**1. Motivate**

What gimmick or sales pitch did you buy into but later regret?

* “as seen on TV”
* the first 100 callers will receive …
* it slices, it dices, …
* free gift with every purchase
* miracles results guaranteed - you WILL lose weight
* one size fits all

A video introduction to the lesson is available. View it at <https://tinyurl.com/3bp2cp6e> If there is no wi-fi where you teach, it is best to download the video file to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/5xw75u32>

* endorsed by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (famous person)
* only 12 items left in stock

**2. Transition**

So often those special offers just don’t meet expectations.

* But, Jesus works in a way that goes *beyond* our expectations.

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Jesus Does What We Cannot

Listen for who could help.

John 5:1-7 (NIV) Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews. 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. 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."

Note the setting for the encounter described in these verses.

* Near the sheep gate
* Beside a pool
* Surrounded by 5 colonnades or porches
* Adjacent to the temple

Who were people gathered around the pool, why were they gathered there?

* disabled in some way …
* blind, lame, paralyzed

What was the situation of one particular man lying at the pool?

* invalid for 38 years
* Jesus saw him there, learned his condition

What did Jesus ask him? How did the man respond?

* “Do you want to get well?”
* I have no one to help me into the pool (when the water was agitated)
* common belief was an angel caused ripples in the pool, first person in would be healed

After 38 years, how would he still have any hope to get better?

* in one way, he seemed to be resigned to the problem of not being able to be the first in
* on the other hand, he still came daily, hoping for something good to happen
* seemed to be the only thing he had going for him

Why did Jesus ask him if he wished to get well? Isn’t that an obvious question? Why is this question important/necessary?

* wanted to open up conversation, engage the man
* showed the man He realized and saw the problem
* showed an interest in the man’s need
* wanted the man to face the reality of his need
* needed the man to admit he had little or no hope of his current situation improving

The man may have felt like life had treated him unfairly. In what way do *you* think life is unfair?

* bad stuff happens to good people
* bad people seem to thrive and flourish
* the government is not helping us, seems to make things worse
* sometimes seems like God doesn’t hear my prayers

When/why do we tend to get impatient with God’s timing in our lives?

* involves health problem
* involves a hoped for (prayed for) change of attitude in someone
* involves financial or work problems
* a problem involving legal issues, government

This man was depending on a random water flow and some way to jump into the pool. On what in life, other than God, do we sometimes depend?

* some people are depending hopefully on the lottery
* that someone else will change their attitude
* that a new job opening will become available
* that the doctors will find a cure for your situation
* that a better boss, a better doctor, a better teacher will enter into the situation

3.2 Jesus Does More than We Expect

Listen for what only Jesus could do.

John 5:8-11 (NIV) 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, 10 and so the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat." 11 But he replied, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"

Note the three-pronged admonition did Jesus give to the man.

* Get up
* Pick up your mat
* Walk

What might have encouraged the man to stand, even though he hadn’t been able to do so for 38 years?

* nothing to lose
* was encouraged, challenged to obey the obvious authority of Jesus
* might have been a reflex action – the man said “get up”

What were the religious leaders more concerned about?

* this is the Sabbath
* you’re carrying that mat, that’s defined as work
* you are not supposed to do work on the Sabbath
* that issue was more important than the fact that the man had just been healed

Why do you suppose Jesus choose to heal this man on the Sabbath?

* this was the day Jesus encountered the disabled man,
* no good reason to wait a day and say, “Come and see me tomorrow.”
* Jesus could also be raising the issue with the religious leaders
* the definition of “work” by the scribes and pharisees had become ridiculous
* they were missing the point of God’s command to keep the Sabbath holy, special, different, unique from other days

When has someone tried to squelch your freedom in Christ with religious rules or regulations?

* the role of sports participation or attendance on Sunday
* church music preference
* how to dress when attending church
* choices of entertainment
* which Bible translation/paraphrase you use

Why do some people care more about keeping certain "religious" rules than they do about developing a meaningful relationship with Jesus?

* they have legalistic mindset
* they hope to please God by doing or not doing certain things
* they think God is going to judge by weighing our good deeds against our sins …
* their religion is a religion of deeds, not a relationship
* Satan has them fooled/confused about God’s love and forgiveness

3.3 Authority to Do Only what God Does

Listen for an assassination plan.

John 5:17-20 (NIV) Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working." 18 For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God. 19 Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. 20 For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these.

What words and phrases point to as the source of Jesus’ power to act?

* the Son can do nothing by Himself
* Jesus did nothing by Himself (as a human)
* He does what He sees the Father do
* His power comes from the God the Father

What can we learn from the fact that the Son gives life to “whom He wishes” or “to whom He is pleased to give it”?

* Jesus is pleased to give new life, spiritual life, eternal life to all who believe
* Consider 2 Peter 3:9 (NIV) *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*
* We see agreement among the members of the Trinity – both the Father and the Son desire to give spiritual life to all people

What did Jesus say that suggests what the Father does through the Son is not limited? What was at least one greater work that the Son would do?

* you will be amazed
* even greater things than this healing God will do
* God the Father has/will raise people from the dead
* God the Son gives life to whom He is pleased to do so
* be raised from the dead

How can *we* join God and participate in His work?

* be convinced/convicted of God’s power, authority, and love for us
* listen to, heed God’s direction
* become involved in ongoing outreach of the church
* involvement in various church ministries – music, multi-media, greeting, prayer ministry, outreach, teaching, children’s ministries, office help

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

Application

Submit to authority.

* Reflect upon areas of your life where you have not submitted to God’s authority.
* Consider the difference it would make if you did so today.
* Write those things down and surrender them to Him.

Share gratitude.

* Gratitude helps with moments of skepticism.
* Share with your group or a friend things you are grateful for in your life.
* Be sure to direct the thanks to God.

Celebrate with others.

* Find a way to celebrate with someone in your group or family something that the Lord has done recently in his or her life.
* Spend time worshiping God for His faithfulness.

Cryptogram Puzzle



Members of a mission trip in Loupezil Virlip received these two parts of a coded message from believers of a local congregation. Most of the letters in the key are there. Use the letters in the lower row to match the blanks in the message and place the correct letter. Forward the contents of the message to your mission trip committee. Technical help and more fun Family Activities are found at <https://tinyurl.com/5xw75u32>