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Jesus Restored My Life



QUESTION 1:

When have you been thankful for rescue from a helpless situation?

THE POINT

Jesus restored what was broken in my life.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

In 2004, our daughter Hadley was born. Due to some pre-existing health conditions, she was born weighing only 15.5 oz. Over the next 108 days we were on a roller-coaster ride of life and death. Some days the doctors had great news to share with us about her progress, and on other days we arrived at the NICU only to be greeted with discouraging news. At one point during that journey our daughter acquired an infection that caused her to become septic. Our doctors shared with us that there was nothing else that the medical staff could do for her. We would just have to wait and see what happened.

Hearing those words can cause you to lose your breath. We had reached the end of the medical options, but we had only begun to explore what God was capable of. Over the next several weeks, we learned to pray like never before, and as we did, God showed up. In our time of desperation, we turned to the only One who could meet our need, and He did.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

JOHN 5:2-7

² By the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem there is a pool, called Bethesda in Aramaic, which has five colonnades. ³ Within these lay a large number of the disabled — blind, lame, and paralyzed. ⁵ One man was there who had been disabled for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and realized he had already been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to get well?” ⁷ “Sir,” the disabled man answered, “I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I’m coming, someone goes down ahead of me.”

We don’t know much about the pool called Bethesda, but it was by the Sheep Gate. Here came Jesus, the Lamb of God (John 1:29) to the Sheep Gate to touch a man’s life and show Himself to be the Good Shepherd (10:11). We do know this pool was a place where the sick and the infirm would gather, and at some point along the way, something significant must have happened at this pool for it to receive the reputation as a place of healing. Over time it had become a place where it was thought that, when the waters stirred, they had healing powers.

Jesus met one man who apparently believed in the healing power of the waters when they were stirred. He had a health condition that prevented him from functioning with full mobility. Like the Samaritan woman at the well we studied about in the previous session, this

man also misunderstood his greatest need. The woman thought her greatest need was a drink of water, and this man thought his greatest need was someone to help him get into the water. In both cases they had met the only one who could help them. In this man’s case, he had been suffering for thirty-eight years. We are not told if this man was thirty-eight years old and had been suffering from this infirmity his entire life or if he acquired this problem later in life. Either way, this man was well acquainted with suffering.

QUESTION 2:

What do you find most striking about this encounter?

Jesus knew what the man's ailment was and how long he had suffered. Jesus's encounter with this man was no accident. In compassion, Jesus asked him, "Do you want to get well?" (v. 6). One would think the easy answer would be "Yes!" However, like we often do, the man only gave the Lord an excuse. He blamed other people for his hopelessness. Many times in my life I miss out on the blessing of God because I make excuses for my sin, my failure, or my situation instead of responding to God with humility. Just as He does in our

lives today, Jesus ignored the man's excuse and stepped in with His power and His grace. He is so good to us like that. He meets us right where we are in our hopelessness and provides what we need.

QUESTION 3:

Why would Jesus ask the man, "Do you want to get well?"

JOHN 5:8-11

⁸ "Get up," Jesus told him, "pick up your mat and walk."⁹ Instantly the man got well, picked up his mat, and started to walk. Now that day was the Sabbath,¹⁰ and so the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "This is the Sabbath. The law prohibits you from picking up your mat."¹¹ He replied, "The man who made me well told me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"

Then it happened! After thirty-eight years of suffering, this man's life was instantly changed by a few short words spoken by the Healer, "Get up, pick up your mat and walk." All of the pain and suffering were just gone. Jehovah-Rapha had spoken, and the man was healed—*instantly, in the blink of an eye.*

Jehovah-Rapha was the Hebrew name meaning, "The Lord is my Healer." This name was first used by God when the Israelites were in the wilderness (Ex. 15:26), and much like this man waiting by a pool of water, the Israelites found their healing by the waters at Marah. It was there that God turned the

drinking water from bitter to sweet and provided a promise of health and healing. What the Israelites needed was water to drink to sustain them in the present. What God provided was water that would sustain them in the moment and a promise that would sustain them in the future.

At Bethesda the man's request was simply to receive help getting down into the water. Instead of following the man's request, Jesus just met his need. God excels at exceeding any expectations we may have. When we come to faith in Christ, we are amazed at how deep His love is for us. We are blown away by

SPIRITUAL HEALING

The man in this story had a disability. He couldn't stand or walk until Jesus healed him. List some spiritual disabilities people experience.

Beside each item, list a way Jesus can heal that problem:

	Spiritual Disability	Jesus's Healing
Ex.	A bitter spirit	Jesus saves and gives a heart of kindness
1.		
2.		
3.		

*“The LORD is my shepherd; I have what I need.
He lets me lie down in green pastures; he leads me
beside quiet waters. He renews my life; he leads
me along the right paths for his name’s sake.”*

PSALM 23:1-3

the depths of His sustaining grace in our lives. We can't imagine the short-sightedness of our expectations. Like the Samaritan woman and the man at the pool of Bethesda, we sometimes fail to recognize "the gift of God" (John 4:10), the One with whom we are in a relationship.

This man had been waiting thirty-eight years to be healed, but he was healed on "the wrong day." At least that's how the religious leaders viewed it. Jesus had healed this man on the Sabbath. This wasn't against the law given by God, but it was against the rules developed by the Jewish leaders. They had a set of "guidelines" about what could and could not be done on the Sabbath.

Jesus didn't forget that this was the Sabbath day. He knew what He was doing. This pattern of "breaking of the rules" would become the

theme of Jesus's interaction with the Jewish leaders for the next four chapters of John. The authorities' problem with what happened was not how this man had been healed or who had healed him. They were upset because he was carrying his bed! They considered this work. Notice the lack of compassion. The Jewish leaders showed no concern for this man's suffering, but they were extremely bothered by his "work." We can be thankful that Jesus is full of compassion; He never overlooks our condition. Jesus saw the real need of this man and He sees ours as well.

QUESTION 4:

How has life with Jesus exceeded your expectations?

JOHN 5:19-21

¹⁹ Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, the Son is not able to do anything on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, the Son likewise does these things. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing, and he will show him greater works than these so that you will be amazed. ²¹ And just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son also gives life to whom he wants."



After healing the man, Jesus was confronted by the religious leaders, leading Jesus to make a powerful claim about Himself. The crux of this claim was what would ultimately lead to His crucifixion. “Jesus responded to them, ‘My Father is still working, and I am working also’ ” (John 5:17). Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah. There can be no doubt what Jesus saying, and it was not lost on the Jewish leaders: Jesus was “making himself equal to God” (v. 18).

In verses 18-21, Jesus made three bold claims about Himself and His unique relationship with the Father.

- 1. Jesus saw the Father at work and aligned Himself with that work.** Being God in the flesh, and one with the Spirit, Jesus would have seen clearly what the Father was doing. Today we can see where God is at work because, as believers, we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:10-12).
- 2. Jesus did the work the Father showed Him.** Jesus not only saw what the Father was doing, but He joined Him in it. Jesus participated because His life and mission lined up perfectly with His Father.
- 3. Jesus came to give life.** The very purpose for the Word becoming flesh (John 1:14) was to seek and save the lost. God sent His Son to accomplish this work. God sent His Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but to save it (John 3:17).

Just as Jesus brought physical healing to the man by the Sheep Gate through the power of His words, He has brought us spiritual healing through His death, burial, and resurrection.

QUESTION 5:

What do these words of Jesus teach us about our priorities in life?



