

# Jesus Heals the Man at the Pool of Bethesda

John 5:1-18



New Testament 5  
Part 1: Jesus' Ministry

## SUNDAY MORNING

New Testament 5 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

John 5:1-18

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: “[W]hatever you want men to do to you, do also to them...”  
(Matthew 7:12b).

OLDER CHILDREN: “[B]elieve the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him” (John 10:38b).

### SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- [“God Created Me”](#)
- [“God Takes Care of Me”](#)
- [“Matthew 7:12”](#)

### LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [Jesus' Ministry & Last Week Bible fact cards](#) (provided under “N.T. 5 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)
- “Summary of the Bible” from “[Kids Prep](#)” CD by Jeff Miller
- [Map of Palestine](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- Boyhood and Early Ministry A Beka picture set (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, *not the lesson book*)
- Crutches and/or wheelchair to use in discussion about people with disabilities
- Pictures of people with disabilities (for preschoolers)
- If possible, have someone with a disability (permanent or temporary) come talk to



the class about what his/her life is like and how people treat him/her

- [NOTE: See *The Living Bible Encyclopedia, Volume 14* for information on Jewish

## LESSON STARTS HERE

traditions regarding the Sabbath]

### PERSONAL APPLICATION:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: I must treat other people just as I want to be treated.

OLDER CHILDREN: It is important to help others in need, remembering that the good things we do bring honor to our Heavenly Father.

### INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

The Bible tells us that Jesus had special power to do special things that ordinary people couldn't do. Why did He do miracles? Miracles confirmed Jesus' claim to be God's Son. Jesus helped other people and treated them like He wanted to be treated. That's what He wants us to do, too. Today we'll talk about one man that Jesus helped.

### INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Do you know what it means to be disabled? Do you know someone who is disabled? What do you think it would be like if you could not walk, or see, or hear? There are still many people with problems like that today. Wouldn't it be wonderful if there was someone who could heal people who are suffering so much? Jesus could, and He spent much of His time on Earth doing just that—healing those who were blind, deaf, crippled, or sick. Today we're going to learn about one of those people who needed Jesus' help.

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

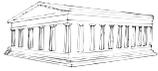
1. After Jesus' second miracle (healing the nobleman's son—John 4:46-54), it was time for Jesus and His disciples to go to Jerusalem for one of the yearly Jewish feasts. He went to the Pool of **Bethesda** on the Sabbath (Saturday, the day of worship for the Jews). Around the pool were many sick and disabled people. In Bible times (and even today in many countries), people who are crippled or very sick beg for money on the streets to get money (became beggars), because they can't work. They become totally dependent on the kindness of others. The sick people sitting or lying around the Pool of Bethesda were there because they believed that the water in



**Bethesda** means “house of mercy.”



**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the article “[\*\*The Stirring of the Water and Bible Integrity\*\*](#)” by Dave Miller on the Apologetics Press Web site for a study on whether the Bible endorses the superstitious mentality of those at the Bethesda pool.



**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Underground springs were the source of the pool that bubbled up from time to time. Some superstitious Jews believed that angels were stirring the waters. The phrase “waiting for the moving of the waters” (John 5:3) and verse 4 are not in the oldest and most reliable New Testament manuscripts. Commentators think that this section may have been added later, possibly by a scribe, to clarify verse 7. In New Testament times, it was not uncommon for healing “shrines” to be set up for idol worshippers to purify themselves for worship. (See the recommended reading above.)

the pool would help them get well. There was nothing magical or healing about the water, whether it “moved” or not, but the pool became a focal point of hope for those who were desperately ill or disabled.

2. Jesus and His disciples found a man lying near the pool who had been sick for 38 years. Jesus knew immediately what the crippled man needed. The man did not know who Jesus was; he just thought that he needed help to get into the water.



**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the article “[The Very Works that I Do Bear Witness of Me](#)” by Eric Lyons and Kyle Butt on the Apologetics Press Web site for a study on whether it is rational to believe in the miracles of Jesus.

3. Jesus said, “Rise, take up your bed and walk.” The man was healed immediately! This miracle, like all others in the Bible, proved that His words were from God. Jesus was Who He claimed to be—the Son of God

**YOUNGER CHILDREN:** Talk with them more about the man’s disability, what it would have been like to have been crippled and helpless, etc., with no hospitals or places where you could get help. Give them the opportunity to walk on crutches or sit in a wheelchair. People with any kind of handicap are no different than we are. We should treat them just as we want to be treated.

**OLDER CHILDREN:** At first, the man who was healed did not tell the Jews who had healed him, because he did not know Jesus’ name. But when he found out that it was Jesus who healed him, he went back and told the Jews. Whatever the man’s reasons for doing this, his action resulted in causing even more problems for Jesus (verse 16).

4. Jesus said, “My Father has been working until now, and I have been working” (John 5:17). When the Jews heard this, they knew Jesus was making Himself equal with God by calling Himself the Son of God, and they became very angry (John 5:18; 8:42). They were suspicious of everything He did and said (John 2:18; 4:1), and they were looking for opportunities to trap Him. They wanted to kill Jesus, because He told them that He was the Son of God, the Messiah, and because thousands of people were following Him. The miracles demonstrated that, as the Son of God, Jesus was more powerful than any “god” or supernatural force (John 10:25-38).
5. The Jews were even angrier with Jesus because He performed this miracle on the Sabbath (John 5:16). The Jews were also very upset when they saw the healed man carrying his bedroll on the Sabbath. In the Law of Moses, God provided the 7<sup>th</sup> day as a holy day when no man or animal was to work; it was clearly intended to be a blessing for the Jews, both physically and spiritually. But by

New Testament times, Jewish traditions [which originated between the time of Ezra and the New Testament era] said no one should carry anything on the Sabbath (see Jeremiah 17:21-22; Numbers 15:32-36; Exodus 31:13-17; 23:12; Nehemiah 13:19). Jesus regularly attended



**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See the articles “Did Jesus Break the Sabbath?” and “[Situation Ethics—Extended Version](#)” by Dave Miller, and “[Did Jesus Condone Law-breaking?](#)” by Eric Lyons on the Apologetics Press Web site for a study on whether Jesus ever endorsed breaking God’s laws (e.g., Jews breaking the Sabbath).

worship services at synagogues on the Sabbath, but He also taught that the Sabbath was made for man’s benefit and that the impossible traditions of the scribes and Pharisees regarding the 7<sup>th</sup> day should be ignored.

**YOUNGER AND OLDER:** Jesus was always looking for ways to help people. He wanted to give them what they needed most. But He also wanted everything He did to glorify God (to cause people to honor and praise God). We should be looking for ways we can help, too (giving them food and clothing, giving them a kind word and showing them respect, giving them a Bible, etc.). In our actions and words we should bring honor to our heavenly Father, just as Jesus did. (Everything we do reflects on our earthly family and our family name. Even more than that, our actions reflect our commitment and love for the Lord.)

### PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#)

#### Ages 2-5:

- “[Jesus Heals the Man at the Pool Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Reaching out to others: Make homemade cookies and bring them to class. Let the kids wrap them in small plastic bags. Let them draw a picture and/or write their names on cards to go with the cookies. Talk with the children about doing good to others, treating them like they would want to be treated if they were in a different or strange place. Let the children give the bags of cookies to visitors before or after class. You could also take the four and five-year-olds to the nursing home to deliver cookies and handmade cards.
- Handprint verses: Talk about how many good things we can do to help other people with our hands. Help each child make his/her handprint on a piece of card stock; write the memory verse on the card.

#### 1st-2nd Graders:

- Review game: Cut out 6-10 men shapes and the same number of pallets/stretchers. Write review questions about the lesson on the pallet cutouts and the appropriate answers on the men cutouts. Put magnetic tape on the back of each shape, and play the game on a magnetic board. ([Man Cutouts](#) and [Stretcher Cutouts](#) provided in activity sheets)
- Remembering on a map: Draw a large map of Palestine on butcher paper or poster board. With each lesson in this unit, add a small picture or write a short description of what happened in each place (Example: Bethesda—card that says “Man at the pool” or small

picture that describes lesson). The next class period, take all the cards/pictures off the map and ask the children, “What happened at \_\_\_\_\_?” and let them put the pictures or cards back on the map.

- Word puzzles: Print the main words from the lesson on sentence strips or strips of card stock or construction paper. Cut the strips into individual letters, keeping each word together in a plastic bag. Divide the class into pairs or groups of three. Give each group one word at a time to unscramble. When they have figured out the word, let them tell the importance of that word. (The teacher can write the words on the board, if the students need help.) ([Word Puzzles Cutouts](#) provided in activity sheets)
- “Jesus’ Miracles” egg carton game: In each section of an egg carton, write the name of a place where Jesus performed a miracle. On plastic eggs, write the miracles He performed. Ask the students to match the eggs to the correct spaces in the egg carton.

### 3rd-4th Graders:

- Remembering on a map: Draw a large map of Palestine on butcher paper or poster board. With each lesson in this unit, add a small picture or write a short description of what happened in each place (Example: Bethesda—card that says “Man at the pool” or small picture that describes lesson). The next class period, take all the cards/pictures off the map and ask the children, “What happened at \_\_\_\_\_?” and let them put the pictures or cards back on the map.
- Review game: Cut out 6-10 men shapes and the same number of pallets/stretchers. Write review questions about the lesson on the pallet cutouts and the appropriate answers on the men cutouts. Put magnetic tape on the back of each shape, and play the game on a magnetic board. ([Man Cutouts](#) and [Stretcher Cutouts](#) provided in activity sheets)
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- Have the children read the following:
  - John 5
  - *Jesus Heals the Man at the Pool*, by Lisa M. Clark, Arch books

### SONGS:

#### “GOD CREATED ME” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”)

God created me. He gave me hands to wave. (wave)  
God created me. He gave me hands to wave.

God created me. He gave me feet to walk. (walk in place)  
God created me. He gave me feet to walk.

God created me. He gave me ears to hear. (cup hands to ears)  
God created me. He gave me ears to hear.

**“GOD TAKES CARE OF ME” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Lora Laycook  
(Tune: Chorus of “Sunlight, Sunlight”)

Pray, pray; pray, pray,  
Let us pray today.  
Pray, pray; pray, pray,  
As we work and play.  
God is up in Heaven, so very good is He,  
He will ever love and take good care of me.

**“MATTHEW 7:12”**

Author: Jeff Miller  
(Tune: See “[Hidden in My Heart 2](#)” CD)

\*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

\*\*\* IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE “SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



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## WEDNESDAY EVENING

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### PERSONAL APPLICATION:

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OLDER CHILDREN: It is important to help others in need, remembering that the good things we do bring honor to our Heavenly Father.

### INTRODUCTION:

Review [N.T. 5 Bible Fact Flash Cards](#) (provided under “N.T. 5 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Review Sunday’s lesson (see [N.T. 5 Review Questions](#) for example questions)

Let the children act out the lesson, taking turns being the crippled man, or ask teens from your congregation to act out the story. Continue talking about how grateful we should be to have our good health and how we can help others who are sick.

### PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

See Sunday morning’s lesson

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