

STEP BY STEP THROUGH YOUR LENTEN JOURNEY BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Week Three: Do You Want to be Healed?

Healing of the Paralytic

“Do you want to be healed?” was the question Jesus asked on Sabbath at the pool of Bethesda. What does it mean to be healed? For many, it means not having pain, but is that really what healing is? In Armenian, the word for health is առողջութիւն (*aroghchootyoon*) and literally can be translated as “towards wholeness”. True health is being whole in body, soul, and spirit. When we are not whole, we are broken and need to be put together again.

Read John 5:1-15

What do you think?

1. Where in your life are you broken? Where do you need healing to take place? Is it emotional, physical, spiritual, or any other healing that is needed?
2. The man has put all his hope of healing in the pool and someone to take him into it a right time. Where do you put your hope of healing? Do you turn to God or something/someone else?
3. Why would Jesus ask if he wanted to be healed? What kind of a question was that?
4. How do you understand Jesus’s statement “take up your bed and walk”? Think of times when God transformed your life so that you would not return to the place you were in?
5. Is there a right time or place to heal or to be healed? Why was Jesus and the paralytic blamed for breaking the Law? Should they have waited until Sabbath was over?

Sometimes healing means to give up firm habits or ways of comfort we have surrounded ourselves with or doing something we don’t want to do or even feel ready to do. This can include attention and care we get in our brokenness or simple pleasures that make us feel better but aren’t necessarily good for us. When Jesus asked the man if he wanted to be healed, the paralytic answers that he has no one to take him into the pool. That is not what Jesus asked him, but the man thought Jesus was asking if he needed help getting into the pool. Christ asks the paralytic if he wants his life to change because after this healing, he will no longer be able to beg, and his life will be completely different.

In hope and desperation for help we often might misunderstand God’s instructions or what opportunities are laid before us. We often think of the healing of physical wounds, forgetting about the wellbeing of our soul. Our spiritual and physical wellbeing is tightly intertwined, and one often depends on the other. Jesus wants us to fully believe and trust in Him and not worry. In Luke 12:25-26 He says, **“Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life?”** Since you cannot do this very little thing, why would you worry about anything at all?

The period of Great Lent is a time of healing for our souls. It is not a time of bargaining or negotiation with our Lord, nor is it a time to test Him. This is exactly what Jesús means in John 4:48 when He says, *“Unless you people see signs and wonders you will never believe.”* It is a time of transformation by humbling ourselves in prayer, fasting and almsgiving, by inviting our Lord and Savior into our homes and hearts to heal us and lead us toward a life of holiness and wholeness.

St. Gregory of Narek prays it best in his Book of Lamentations:

With every possible facet of the art of healing, Lord Jesus, cause of all healthy life, mighty heavenly king, God of all things apprehended by the mind and by the eye, “Thou are in me,” in the words of the prophet, “And behold, through this union with you through these words, your light shall break forth in me to heal my breath and body,” you who are mighty and invincible. Amen. (Prayer 43 A)