

In God's hands - God brings us life through Jesus

What sort of things do you enjoy doing to keep active? Going for walks? Riding your bike? Skipping? In today's story we hear about a man who, because he was unwell, wasn't able to do anything active at all - until the day he met Jesus!



Watch our video <https://youtu.be/mn8kaiM4Q1U> where Margaret and Scruff tell the story.

Read the story in the Bible in John 5:1-15 or read the simple version of the story on the last page below.

I wonder what surprised you most about this story?

I wonder why you think Jesus asked the man if he wanted to get well?

I wonder how the man felt when Jesus told him to get up and walk? He had been hoping that someone would help him into the water so this wasn't what he was expecting!

What a difference it made to the man, meeting Jesus that day, he had been ill for 38 years and now he could walk! Jesus gave the man a sort of new life because his old life was lying on a mat by the pool each day and his new life was walking and being able to do lots of things he hadn't been able to do before. And Jesus makes a difference to us too, when we are friends with him and follow him he gives us new life, a life to live with him. This is the life God wants all of us to have - life to the full; real life that goes on for ever - because if we live to please God, we will live with him for ever.

Pray together - spend a few moments thinking about people who need to know Jesus and the life he brings: friends, family, people in the news or people in other countries who have not heard about Jesus.

On a piece of paper draw around one of your hands and then cut out the hand shape. Write the names of the people you have been thinking about on it or you could write one name on each finger on the hand shape.

As you look at the hands pray together asking God to touch these people's lives.

Activity - First of all, fill a rucksack or bag with some heavy objects - maybe some books or if you are in the garden some bricks or stones.

Thinking back to the story, what did Jesus do and say to the man? (He fixed his legs and told him not to sin so he could 'walk with God'.)

What do you think 'sin' is? (Walking away from God and not living the way he wants us to, doing or saying wrong things.)

'Sins' are a bit like the heavy objects in the rucksack - try lifting it up - and our sins make it harder for us to walk with God.

Spend a few moments thinking of things you did last week that didn't please God. When we are sorry, God forgives us. It's as if the weights are taken out of the rucksack so we can walk comfortably with God again.

Take some time to say sorry to God, each of you taking objects out of the rucksack as you do so. Feel the difference!

Make a poster or a card with this verse from the Bible:

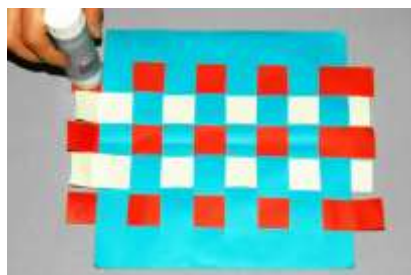
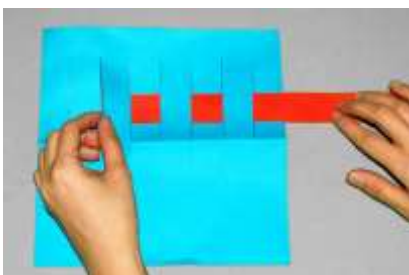
Anyone who belongs to Christ is a new person.

The past is forgotten, and everything is new.

Corinthians 5:17 (CEV)

Make a reminder of the story - Jesus told the man to pick up his mat and walk. Why not have a go at some weaving and make a small mat. You could weave some paper strips together as Margaret shows on our video or if you have some wool or string you could use that.

To weave with wool, find a piece of strong cardboard and cut out a rectangle. Make some cuts on both of the short ends about 1cm long and about 1-2cm apart. Wind some wool or string around the cardboard and into the slits as in the picture and tie it off at the back. Weave lengths of wool back and forth through the long threads to make a mat. When you have finished weaving cut across the threads on the back to remove the cardboard and tie the ends together neatly. Trim the ends.



The healing at the pool

In the city of Jerusalem there was a pool of water called "Bethesda". It was a beautiful pool with porches built around it so that people could sit and rest. Sometimes the water in the pool was very calm. But sometimes the water would bubble up.

Many sick people liked to go to the Pool of Bethesda. Some were blind or paralysed. Others could not walk. They came to the pool and waited for the water to bubble up. People believed that if they touched the bubbly water before it stopped bubbling then they would be made well.

One day Jesus passed by the pool and saw one of the men lying down beside the pool all alone. He noticed that the man was very sad so he stopped to talk to him.

The man could not stand or walk because his legs did not work properly. He was sad because he had been unable to walk for thirty-eight years. Every time the water bubbled up the man tried to get to it and touch it but he could not. He was also sad because he had no friends to carry him to the pool. Jesus asked the man, "Do you want to get well?"

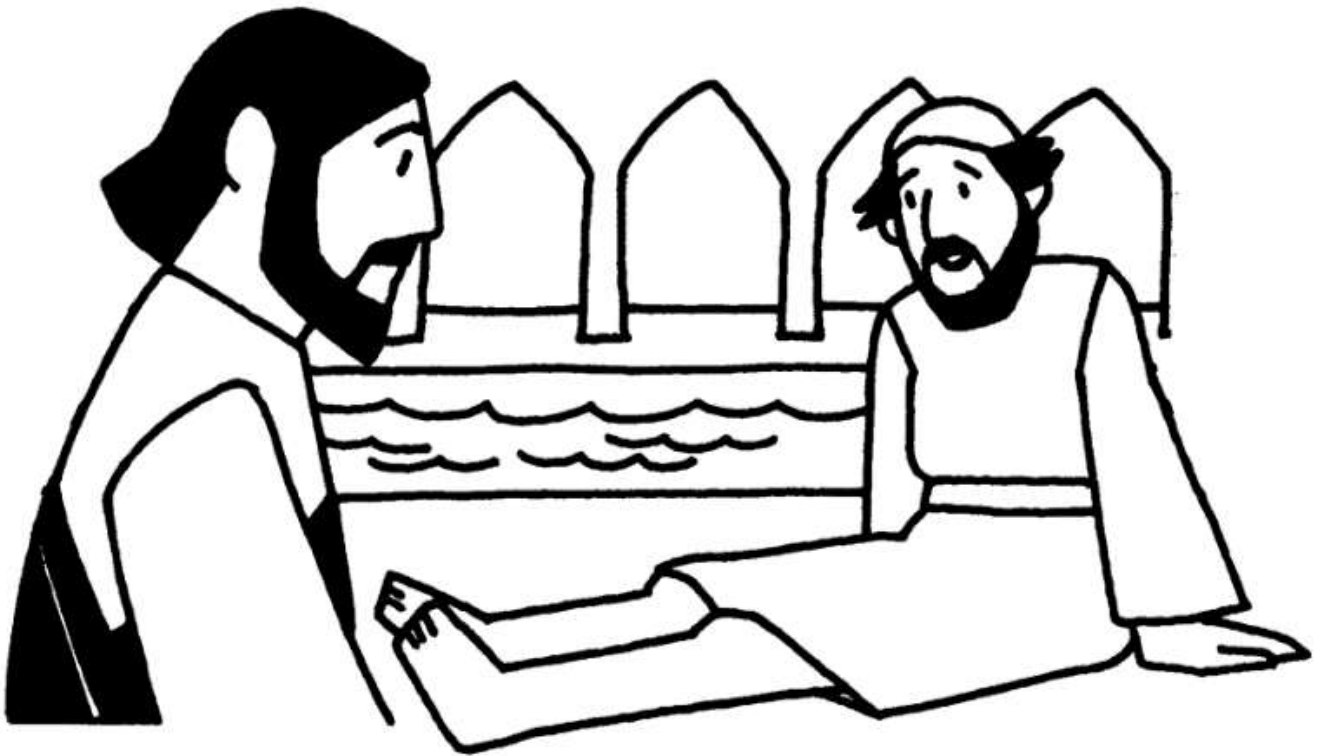
The man told Jesus that he really wanted to get better but there was no one to carry him to the bubbly water. He was very sad. He thought that no one cared that he was sad.

But Jesus cared that the man was sad! He listened to the man and then he said something very surprising: "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk."

As soon as Jesus said this to the man the man was cured. For the first time in thirty-eight years he was able to stand up. He did just as Jesus said and picked up his mat and walked.

The man was so excited that he did not even notice Jesus slipping back into the crowd. People asked the man who had made him well. The man could not answer because he did not even know the name of the man who had healed him.

Later he saw Jesus at the temple and Jesus told the man to always be good. He was so happy to see Jesus. He was happy to see the man who had made him well.



A man by a pool John 5:1-18