

Dealing with Life's Struggles
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In John 5, we hear of an invalid who for 38 years struggled to get around, had no friends to help him and was looked down upon by some who believed his disability was the result of sin in his life. The man believed his only hope was to get into a nearby pool that was noted for its water that would occasionally stir. People believed that angels would stir the pool and if they could get in while this occurred, they could be healed. Unfortunately, he was too slow to make it into the water on time and so he remained embroiled in his struggles for many years.

I think we can identify with a man like this; we have our struggles too. Many of us battle things like health, finances, addiction, loneliness and other difficult challenges. How do we deal with the struggles of life? We find help by looking at another character who also appears in the story; Jesus. Jesus saw the man, spent time with him and asked him if he wanted to be healed. These three encouraging things are what Jesus still provides for us in all our struggles. First, Jesus sees our struggles. Sometimes we might feel as though nobody knows what we're going through, but that's not true, Jesus does. Second, Jesus comes near to us in our struggles. Sometimes people see our struggle, but want nothing to do with us, but that's not true of Jesus; He wants everything to do with us. Third, Jesus wants to provide help to us in all our struggles. I hope that you are encouraged by his awareness and presence and that you take advantage of the help He offers. The man in the story struggled with that last part.

When asked if he wanted to be healed, he didn't say yes, instead he told Jesus about his desire to get into the pool to find healing. He failed to see that Jesus was able to help him and I think sometimes we do the same thing. In health struggles, sometimes we rely only on doctors and medicine, but fail to include Doctor Jesus in the equation. When we call out to Jesus in prayer, we may not always be physically healed, but it does tend to bring us a sense of peace in the storm. In struggles with addiction, sometimes we rely solely on willpower, but we need to lean on the words that Jesus spoke about overcoming strongholds in our life. There is powerful guidance found in scripture that can help us towards finding victory over any enemy. When sad in life, sometimes we see material possessions as the solution to our blues, but it's when we turn to Jesus and ask Him to use us in service unto Him that a renewed and lasting joy is found.

In all our troubles, know that Jesus is aware of them, He's near to us in them and wants to help us with them all.