles or to simply learn to cope with dysfunction. He created us for abundant life, genuine healing, and authentic transformation. Our past doesn't have to determine our future when Jesus steps into our story.

Bible Verse

"Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a dream fulfilled is a tree of life." - Proverbs 13:12

'My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.' - Galatians 2:20

'This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!' - 2 Corinthians 5:17

Reflection Question

How has long-term struggle shaped your identity? What would it look like to see yourself through God's eyes instead?

Quote

He was so used to being paralyzed... He was so used to his condition that his condition actually shaped his identity. He was self defined by his limitation.

Prayer

Lord, help me to see myself as You see me, not defined by my limitations but created for Your purposes. Restore my hope and renew my expectations of what You can do. Amen.

Day 3: Grace That Requires Nothing

Devotional

The healing at Bethesda reveals something beautiful about God's grace. The paralyzed man didn't earn his healing through good behavior, perfect faith, or following the right system. He didn't even ask for it directly. Jesus simply chose to heal him with no strings attached, no performance required. This challenges our natural tendency to believe we must somehow deserve God's intervention in our lives. We think we need to pray harder, be better, or figure out the right formula before God will move. However, grace operates on an entirely different principle. Grace is initiated by God, not earned by us. The religious leaders were upset because the healing happened on the Sabbath, violating their system of rules. They prioritized their religious structure over a person's restoration. How often do we do the same thing? We get so focused on doing things "the right way" that we miss God's gracious work happening right in front of us. Grace threatens our need for control because it reminds us that transformation comes from God's heart, not our effort. This doesn't mean we're passive, but it does mean we can rest in the truth that God's love for us isn't based on our performance. He moves toward us not because we're ready, but because He's gracious.

Bible Verse

"God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it." - Ephesians 2:8-9

Reflection Question

Where in your life are you trying to earn God's favor instead of simply receiving His grace?

Quote

Grace is initiated by God and not earned by us. There was nothing that man needed to do, nor did do to deserve to be healed.

Prayer

Father, thank You that Your grace isn't something I have to earn. Help me to receive Your love and transformation as the free gift it is. Amen.

Day 4: Restoration Includes Transformation

Devotional

After healing the paralyzed man, Jesus found him later in the temple and gave him an important warning that restoration includes transformation. The man couldn't simply return to his old life with a new body, something deeper needed to change. Jesus didn't come just to improve our circumstances. He came to transform our entire lives. This is where many of us struggle with Jesus' work in our lives. We're comfortable with Him as our Savior, rescuing us from our problems. However, we're often less comfortable with Him as Lord, having authority to change how we live. We want the healing without the transformation, the blessing without the surrender. True restoration always involves letting go of control and stepping out of our dysfunctional comfort zones. Even when our old patterns are broken, they're familiar. We know what to expect from them. Trusting Jesus fully means embracing the unknown territory of His plans for our lives. The beautiful promise is that Jesus' transformation is always for our good. He doesn't change us to restrict our joy but to increase it. His authority in our lives isn't burdensome, but the pathway to the abundant life He designed us to experience. When we surrender control to Him, we discover that His plans are far better than anything we could have imagined.

Bible Verse

'But 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.'" - John 5:14

'Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.' - Romans 12:2

Reflection Question

What areas of your life are you holding back from Jesus' transformative authority?

Quote

Restoration includes transformation. Something in our lives must change.

Prayer

Jesus, I surrender not just my problems to You, but my entire life. Help me to trust Your authority and embrace the transformation You want to bring. Amen.

Day 5: Living Water vs. Broken Cisterns

Devotional

The man at Bethesda was so focused on the pool's supposed healing power that he almost missed the Living Water standing right in front of him. For 38 years, he had put his hope in a broken system, waiting for an angel to stir the water, competing with others for the first spot, depending on his own ability to move fast enough. We do the same thing. We create our own "pools of Bethesda", systems, routines, and strategies for managing our brokenness instead of surrendering it to Jesus. We put our hope in therapy, self-help, relationships, achievements, or religious activities, thinking these will finally fix what's wrong. While these things aren't necessarily bad, they become broken cisterns when we depend on them instead of on Jesus. Every human system eventually fails until Jesus steps in. Only He can restore what we've learned to live with. The incredible news is that Jesus doesn't wait for our systems to fail before He offers Himself. He stands ready to be our source of healing, hope, and transformation right now. We don't have to wait for the perfect moment or the right circumstances. The Living Water is available today, offering us genuine restoration that no earthly system can provide. By God's grace, Jesus restores what we've learned to live with. He breaks the cycles we've accepted as permanent and offers us the abundant life we were created to experience.

Bible Verse

"“For my people have done two evil things: They have abandoned me— the fountain of living water. And they have dug for themselves cracked cisterns that can hold no water at all!” - Jeremiah 2:13

‘Jesus told him, “Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!” Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking!’ - John 5:8-9a

Reflection Question

What "broken cisterns" have you been depending on instead of trusting in Jesus as your source of life and healing?

Quote

The living water of Jesus is standing before this man offering healing. And this man's going, yeah, but there's this pool.... that might be able to heal me.”

Prayer

Lord, forgive me for looking to broken systems for what only You can provide. Help me to find my hope and healing in You alone. Amen.