

STEP 3 –“DO YOU WANT TO GET WELL?”

JOHN 5:1-9 NIV

5 Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. 3 Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed.^{[4] [b]} 5 One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?”

7 “Sir,” the invalid replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.”

8 Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” 9 At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. The day on which this took place was a Sabbath.

Footnote:

John 5:4 – Some manuscripts include here, wholly or in part, *paralyzed—and they waited for the moving of the waters. 4 From time to time an angel of the Lord would come down and stir up the waters. The first one into the pool after each such disturbance would be cured of whatever disease they had.*

Jesus was in Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. Inside the city, near the Sheep Gate, was the pool of Bethesda. It was a beautiful place with five covered porches. It was a popular place. Crowds of sick people—blind, lame, and paralyzed—lay on the porches hoping for healing.

One man had been disabled for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew of his long-term disability, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?”

“Sir, I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.”

Jesus told him, “Get up, pick up your mat, and walk.” Instantly, the man was healed. He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking.

ENTERING THE STORY

John tells us this man had been sick for thirty-eight years—possibly his entire life.

Hope has faded and is all but gone.
Disappointment is normal and expected,
Easy excuses come without thinking.

“Do you want to get well?” It seems like a strange question. Surely, this man wants to get well. But does he? Listen to his answer. He doesn’t say, “Yes.” He says, “I can’t.”

Then come excuses. No one helps me. Someone always gets there first. I am a victim. And maybe he is. He is in a tough position. He has been overlooked. He has tried over and over. He has failed again and again.

Jesus doesn’t argue with him. He doesn’t stir the water. He simply gives him a command.

“Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.”

And he does. Healed. Whole. Mobile.

THINKING IT THROUGH

Jesus heals the 38-year disabled man and calls him to act. The healing is grace given. Receiving the grace and responding appropriately is obedience. The man gets up.

For thirty-eight years, his mat had been his whole world. It was his identity, his security, his excuse, and his routine. He was comfortable with his misery. Jesus disrupts the man's comfortable misery with a question quickly followed by a command.

Get up.

It's a call for obedience rooted in faith, trusting Jesus has the power to provide transformation. This isn't just physical healing. It's a call to a new way of living.

Step 3 of RE:GENERATION says:

WE CHOOSE TO TURN OUR LIVES AND OUR WILLS OVER TO THE CARE OF GOD.

Step 1 says, "I can't."

Step 2 says, "Jesus can."

Step 3 says, "So I will trust Him enough to obey and follow Him, one step at a time."

This is the step where belief turns into action. It's one thing to believe Jesus can heal; it's another to get up when He says, "Walk." Step 3 is where we stop managing our own recovery, our own image, our own outcomes, and start trusting God with direction, not just forgiveness. It's where we stop saying, "I'll follow as long as I understand," and start saying, "I'll follow because I trust the One Who is leading."

Where He leads, I'll follow.

For this disabled man, obedience meant getting up, picking up his mat, and walking into a future he hadn't planned, couldn't imagine, and couldn't control. For us, it often looks like:

- Letting go of habits that feel familiar but keep us stuck in comfortable misery.
- Taking the next step we can't fully see but trusting and obeying The One who can.
- Trusting God with areas we've always tried to manage ourselves.

Step 3 is about surrendering control and simple obedience rooted in faith. The essence of faith is trusting God with the unknown. It's not just believing Jesus can change us, but actually getting up and taking a step of obedience.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

"Do you want to get well?" What does this reveal about desire and willingness in transformation?

Where in your life are you still saying, "I can't," instead of trusting that Jesus can?

What "mats" in your life represent comfort, identity, or excuses that Jesus might be asking you to pick up and leave behind? What would it look like for you to "get up and walk" in obedience today, even if you don't fully understand what's ahead?

What excuses, fears, or obstacles do you experience when Jesus calls you to take a step of faith?

RE:GENERATION

Coming this fall to Sherwood Oaks Bloomington: Re:generation—a Gospel-centered journey of heart transformation. Learn how the Twelve Steps, lead to freedom in Christ. Info meeting this summer!

Re:generation General Information: https://www_regenerationrecovery.org/

Find your struggles (a survey): https://www_regenerationrecovery.org/struggle-finder

12 Steps with Key Concepts: https://www_watermarkresources.com/ministries/regen/12steps