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~ *Rise Up and Walk* ~

You can learn much more about this story by doing these three things:

1. Read the story in John 5:1-30. I have not included all of it. You should also read John 5:31-47.
2. Discover key cultural and historical insights.
3. Answer the reflective questions.

1. Read the text of the story from the New American Standard Bible and from the Easy Read Version

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John 5 - NASB	John 5 - New Living Translation
<p>5 After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.</p> <p>² Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep <i>gate</i> a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porticoes. ³ In these lay a multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame, and withered, [waiting for the moving of the waters; ⁴ for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool and stirred up the water; whoever then first, after the stirring up of the water, stepped in was made well from whatever disease with which he was afflicted.] ⁵ A man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying <i>there</i>, and knew that he had already been a long time <i>in that condition</i>, He [*]said to him, "Do you wish to get well?" ⁷ The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I am coming, another steps down before me." ⁸ Jesus [*]said to him, "Get up, pick up your pallet and walk." ⁹ Immediately the man became well, and picked up his pallet and <i>began</i> to walk.</p> <p>Now it was the Sabbath on that day. ¹⁰ So the Jews were saying to the man who was cured, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not permissible for you to carry your pallet." ¹¹ But he answered them, "He who made me well was the one who said to me, 'Pick up your pallet and walk.'" ¹² They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Pick up <i>your pallet</i> and walk'?" ¹³ But the man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away while there was a crowd in <i>that</i> place. ¹⁴ Afterward Jesus [*]found him in the temple and said to him, "Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you." ¹⁵ The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. ¹⁶ For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath. ¹⁷ But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working."</p> <p>¹⁸ For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.</p> <p>¹⁹ Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to</p>	<p>5 Afterward Jesus returned to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish holy days. ² Inside the city, near the Sheep Gate, was the pool of Bethesda, with five covered porches. ³ Crowds of sick people—blind, lame, or paralyzed—lay on the porches. ⁵ One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, "Would you like to get well?"</p> <p>⁷ "I can't, sir," the sick man said, "for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me."</p> <p>⁸ Jesus told him, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!"</p> <p>⁹ Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking! But this miracle happened on the Sabbath, ¹⁰ so the Jewish leaders objected. They said to the man who was cured, "You can't work on the Sabbath! The law doesn't allow you to carry that sleeping mat!"</p> <p>¹¹ But he replied, "The man who healed me told me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"</p> <p>¹² "Who said such a thing as that?" they demanded.</p> <p>¹³ The man didn't know, for Jesus had disappeared into the crowd. ¹⁴ But afterward Jesus found him in the Temple and told him, "Now you are well; so stop sinning, or something even worse may happen to you." ¹⁵ Then the man went and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had healed him.</p> <p>¹⁶ So the Jewish leaders began harassing Jesus for breaking the Sabbath rules. ¹⁷ But Jesus replied, "My Father is always working, and so am I." ¹⁸ So the Jewish leaders tried all the harder to find a way to kill him. For he not only broke the Sabbath, he called God his Father, thereby making himself equal with God.</p> <p>¹⁹ So Jesus explained, "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing. In fact, the Father will show him how to do even</p>

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them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and *the Father* will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel. ²¹ For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. ²² For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, ²³ so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

²⁴ “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

²⁵ Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; ²⁷ and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is *the* Son of Man. ²⁸ Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, ²⁹ and will come forth; those who did the good *deeds* to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil *deeds* to a resurrection of judgment.

³⁰ “I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

³¹ “If I *alone* testify about Myself, My testimony is not true. ³² There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true.

³³ You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth. ³⁴ But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. ³⁵ He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

³⁶ But the testimony which I have is greater than *the testimony of* John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.

³⁷ And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. ³⁸ You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.

³⁹ You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; ⁴⁰ and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life. ⁴¹ I do not receive glory from men; ⁴² but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. ⁴³ I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. ⁴⁴ How can you believe, when you receive glory from

greater works than healing this man. Then you will truly be astonished. ²¹ For just as the Father gives life to those he raises from the dead, so the Son gives life to anyone he wants. ²² In addition, the Father judges no one. Instead, he has given the Son absolute authority to judge, ²³ so that everyone will honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son is certainly not honoring the Father who sent him.

²⁴ “I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life.

²⁵ “And I assure you that the time is coming, indeed it’s here now, when the dead will hear my voice—the voice of the Son of God. And those who listen will live. ²⁶ The Father has life in himself, and he has granted that same life-giving power to his Son. ²⁷ And he has given him authority to judge everyone because he is the Son of Man. ²⁸ Don’t be so surprised! Indeed, the time is coming when all the dead in their graves will hear the voice of God’s Son, ²⁹ and they will rise again. Those who have done good will rise to experience eternal life, and those who have continued in evil will rise to experience judgment. ³⁰ I can do nothing on my own. I judge as God tells me. Therefore, my judgment is just, because I carry out the will of the one who sent me, not my own will.

³¹ “If I were to testify on my own behalf, my testimony would not be valid. ³² But someone else is also testifying about me, and I assure you that everything he says about me is true. ³³ In fact, you sent investigators to listen to John the Baptist, and his testimony about me was true. ³⁴ Of course, I have no need of human witnesses, but I say these things so you might be saved. ³⁵ John was like a burning and shining lamp, and you were excited for a while about his message. ³⁶ But I have a greater witness than John—my teachings and my miracles. The Father gave me these works to accomplish, and they prove that he sent me. ³⁷ And the Father who sent me has testified about me himself. You have never heard his voice or seen him face to face, ³⁸ and you do not have his message in your hearts, because you do not believe me—the one he sent to you.

³⁹ “You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me! ⁴⁰ Yet you refuse to come to me to receive this life.

⁴¹ “Your approval means nothing to me, ⁴² because I know you don’t have God’s love within you. ⁴³ For I have come to you in my Father’s name, and you have rejected me. Yet if others come in their own name, you gladly welcome them. ⁴⁴ No wonder you can’t believe! For you gladly honor each other, but you don’t care about the honor that comes from the one who alone is God.

⁴⁵ “Yet it isn’t I who will accuse you before the Father. Moses will accuse you! Yes, Moses, in whom you put your hopes. ⁴⁶ If you really believed Moses, you would believe me, because he wrote about me. ⁴⁷ But since you don’t

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one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the <i>one and only</i> God? ⁴⁵ Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. ⁴⁶ For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"	believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?"
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2. Discover key cultural and historical insights.

- The pool of Bethzatha was located to the northeast of the city just outside the walls. It was originally built to supply water for the temple, but by Jesus' time this function seems to have been superseded with newer water sources, and it seems to have acquired a reputation for healing qualities. The pool had five porches – the four sides and one going through the middle.
- Sick people lying beside the pool were there not only for healing but also to beg. Such beggars were the socially expendable. In this category were prostitutes, the poorest day laborers, tanners (forced to live outside cities because of their odor), peddlers, bandits, sailors, gamblers, usurers, donkey drivers, dung collectors, and even some merchants. They would be forced out of cities at night although they could be in a city during the day to look for work or to beg.
- We do not know if the man had been at this place for 38 years. He could have been with friends or family for part of that time. But by the time this event takes place, he seems friendless. He has no one to put him into the pool of water. He is friendless and family-less.
- The command to pick up his mat would violate the Law of Moses and its reiteration in Jeremiah 17:21-22.
- The Sabbath is a day for rest. But Jesus says God is not resting but working on the Sabbath! Israelites were free for service to God, not for service to others. Jesus is showing that the man is free to serve God who is working.
- This man was a friendless outcast, not attached to anyone or to any group. What caused him to be in this condition – to be an outcast? Jesus told him not to sin lest he risk a greater trouble – being outcast again and having no one to remember him or bury him.
- In the ancient Middle East, honor comes from one's family. Jesus claims honor for himself by claiming a special relationship with God.
- To claim honor for oneself in the Middle East was to play the fool. Honor is always something given by others. Jesus does not claim honor for himself, (see 5:31).
- Jesus does not accept glory from others; he is rejecting a core value of the Mediterranean world, (see 5:41).
- In the first century, many places like this were found in the ancient world. They were places of healing and were dedicated to the worship of the god, Asclepius. After the second Judean revolt in 135 C.E., the emperor Hadrian turned it into a healing sanctuary dedicated to the god Serapis.

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3. Answer these reflective questions.

Jesus went to a place of need. Do you believe this was a habit of Jesus? Why did he heal only one man? Why do you think Jesus walked away without revealing who he was?

As the man was walking, the religious leaders commanded him to stop because he was carrying a load on the Sabbath. Do you think that mattered to the man? How do you think he felt when the leaders told him he was breaking the Sabbath rules? Was he really breaking them?

When Jesus and the man had their second conversation, Jesus told him not to sin anymore lest something worse happen to him. What do you think this meant?

Jesus made many claims about himself on this day. He said:

- God was his Father**
- The Son could only do what the Father was showing him to do.**
- God would show him greater things.**
- God loved him.**
- The Son can give life to whom he wishes.**
- He will be the judge of all people.**
- All people will honor the Son**
- He can give eternal life.**

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What does this teach you about Jesus? Which of these is most important to you?
