

Use Week of:

## Unit 22 • Session 3

# Jesus Healed a Man Who Was Lame

### BIBLE PASSAGE:

John 5

### STORY POINT:

Jesus healed a man who could not walk.

### KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 53:4-5

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why did God create people? God created people to worship Him, love Him, and show His glory.



**INTRODUCE THE STORY**  
(10–15 MINUTES)  
PAGE 42



**TEACH THE STORY**  
(25–30 MINUTES)  
PAGE 44



**APPLY THE STORY**  
(25–30 MINUTES)  
PAGE 50



Additional resources are available at [gospelproject.com](http://gospelproject.com). For free training and session-by-session help, visit [ministrygrid.com/thegospelproject](http://ministrygrid.com/thegospelproject).

## LEADER Bible Study

Located in the city of Jerusalem, the pool of Bethesda was a place many believed to possess healing powers. People who were sick or disabled went to the pool in hope of being made whole. They believed an angel would stir up the waters, and the first person to get in would be healed. (Some translations include this detail in verse 4; but since the earliest and most accurate manuscripts do not include the detail, most contemporary translations omit it as well.)

Jesus sought out a man at the pool of Bethesda who had been disabled for 38 years. Jesus asked the man, “Do you want to get well?” The man, not recognizing who was talking to him (see John 5:13), explained his inability to get to the pool in time. Filled with compassion, Jesus commanded this man: “Get up, pick up your mat, and walk.” After decades of helplessness, the man was instantly healed. He picked up his mat and walked.

At this time, Jesus slipped away through the crowd. So when the Jewish leaders approached the man, asking questions about the healing and accusing the man of breaking the law by picking up his mat on the Sabbath, the man could not even identify who healed him. Yet Jesus sought out the man a second time. Jesus found the man in the temple and warned him, “Do not sin anymore, so that something worse doesn’t happen to you.”

Jesus cared about the man’s body; He had healed it. But Jesus cared more about the man’s soul. As you teach kids, emphasize that the man at the pool was unable to help himself. Jesus healed him, and he obeyed Jesus’ commands. In a similar way, we are unable to free ourselves from sin. Jesus calls us to trust in Him. When we trust in Jesus, He frees us from the power of sin and death so we can follow Him and obey Him.

# The BIBLE Story

## Jesus Healed a Man Who Was Lame

*John 5*

Jesus went to Jerusalem and stood by the pool of Bethesda (buh THEZ duh). Many people were at the pool who were blind, lame, or paralyzed. **Jesus noticed a man who could not walk. He had been lying there for a long time. Jesus asked him, “Do you**

**want to get well?”**

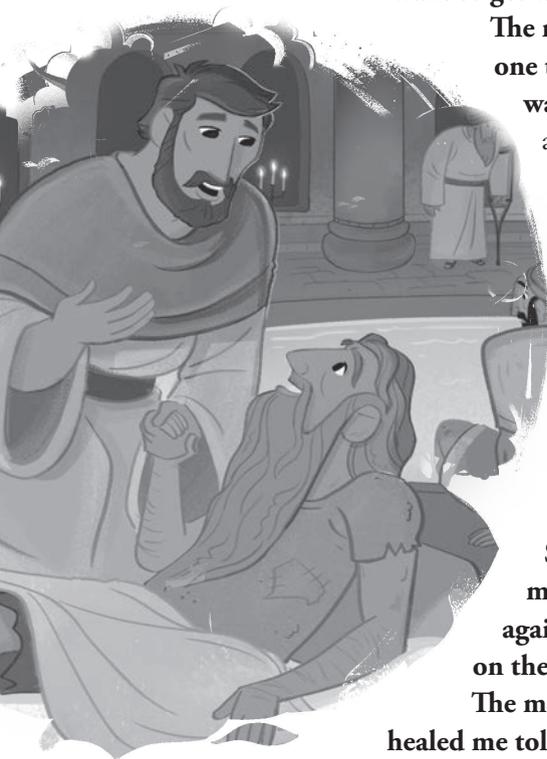
The man answered, “Sir, I have no one to put me in the pool when the water is stirred up. Someone else always gets in before me.” The man thought if he could get into the water, he would be healed.

Jesus told him, “Get up, pick up your mat, and walk.” Right away, the man was miraculously healed. He picked up his mat and started to walk.

This happened on the Sabbath, so the Jews told the man who was healed, “It is against the law to pick up your mat on the Sabbath.”

The man replied, “The man who healed me told me to pick up my mat and walk.”

“Who was the man?” the Jews asked. But the man who was healed did not know who had healed him. By this time, Jesus had slipped away into the crowd.



Later, Jesus found the healed man in the temple. Jesus said to him, “See, you are healed. Do not sin anymore, so that something worse doesn’t happen to you.”

Then the man went to the Jews and told them that Jesus had healed him. So the Jews began persecuting Jesus because He was healing people on the Sabbath.

Jesus told the Jews, “My Father is still working, and I am working too.”

Now the Jews wanted even more to kill Jesus because He wasn’t just breaking their rules about the Sabbath, **He was saying that God is His Father—making Himself equal to God.** Jesus is God’s Son, and He always did what God said was right.

*Christ Connection: The man at the pool was unable to help himself. Jesus healed him, and he obeyed Jesus’ commands. In a similar way, we are unable to free ourselves from sin. Jesus calls us to trust in Him. When we trust in Jesus, He frees us from the power of sin and death so we can follow Him and obey Him.*

## Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Use dramatic conversation:** Stand in one place as you speak Jesus’ dialogue and another place as you speak the dialogue of the man who was lame.
- **Call for active listening:** Challenge kids to count how many times they hear the word *healed*.

# INTRODUCE the Story



**SESSION TITLE:** Jesus Healed a Man Who Was Lame

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** John 5

**STORY POINT:** Jesus healed a man who could not walk.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Isaiah 53:4-5

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why did God create people? God created people to worship Him, love Him, and show His glory.

## Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to discuss what they like to do on Saturdays.

**SAY** • People spend their Saturdays doing all kinds of things. Some people do chores at home, some people play games or sports, and some might even do work. Today we will learn about a time people were angry at Jesus because He did something on the Sabbath, which is a special day of rest that Jewish people have on Saturdays.

## Activity page (5 minutes)

• “A Pool of Words”  
activity page,  
1 per kid  
• pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the “A Pool of Words” activity page. Challenge kids to find the words from the word box hidden in the grid of letters. Words can be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal, but will not be backwards.

**SAY** • Good job finding those key words in that large pool of letters. Today we will learn about a man who could not walk. He wanted to climb into a pool, but he had no one to help him.

## Session starter (10 minutes)

### OPTION 1: Count the tosses

Hold a tennis ball in one hand. Challenge the kids to watch you closely and count how many times you toss the ball into the air. While you are doing this, hold up some number of fingers on your other hand. After tossing the ball for a few minutes, ask the kids how many fingers you were holding up. Chances are, no one will know.

**SAY** • In that game, you were so focused on counting the times I tossed the ball, you missed how many fingers I was holding up. In our story today, we will learn about a time religious leaders focused so hard on a small detail of their religious laws, they missed something important Jesus was doing.

### OPTION 2: Pallet placemats

Provide each kid with two sheets of construction paper. Help the kids cut 1-inch vertical strips from one sheet. Then show them how to fold the other sheet in half and cut slits starting at the fold and going to about an inch from the edge of the paper. Demonstrate how to weave the strips over and under through the slits to make a pallet placemat. You may use clear contact plastic to cover the placemats and make them water resistant.

**SAY** • Today we will hear about a time Jesus told a man who could not walk to pick up his mat and walk. A pallet is like a large mat that a person can lay on. What do you think happened to that man? We'll learn more soon.

**LOW  
PREP**

• tennis ball

• construction paper  
• scissors  
• clear contact plastic  
(optional)

## Transition to teach the story

# TEACH the Story



**SESSION TITLE:** Jesus Healed a Man Who Was Lame

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** John 5

**STORY POINT:** Jesus healed a man who could not walk.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Isaiah 53:4-5

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why did God create people? God created people to worship Him, love Him, and show His glory.

## Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

## Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire

*[Leader enters wearing safety glasses and casual clothing under a greasy apron or coveralls.]*

**LEADER** • Hi, friends! I'm glad you could make it in to my workshop today. As you may know, I am an inventor. That means that I look around at different problems people face and build devices that can solve those problems. They say that necessity is the mother of invention. That basically just means that you are more likely to invent a gadget when you need one than if you don't. That makes me think of an inventor named Benjamin Franklin Palmer.

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

Palmer invented the artificial leg, also sometimes called a prosthetic leg. Before 1846, if a person were missing a leg, he'd use a peg leg, which was basically just a wooden stick. Palmer's invention made walking easier, as his artificial leg had the ability to bend almost like a knee. Since then, prosthetic legs—and

arms, hands, and feet for that matter—have come a long way. Today, modern medical prosthetics are even better than they were when Palmer invented them, but his invention was the start of wonderful things to help people walk.

You know, that reminds me of a Bible story. But Jesus didn't need a special invention to help people walk. I'll tell you about it.

### **Big picture question (1 minute)**

**LEADER** • As we get into our story, let's review our big picture question and answer. ***Why did God create people? God created people to worship Him, love Him, and show His glory.*** When Jesus healed people, they almost always began to give glory to God. Jesus' healings showed the people who He is and how much He loved them. It directed them back to God, to love and worship Him, just as they were created to do. We are created for the same reason! Even the sickness and pain we go through is used by God to help us worship Him and give Him glory.

### **Giant timeline (1 minute)**

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

• Giant Timeline

**LEADER** • We have talked a lot about Jesus' ministry. Jesus traveled around Israel healing, teaching, and doing miracles. Jesus wanted God's people to know God and honor Him as Creator and King. Two weeks ago we learned that **Jesus healed ten men, and one was saved.** Last week we learned that **Jesus healed a woman and raised a girl from the dead.** This week,

we will learn about a time Jesus healed a man who had been unable to walk for nearly 40 years. That is even longer than some of your parents have been alive!

## Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to John 5. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Healed a Man Who Was Lame.”

**LEADER** • Wow, can you believe it? The religious leaders were so caught up in worrying about the law of the Sabbath, they didn’t really stop to think about the wonderful healing Jesus had performed. They didn’t seem to care that the man could now walk, they were upset that he had carried his mat!

I think it’s really cool to realize that the man Jesus healed obeyed Him. When Jesus said, “Pick up your mat and walk,” he did not respond, “Well, I’d like to, but I really can’t. It’s the Sabbath and I’m not supposed to pick up my mat. Plus, I haven’t been able to walk in 38 years, so why would I be able to now? I think I’ll stay put.” Not at all. He obeyed right away. He had faith that Jesus had healed him. That shows us something very interesting about Jesus’ commands.

Jesus tells us what to do, and He gives us the power to obey. Without Jesus, we cannot obey God. But when we have faith in Jesus’ death and resurrection, God forgives our sin and fills us with the Holy Spirit. With His help, we can obey God. We can glorify God because God has given us both the commands and the power to obey them.

- Bibles
- “Jesus Healed a Man Who Was Lame” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

## Christ connection

**LEADER** • The man at the pool was unable to help himself. Jesus healed him, and he obeyed Jesus' commands. In a similar way, we are unable to free ourselves from sin. Jesus calls us to trust in Him. When we trust in Jesus, He frees us from the power of sin and death so we can follow Him and obey Him.

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

## Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the "Unit 22, Session 3" questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about why God allows some people to live with disabilities or lasting sickness. Guide them to discuss how they can know God loves all people.

• "Unit 22, Session 3" Questions from Kids video



## Missions moment (3 minutes)

Before the session, print the "A Special Healing" printable. Select a strong reader to read the story aloud, or read the story to your group.

• "A Special Healing" printable

**LEADER** • We have been learning about many people whom Jesus healed. In today's Bible story, **Jesus healed a man who could not walk.** When missionary Amy Carmichael, or "Amma," asked Jesus to heal her friend, she had faith that He would do it. It's important to remember that even if God doesn't heal the people we ask Him to heal, we can trust Him to use the situation for His glory and our good.

Close in prayer, thanking God for the ministry of Amy Carmichael and praying for any missionaries your church supports.

• Key Passage Poster  
• "By His Wounds (Isaiah 53:4-5)" song

## Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read

together Isaiah 53:4-5. Then sing the key passage song.

**LEADER** • Jesus took on our sickness when He died for our sins. Jesus' resurrection made the way for us to be forgiven of sin and healed from the damage sin causes in our lives.

### **Sing (4 minutes)**

• "Just As I Am" song

**LEADER** • Jesus loves each of us and doesn't expect us to fix our own lives. He accepts us just as we are, but He doesn't leave us in sin! The Holy Spirit transforms believers into new creatures who love and obey God. Sing together "Just As I Am."

### **Pray (2 minutes)**

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

**LEADER** • Father, thank You for sending Jesus to rescue us from sin and death. Help us trust You even in difficult times. Give us courage to obey You out of love and to glorify You always. Amen.

### **Dismiss to apply the story**

## The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



**God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



**We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



**God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



**Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



**We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

# APPLY the Story



**SESSION TITLE:** Jesus Healed a Man Who Was Lame

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** John 5

**STORY POINT:** Jesus healed a man who could not walk.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Isaiah 53:4-5

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why did God create people? God created people to worship Him, love Him, and show His glory.

## Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- masking tape
- beanbag or paper wad

Use masking tape to make a hopscotch board on the floor. Teach the kids how to play hopscotch, tossing a beanbag or paper wad onto the board and hopping through the board without touching the square in which the beanbag landed. Depending on what number the beanbag landed on, that's how many times the kids must try to say the passage from memory. Thank each kid for her efforts.

**SAY** • Great job learning that key passage. Isaiah lived many years before God the Son became a human. Even so, Isaiah's writing was about Jesus. Jesus came to heal people. Some people were healed from sickness, but even more importantly, Jesus heals us from sin and death when we believe that He died for us and rose again. That is the most important healing of all.

## Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Story Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970, optional)

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids use the table of contents at the front of each Bible to find John 5. Remind the kids that John was a disciple of Jesus and one of Jesus' closest friends. He wrote about Jesus so other people could know Jesus is God's Son.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Where was Jesus when He saw the man who could not walk? (*at the pool called Bethesda in Jerusalem, John 5:2*)
2. Why were the religious leaders upset at the man who had been healed? (*He carried his mat on the Sabbath; John 5:10*)
3. Who is Jesus' Father? (*God, John 5:17-18*)
4. How are we similar to the man who could not walk? *Guide kids to discuss the fact that we are helplessly trapped in sin. The Bible describes us as dead in sin. We need Jesus to rescue us and give us new life. Apart from Jesus' complete work on the cross, we could not have salvation.*
5. How can we gain salvation and healing from sin? *Guide kids to think through the message of the gospel. Remind them that we are saved by grace through faith. We cannot earn salvation, but when we have faith that Jesus died for our sins and rose on the third day, God gives us salvation.*
6. Why do you think Jesus told the man to stop sinning? *Guide kids to see that the phrase "so that something worse doesn't happen" is a reference to being separated from God after death. Help the kids see that no matter what physical ailment we may suffer with, we can all have eternal life and hope for the future. Jesus' death and resurrection gives us that hope for eternity spent with God in a restored world.*

**SAY** • **Jesus healed a man who could not walk.** Jesus commanded the man to pick up his mat and walk, and the man immediately obeyed. Jesus gave him the command and the power to obey it.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

## Activity choice (10 minutes)



### OPTION 1: Styles of dress

Display the “How Did Amy Dress?” printable where kids can see it. Distribute copies of kid-friendly magazines for the kids to look through. Call out different styles of dress or uniforms and challenge the kids to see if they can find someone who matches that description in the magazines.

**SAY** • Sometimes how we dress can communicate certain things about us. If you go to another country, the styles people wear might be different. Missionary Amy Carmichael decided that she wanted to dress like the people she was serving.

When she lived in Japan, she dressed in a *kimono*. When she lived in India, she wore a *sari*. She didn't want the clothes she wore in Ireland to distract people from hearing the gospel. God can use even the clothes we wear to help us show the love of Jesus.

### OPTION 2: Impossible commands

Invite the kids to stand on one side of the room. Stand on the opposite side, facing them. Ask them to obey all the commands you will give. Proceed to give them commands that are impossible to obey. See the suggested commands below, or make up your own.

- Jump into the air and wait 10 seconds before letting your feet hit the ground.
- Count to 15 million.
- Rub your belly, pat your head, and clap your hands all at once.
- Balance on one foot for a whole day.
- Throw a rock 500 yards.

• “How Did Amy Dress?” printable  
• kid-friendly magazines

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment found in Teach the Story.

**LOW  
PREP**

After a minute or two, stop the game and ask kids about ways they might be able to obey the commands using special tools or technology. Be prepared to help kids come up with solutions to the impossible commands.

**SAY** • When Jesus said, “Pick up your mat and walk,” it probably sounded like an impossible command. How could a man who could not walk obey such a command? The answer is with Jesus’ power. **Jesus healed a man who could not walk.** When Jesus commanded the man to walk, He also gave the man the healing power to be able to obey. Jesus commands His people not to sin, and He died on the cross and rose again to give us the power to obey.

### Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.

• pencils and crayons  
• paper  
• Bible Story Coloring  
Page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week’s *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.