

# *To Be Made Well*

*Healing Stories in the Gospels  
Small Group Leader Guide*

*Pool of Bethsaida*  
John 5: 1-9

*Bleeding-Courageous Woman / Jarius Daughter*  
Mark 5:21-43; Matthew 9:18-26; Luke 8:41-56

*Bent Over Woman*  
Luke 13:10-17

*Four Friends*  
Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:18-26; Matthew 9:2-8

*Demoniac*  
Luke 8:26-39; Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20

*Blind Bartimaeus*  
Mark 10:46-52; Matt 20:29-34; Luke 18:35-43

# To Be Made Well

*Pool of Bethsaida*

*John 5: 1-9*

## **Do You Want to be Made Well?**

**John 5:1-9** Pool of Bethsaida

### **Message Summary**

John 5:1-15 in our healing story Jesus invites this man to move beyond a life defined by waiting, feelings of helplessness or just feeling stuck. When Jesus says, "Get up, take your mat and walk," it is more than just a physical healing it is a call to stop remaining stuck in old patterns. The account highlights that transformation begins in response to Jesus' invitation to rise and step into new life.

### **Small Group Discussion Questions**

- Why do you think Jesus asked the man, "Do you want to be made well?" even though his condition seemed obvious? What might this question reveal about responsibility or readiness for change?
- What are some areas in life or society where we've grown comfortable with our own brokenness instead of wanting healing?
- The man's response to Jesus' question "Do you want to be made well," is to explain his situation instead of saying yes. How does the man's response to Jesus reflect his understanding or misunderstanding of what it means to be healed?
- When Jesus invites change, do we offer excuses, explanations, or honest trust?
- After being healed, Jesus tells the man to "take up your mat and walk." What might this symbolize about leaving behind one's past or taking responsibility for a new life?
- At the end of the story the man is questioned for carrying his mat. How do we handle criticism or resistance when we seek to follow Jesus?

### **Closing Prayer**

*Jesus, we are humbled in knowing that you see us where we are. Without judgement or criticism, rather purely out of love for us you offer to all the invitation to be made well. Lord, give us the courage to rise, to lean into the resources you offer so that we might leave behind what keeps us stuck so that we may embrace the life you offer. Strengthen our faith and help us trust in your healing work. In the name of Jesus, the one who offers healing. Amen.*

# To Be Made Well

*Bleeding Woman / Jarius Daughter*

*Mark 5:21-43; Matthew 9:18-26; Luke 8:41-56*

## **Jesus Willingly Enters Our Mess**

**Luke 8:41-56** Bleeding Woman / Jarius Daughter

### **Message Summary**

Jesus willingly steps into our human messiness and moves toward us-people who are broken in body, mind or spirit. In both miracles Jesus shows love and offers healing in the present while also pointing toward God's promise of eternal life. This passage invites us to trust Jesus' healing power and to join him in the dirty, hard, holy work of loving our neighbors and healing a broken world.

### **Small Group Discussion Questions**

- What risks do the bleeding woman and Jarius take in coming to Jesus?
- Where do you see Jesus restoring not just bodies, but relationships, community, and hope in this scripture?
- Where do you see a need for this type of holistic healing in your community or church?
- How does knowing that Jesus willingly enters our mess shape the way we respond to our own struggles or the struggles of others?
- What might it look like for us (as individuals or as a church) to "get our hands dirty" and walk alongside others in their pain or challenges?

### **Closing Prayer**

*Gracious and merciful God,*

*You are not afraid of our wounds, our doubts, or our brokenness. In Jesus, you draw near, touching our pain and restoring us to life, community, and hope. As we journey together, give us faith like the bleeding woman and courage like Jairus—to trust you even when pain and fear feel overwhelming. Send us out with willing hearts and open hands, ready to join Christ in the healing of the world, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

# To Be Made Well

*Bent Over Woman*

*Luke 13:10-17*

## **Being Untied**

**Luke 13:10-17** Bent Over Woman

### **Message Summary**

This sermon reflects on Jesus healing a woman who had been bent over for eighteen years and the controversy that followed because the healing took place on the Sabbath. While the miracle itself is striking, the deeper message centers on freedom—being “untied” from what binds us.

Jesus refuses to be constrained by rigid rules that prevent compassion. When challenged by synagogue leaders, he exposes their hypocrisy: if animals can be untied and cared for on the Sabbath, how much more should a woman be set free? The sermon highlights a key insight from the Greek text—this woman does not straighten herself; rather, she is straightened. God is the one doing the work.

The sermon then turns inward, asking how often we, like the synagogue leader, insist on how God should act. We long for miracles that fix what is broken—healing disease, restoring relationships, removing suffering. While such miracles do happen and are beautiful, they are not the only ways God heals.

Through hospice stories, the sermon shows that sometimes God’s most profound healing happens not by removing pain, but by meeting us within it—bringing peace, reconciliation, courage, and new life even when circumstances remain unresolved. Fixating on one kind of miracle can keep us “bent,” unable to receive the healing God is offering.

The sermon concludes with hope: God sees us, touches us, and works beyond our expectations. True freedom comes when we release control, remain open to God’s work, and allow ourselves to be untied and made whole in whatever way God chooses.

### **Small Group Discussion Questions**

- What stands out to you most in the story of Jesus healing the bent-over woman? Why?
- How does the idea that the woman “was straightened” by God (rather than straightening herself) change how you understand healing and freedom?
- In what ways can rules, expectations, or assumptions sometimes prevent us from recognizing God’s work?

- The sermon suggests that we often want God to fix things in a specific way. Where do you see that tendency in your own life?
- Can you think of a time when God's healing came in an unexpected form—peace, acceptance, reconciliation, or courage rather than a "solution"?
- What might it look like to ask God to "untie" you right in the middle of an unresolved or painful situation?
- How does the story of Ellie help expand our understanding of what a miracle can be?
- What practices (prayer, openness, surrender, trust) might help us stay receptive to God's work, even when life bends us low?

### **Closing Prayer**

*Gracious and loving God,*

*You see us fully—every place where we are bent, weary, afraid, or bound.*

*You are not limited by our rules, our expectations, or our understanding.*

*Reach out and touch us, just as you touched the woman in the synagogue.*

*Untie us from all that holds us captive—*

*from fear, from grief, from the need to control,*

*from the belief that you can only work in one way.*

*Give us courage to face the realities of our lives,*

*and faith to trust that you are at work even when things remain unfinished.*

*Align our hearts with your Spirit,*

*so that we may receive the healing you are offering,*

*and be made whole in the ways you know we need most.*

*Set us free, O God,*

*and straighten us according to your loving will.*

*Amen.*

# To Be Made Well

## Four Friends

*Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:18-26; Matthew 9:2-8*

### **The Four Friends**

#### **Mark 2:1-12**

#### **Message Summary**

Four friends work through every obstacle with grit and determination to bring their friend to experience Jesus' healing power. Friendship can be a source of healing for us still today, especially in an era of loneliness and isolation. We must recover friendship for its own sake, not for what we can get out of a relationship. The four friends bold determination models what it looks like to carry one another when we cannot walk on our own, trusting Jesus to bring both forgiveness and wholeness. This story reminds us true healing so often comes through community grounded in Christ.

#### **Small Group Discussion Questions**

- Who have been the “stretcher-bearers” in your life? When have friends carried you—emotionally, spiritually, or practically—when you could not move forward on your own?
- What barriers keep us from deep, face-to-face friendships today?
- How does the idea of “useless friends” challenge the way we typically think about networking, productivity, or relationships with purpose?
- How do we remain lovingly present with people making unhealthy choices without trying to fix or force change?
- Where do you sense Jesus offering forgiveness, healing, or wholeness in your life right now—and how might community play a role?

#### **Closing Prayer**

*Gracious and healing God, we thank you for the friends who have carried us when we were weary, discouraged, or unable to move forward on our own. Forgive us for the ways we isolate ourselves or treat relationships as transactions rather than gifts. Teach us to make space for holy friendships that reflect your love—friendships rooted in presence, patience, and persistence. Give us the courage to climb roofs when needed, to stay when it is hard, and to trust that your Spirit is at work even when we cannot yet see change. Make us instruments of your healing grace, both for others and for ourselves, until all may know the hope, forgiveness, and wholeness found in Christ. Amen.*

# To Be Made Well

## Demoniac

*Luke 8:26-39; Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20*

### **Make Us Whole Again**

#### **Mark 5:1–20** The Demoniac

##### **Message Summary**

This sermon proclaims the heart of the gospel message found in Mark 5:1–20: no matter how broken we are, Jesus has the power and desire to make us whole again. There is no person Jesus loves more or less than another, no condition beyond his healing reach, and no boundary he will not cross to restore wholeness.

The story takes place immediately after Jesus calms the storm, reinforcing his authority—not only over nature, but over every spiritual power. Jesus intentionally crosses into Gentile territory, a place considered unclean and outside the religious comfort zone of his followers. There, among tombs and pigs, Jesus encounters a man bound by spiritual, mental, and physical chains.

This man represents profound brokenness—violence, isolation, self-harm, and spiritual captivity. Jesus recognizes that this is more than a physical or mental condition; it is spiritual bondage. With authority and compassion, Jesus frees the man completely, demonstrating that his power far surpasses the forces that enslave us.

The sermon invites listeners to reflect on the limitations that bind us today—words spoken over us, trauma endured, unhealthy patterns learned, or lies we tell ourselves about our worth and identity. These limitations are not how God created us; they are the result of a broken world.

Drawing from both pastoral ministry and mental health practice, the sermon emphasizes the importance of seeing ourselves as whole persons—body, mind, and spirit—and allowing faith in Jesus to be part of the healing journey. True healing often involves integrating spiritual restoration with emotional and relational growth.

Finally, the story reminds us that Jesus does not heal us so we can keep the gift to ourselves. The man who is freed wants to stay with Jesus, but instead Jesus sends him back home to tell others what God has done. Wholeness leads to witness. The mercy we receive becomes the message we share.

## **Small Group Discussion Questions**

- What does this story reveal about Jesus' authority and compassion?
- Why do you think it mattered that Jesus crossed into Gentile territory to perform this healing?
- The sermon talks about "limitations" placed on us by others or by ourselves. What are some limitations that people commonly carry today?
- How does seeing healing as spiritual, emotional, and physical change how we understand wholeness?
- Why do you think the freed man wanted to go with Jesus—and why do you think Jesus sent him home instead?
- How have you experienced Jesus bringing healing or greater wholeness into your life over time?
- What makes it difficult for us to share our faith story outside the comfort of church or familiar relationships?
- What might Jesus be inviting you to share with others about his mercy and work in your life?

## **Closing Prayer**

*Healing and merciful God,  
We thank you that no brokenness is too deep,  
no past too painful,  
and no life too tangled for your healing touch.*

*You see us as whole people—  
body, mind, and spirit—  
and you long to free us from everything that  
binds us.*

*Break the chains of fear, shame, self-doubt,  
and sin  
that keep us from living fully as your beloved  
children.*

*Give us courage to trust you with our healing,  
wisdom to walk the journey toward wholeness,  
and humility to receive your grace again and  
again.*

*And when you have set us free,  
send us out—not just to be comfortable,  
but to tell others of your mercy,  
your forgiveness,  
and your power to make all things new.*

*We pray this in the name of Jesus,  
the one who crosses every boundary  
to make us whole again.*

*Amen.*

# To Be Made Well

## *Blind Bartimaeus*

*Mark 10:46-52; Matt 20:29-34; Luke 18:35-43*

### **The Sight to Follow**

**Mark 10:46–52** Blind Bartimaeus

### **What to prepare**

- Paper slips or index cards, and pens
- A small bowl or basket for the **cloak exercise**

### **Message Summary**

Pastor Chang invites us to consider what it truly means to be “made well” through the story of Bartimaeus, a blind beggar who refused to stay quiet despite social pressure. Unlike other healing stories where people return to their former lives, Bartimaeus threw aside his cloak, which was his entire identity and security, and immediately followed Jesus on the road to Jerusalem and the cross. True wellness requires the courage to risk our comfortable identities, to cry out honestly about our brokenness, and to use our healing not for our own comfort but to join Christ’s mission of sacrificial love.

### **Small Group Discussion Questions**

#### **• “Dakota Nice” and “Nunchi”**

*Where in your life have you learned to stay quiet to avoid awkwardness, and what might it be preventing you from bringing honestly to Jesus?*

- Facilitation prompts:

- “Where do you feel pressure to be ‘fine’?”
- “What do you tend to hide because you do not want to burden others?”
- “What is one honest sentence you have been holding back?”

#### **• The invisible places**

*Bartimaeus was seen but not really seen, like part of the landscape. When have you felt invisible in a crowd, a family system, a workplace, or even church? How does Jesus stopping reshape how you imagine God’s attention toward you?*

- Facilitation prompts:

- “What does ‘invisible’ feel like in your body or emotions?”
- “When you picture Jesus stopping, what changes in you?”
- “Is there a difference between being noticed and being known?”

- **Cloak Exercise**

*In the message, Bartimaeus' cloak is more than clothing. It is identity, safety, and an old way of surviving.*

- Instructions:

- Give each person a slip of paper.
    - Ask them to write: "My cloak might be..." (a role, fear, excuse, old label, self-protection pattern).
    - Optional second line: "I sense Jesus inviting me to..."

- Action:

- Invite people to fold the paper and place it in the bowl/basket.
    - No discussion required.

- Brief debrief: (No need to pressure anyone to reveal what they wrote.)

- "What was it like to name something, even privately?"
    - "What part feels risky about letting it go?"

- **"What do you want me to do for you?"**

*Jesus does not assume, he invites Bartimaeus to speak for himself. If Jesus asked you that question today, what would you honestly say, beyond what you think you "should" say? What might you be afraid to name out loud?*

- Facilitation prompts:

- "What is the honest request underneath your usual prayer?"
    - "What are you hesitant to name out loud?"
    - "What would it mean to let Jesus ask you directly, with dignity?"

- **Synoptic Comparison Moment** (*Keep this short. The goal is a fresh lens, not a full study*)

*Read **Luke 18:35–43** (or just verses 38–43), or **Matthew 20:29–34** (selected verses).*

- Facilitation prompts (Ask one question):

- "What detail stands out as different?"
    - "What new angle do you see about Jesus, the crowd, or the healed person?"
    - "How does this deepen the theme: 'To Be Made Well'?"

- **Sight that follows**

*Bartimaeus does not simply enjoy his new life, he follows Jesus on the road toward Jerusalem.*

- The Question of the Week:

- What would it look like for your healing to turn outward into discipleship this week, even in one small, concrete step?

### **Closing prayer**

*Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us.*

*When we hide behind politeness or fear, give us courage to cry out to you.*

*When we feel unseen, remind us that you stop and call us by name.*

*Help us lay down our "cloak," whatever we cling to for safety instead of trust.*

*Give us honest words for what we truly need.*

*And as you make us well, teach us to follow you on the road of love.*

*In your name we pray, Amen.*