

**GOSPEL PEARLS**

## Supposedly useless

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*After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem a pool by the Sheep Gate (in Aramaic called Bethesda) which has five roofed colonnades. In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be healed?” The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.” Jesus said to*

*him, "Get up, take up your bed, and walk." And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed." But he answered them, "The man who healed me, that man said to me, 'Take up your bed, and walk.'" They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk?'" Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you." The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. (John 5: 1-16)*

This paralytic had been brought on a stretcher near the pool. It was believed that whoever was first to immerse themselves into the water, when stirred up by the wings of angels, would be healed. Yet without anyone to help the man go into the water, his being there seems pointless. However, Jesus appeared and his life changed. How many times do we get discouraged and think that our prayers are useless? Jesus warns us that if physical paralysis bad, then even worse is the paralysis of our souls blocked by our sins.