

ENCOUNTERING JESUS

from the GOSPEL OF JOHN

Do You Want To Get Well? June 18, 2017

Day 1: Read John 5:1-5. Physical disabilities are real life issues that affect many. This man's disability plagued him for most, if not all, of his life. While some will face life's challenges nobly and rise above circumstances, others will just wait it out, hoping the issue will just resolve itself. Even if we are physically healthy, we all experience disabilities of the heart, mentally or emotionally. Struggles with desires, habits, fears, insecurities, broken relationships, or unresolved grief are real. As we begin this week, take a moment to pray that God would reveal the disabilities of your own heart. What keeps you from living a more fulfilling life? Do you feel trapped in a hamster wheel? Are there past encounters or abuses that keep you from living a full and normal life? As you encounter Jesus in this story, reflect on areas in your life where you are not well.

Day 2: Read John 5:5-6. Yesterday, we sought to discover disabilities that lie within our own hearts. Do you recall the trials in your life that have left wounds or are there daily reminders that you are not well? Today, let's take another step toward the healing process. Jesus simply asks the man, "Do you want to get well?" Ask yourself the same question. Do you want to get well? Some responses may go something like this: I don't think it is really a problem. I just manage it myself. It is just going to be an on-going issue for me. Either we can respond by allowing our disabilities to define us or we can allow Jesus in to begin to change us. Changing our behaviors often occur only when the pain of staying the same becomes greater than pain of change. What steps have you taken to heal from pain? Recognize the path that you are on. Acknowledge God in this process. Do you know your next step? Pray that the Spirit of God would give you awareness and empower you to take a healing step.

Day 3: Read John 5:7-9. When asked if he wanted healing, the man did not answer directly. Notice he responded immediately with excuses, not recognizing Jesus. This man didn't know Jesus. We all have reasons for living wounded. It can be easy to explain how we have gotten stuck in life

and reluctantly allowed our limitations to hold us back. Stop and think about this. You may have identified your disabilities and expressed a need for healing. What conclusions have you made about your circumstances? Jesus interrupts the man's excuses and simply says, "Get up... and walk." Through encountering Jesus, this man was healed. What does this mean for you? Consider the reasons we use that hold us back. What would it look like to "Get up...and walk."?

Day 4: Read John 5:10-13. The Jewish law forbade a person from doing work on the Sabbath and the penalties were severe. This included things as simple as carrying a load. These Jews were the religious leaders of the day and they spoke with the authority of the Law. Jesus, however, speaks freedom to us with much greater authority as the Son of God. "... through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. 8:2) As you continue to take steps toward healing, there may be those who will discourage you in your journey, but through it all, keep your eyes on Jesus. Spend time in prayer and scripture so that you can recognize the voice of truth. Consider the previous days' devotional times. Especially if facing adversity, pray that God would reveal His truth to you as you seek Him today.

Day 5: Read John 5:14. Jesus is not suggesting that the man's disability was a direct result of his sin. Rather He was saying that a life of sin would have greater consequences than living with a life-long disability. Jesus confronts this man. He has been changed physically but not changed spiritually. Jesus desires a healing of the heart more than a physical healing. He heals and transforms us, so we know and follow Him. Wherever you are in your disability of the heart, trust in His guidance. Jesus reminds us that "In this world, you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." (Jn. 16:33). Take heart! Whether you've experienced healing or are waiting for it, our response is to follow Him.

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John 5:1-15

Jesus sees my _____. Do I? John 5:1-3

Jesus sees my _____. Do I? John 5:5-6

Jesus has a _____ me. Do I? John 5:4,7

Jesus has the _____ me. Do I? John 5:8,9

Pharisees care more about _____.
Do I? John 5:10-13

Jesus cares more about _____. Do I? John 5:14,15

Jesus calls me to _____ what _____ and _____ what I'm _____. _____? John 5:8

Next Steps: This week's devotional will help you apply this message to your own 'disabilities'. As you read:

1. Ask God to show you any 'disabilities of the heart' that you've resigned yourself to.
2. Underline each question in the devo. Write out your response in the form of a prayer.
3. Identify the next step God is calling you to. Detail when and how. Take the first step!
4. Share your decision with a friend. Ask for prayer, encouragement and accountability.