

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Heals Man at Pool of Bethesda

John 5:1-18

Opening

Gathering: Share times when God has intervened in situations even when no one had asked for His help.

Today's Focus: Jesus reached out His loving hand of mercy to heal a man without hope.

Key Verses: *Jess asked him, "Do you want to get well?"* John 5:6

He was even calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God. John 5:18

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Jesus' Passovers (*John 5:1*)

How does Matthew summarize the time of Jesus' ministry that we have studied the past few weeks?
Matthew 4:23-25

Where did Jesus go after months of ministry in Galilee?
John 5:1

What feast was this likely to have been?
Deuteronomy 16:16

What is the first feast that Jesus attended after the start of His ministry?
John 2:13

What is the last feast Jesus attended at the end of His ministry?
John 12:1, 12

Do we know of any other Passovers during Jesus' ministry?
John 6:4

Note: These three Passovers lead us to conclude that Jesus' ministry lasted over 2 years
If today's feast was another Passover, then Jesus' ministry could have been over 3 yrs
There could also have been other Passovers that aren't mentioned (John 21:25)

The Healing Pool of Bethesda (*John 5:2-4*)

Where was the pool of Bethesda?
John 5:2

Where was the Sheep Gate?
Nehemiah 12:38-39 (3:1)

Bethesda - Meant *House of mercy* or *House of grace*

Two spring-fed pools surrounded by 4 porches and separated by a fifth
Excavated in 1888, 55' x 12', steep and winding steps to reach the pool

What kind of people hung out at Bethesda?
John 5:3

Why?
John 5:4

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Heals Man at Pool of Bethesda

Page 2

Jesus Reaches Out (*John 5:5*)

Who did Jesus choose out of all the disabled He saw at Bethesda?

John 5:5

What analogy can be made about this man's 38 years of hopelessness?

Deuteronomy 2:13-14

Who claimed they were chosen by God despite their hopeless condition?

1 Timothy 1:12-14

Why did Paul believe he was picked out?

1 Timothy 1:15-16

Who else has been chosen by God despite their hopeless condition?

Romans 5:6-8

The Call of the Sheep Gate (*John 5:6*)

What did Jesus ask the man?

John 5:6

Was this a stupid question?

Acts 3:2-5 (16:16-19)

Was there more behind Jesus' question than just if he wanted to get better?

John 10:2-10

Why is it important for us to answer Jesus' call to follow Him and receive His healing grace?

John 12:47-50

Fruitless Efforts (*John 5:7*)

Did the man answer Jesus with a Yes or a No?

John 5:7

How are we like the man in our ability to justify and save ourselves?

Galatians 2:15-16

Do our righteous efforts have any merit or are they useless like the man's efforts to get in?

Isaiah 64:6

How did Paul react when he heard that the Galatians were trying to be justified by the law?

Galatians 3:1-5

What works must we do to obey God and be considered righteous?

John 6:28-29

The Grace of Jesus (*John 5:8-9*)

How did this man differ from others who Jesus healed?

Mark 10:46-51

Since the man at Bethesda didn't ask Jesus to heal him, did Jesus pass him by?

John 5:8

What explains Jesus' actions?

Luke 19:10

Did the man wait for Jesus to carry him to the troubled water for healing?

John 5:9a

What risk was there to the man by obeying Jesus?

Mark 2:9-12

How do we respond when Jesus asks us to pick up our mat, even when others may laugh?

Luke 9:23-26

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Heals Man at Pool of Bethesda

Page 3

Knowing Jesus (*John 5:12-14*)

How was this man's response similar to that of Bartimaeus?

Mark 10:52

Was his saving faith in Jesus as the Messiah?

John 5:12-13

Don't we need to acknowledge and know Jesus before we can receive His blessings?

Romans 9:15-16

What parable did Jesus tell that makes this point?

Matthew 20:9-15 (1-16)

How did Jesus later reveal Himself and His purpose to the man?

John 5:14

What did Jesus mean by *something worse may happen to you*?

Romans 8:5-6, 13

Jesus Works on the Sabbath (*John 5:9-10*)

How did the Jewish leaders respond to this great miracle of healing a 38-year invalid?

John 5:9-10

Jews identified 39 works which were prohibited on the Sabbath by the Scripture

Each of these *father-works* had many *descendant-works* defined by rabbis

Examples:

Father-Work

Descendant-Works

Plowing

Digging (dragging a chair might make a rut)
(rubbing foot on pavement ok, not on dirt)

Carrying a burden

Wearing false teeth or extra clothing

Reaping

Tailor carrying needle, scribe carrying pen

Plucking a head of wheat

Pulling out a gray hair (don't look in mirror)

Not a Mat Carrying Day (*John 5:11-18*)

What excuse did the man give for his horrible sin of carrying his mat?

John 5:11

What became more important to the Jews than getting the man to put down his mat?

John 5:12-16

How did Jesus respond to their reprimand?

John 5:17

How did this make the Jews even more upset?

John 5:18

The Sabbath Breaker (*John 5:16*)

Did Jesus have other conflicts with Jewish leaders because of healing on the Sabbath?

Luke 13:10-17

Luke 14:1-6

John 9

What else did Jesus do on the Sabbath that got the Pharisees mad?

Matthew 12:1-14

How did Jesus try to put the Sabbath in perspective?

Mark 2:27

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Heals Man at Pool of Bethesda

Page 4

The Third Commandment - Luther's Small Catechism

What was the initial basis of the Jew's concern about working on the Sabbath?
Exodus 20:8

Note: This is the first mention of doing no work on the Sabbath
More detailed regulations were given to Israel in Mosaic Law, never to Gentiles

What does the Third Commandment mean for us as God's people – the new Israel?
*We should fear and love God that we may not despise preaching and His Word,
but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.*

Does God require that we Christians of the New Testament observe the Sabbath?
Colossians 2:16-17

Did God command us Christians to observe any day?
Romans 14:5-6 (Galatians 4:10-11)

Why, then, do we observe Sunday and other church festivals?
Hebrews 10:25 (Acts 2:42)

What does God require of us in the Third Commandment?
1 Thessalonians 2:13
Luke 11:28
Galatians 6:6
Mark 16:15

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. When has God reached out to me without me calling to Him?
(*John 5:6; Romans 5:6-8; Ephesians 1:4-6; 1 Timothy 1:12-16*)
2. When have I recognized that God has reached out to me?
(*John 5:6-7; 14:1-14; 20:10-18; 21:4-7; 1 Kings 19:9-18; Psalm 37:23-24; Luke 24:13-35*)
3. How have I responded to God when He has reached out to me?
(*John 5:6-8; 10:1-16; 14:15, 22-24; 15:1-17; Luke 1:46-55; 1 John 3:16-18; 4:7-12*)
4. Do I recognize God's hand of grace and mercy when He takes care of me?
(*John 5:12-13; Deuteronomy 12:7; Psalm 139; Isaiah 64:8; Matthew 6:25-34*)
5. How have I responded when I have recognized God's hand of grace and mercy in my life?
(*John 5:14-15; 1 Chronicles 29:10-16; Matthew 10:40-42; 25:40; Luke 23:46; Hebrews 13:1-2*)