



let yourself be...

A 3-DAY DEVOTIONAL



DAY 2: LET YOURSELF BE TRANSFORMED

John 5:1-9 NIV

Some time later, there was a religious gathering of the Jews. Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In Jerusalem there is a pool with five porches called Bethesda near the sheep gate. Inside these porches lay many sick people. Some were blind. Some could not walk. Some could not move their bodies. (An angel of the Lord came at certain times and made the water move. All of them were waiting for it to move. Whoever got in the water first after it was moving was healed of whatever sickness he had.)

A man was there who had been sick for thirty-eight years. Jesus saw him lying there and knew the man had been sick a long time. Jesus said to him, "Would you like to be healed?" The sick man said, "Sir, I have no one to put me in the pool when the water is moving. While I am coming, another one gets in first." Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your bed and walk." At once the man was healed and picked up his bed and walked. This happened on the Day of Rest.

Mark Buchanan writes,

"Sickness can actually steal the place of God. It can become the sick person's center, the touchstone by which he defines himself. Illness is a tyrant with huge territorial ambitions. It is a seductress with large designs. It wants not only the sick person's body. It wants his heart and mind and soul also. It wants to be his all-consuming passion..."

Not everyone wants to get well." [1]

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As we cope with our pain many of us build a life around NOT being whole. This begins to define our reality, as we know it. We settle for relief when what we need is the cure.

The man did not need quicker reflexes, benevolent angels, or enchanted waters. He needed Jesus.

Jesus is again asking questions. Jesus is again asking us what we want.

Along with modeling a love that is invitational rather than argumentative, he asks us to get in touch with who we are being. His question is kind but challenging:

Where are you placing your identity?

Do you want to be healed?

When we are sick... emotionally or physically our lives begin to revolve around our sickness. Some of us are actually not that interested in healing. To be healed might be to give up your identity as one who is suffering. To give up your identity, to change, may simply feel to uncomfortable. When Jesus approaches this man he seems to be saying, "Your suffering is real but your suffering does not define you.

Your victimization does not need to be your identity."

His "I can't" needed to be transformed to "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."

What happens? Jesus speaks and the power of God ripples through his frame and, in a moment his body is completely regenerated.

Now if you are like me, I know what you are thinking... this is a nice story but it simply doesn't happen to everyone. Some people live and die with their physical and emotional illness. True. And it is interesting to note that there were other people at the pool that day that were not healed by Jesus.

While I don't know why God doesn't heal everyone this side of heaven, the theme that seems universal for the ones that he does heal is that they are willing to act, to risk a new identity, to show up in the world differently.

You have been hurt, you have suffered, but this does not define you.

What Satan meant for evil God transforms to good. Our lives are not woven together with anger and regret but with threads of redemption.

You have been pursued. You are loveable.

Jesus is calling you into motion. Faith. The impossible. Pick up your mat... Grab your story and walk.