

Week 12

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man JOHN 5:1-15 *We ask Jesus for help.*

What the Bible Says

Jesus went to Jerusalem and came to the pool of Bethesda. Occasionally the water of this pool would be disturbed. People believed that the first person who entered the water after it was disturbed would be miraculously healed, and so many sick people regularly gathered around the pool—the blind, the paralyzed, and people with all sorts of diseases—hoping to be the first in the water and thus healed.

On the day that Jesus came by the pool, he spoke to a man who'd been disabled and sick for 38 years. The man explained to Jesus that he had no hope of being miraculously healed in the pool; because of his illness, he had no chance of being the first one in the water. He needed someone to help him get into the pool. Rather than help him in that way, Jesus told the man, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!" and the man was instantly healed!

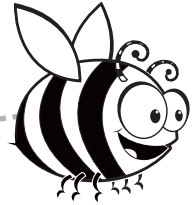
What It Means

"God helps those who help themselves." It's a phrase many people think comes from Scripture, but it's actually from Ben Franklin. In fact, in this story Jesus chose to help the person who perhaps was *least* able to help himself. Of all the sick and needy

people at the pool that day, Jesus zeroed in on the one whose case was possibly the most hopeless. This man had absolutely no way of helping himself into the pool and so no way of helping himself heal.

Why It Matters

When we come to Jesus for help, we too recognize our inability to help ourselves. This doesn't mean that when we face a problem, we must pretend we have no skills, ingenuity, or talents—after all, these things are given to us by God and he wants us to use them! But it does mean we realize that ultimately we're totally reliant on God. Our very lives—our very next heartbeat and very next breath—come from God. Though we can certainly do our best to tackle challenges in life, we do so with a constant reliance upon God for strength, guidance, and power rather than a reliance on our own efforts.



God Sightings®

It's so easy to lose perspective on how reliant we are upon God. So take some time to regain the right frame of mind. This week, wherever you go, think about how everything and everyone you see is ultimately dependent upon God, and thank God for his provision.

Prayer Starter

Pray that as your kids face tough situations in life, they'll learn to rely fully upon Jesus, not their own abilities. Write your prayer here.
