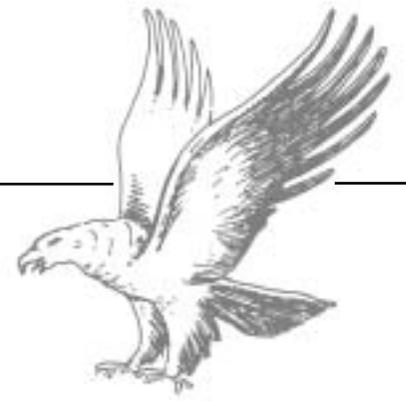


# Wings

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*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”  
Isaiah 40:31*



December 12, 2010

## Do You Want to Be Made Well?

The first step toward improving our lives is acknowledging we have a problem. For many people that first step is the most difficult.

“Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, ‘Do you want to be made well?’” (Jn. 5:5-6).

We do not know the nature of this man’s infirmity. It probably involved some disability in his legs, since he described others going ahead of him to the pool of Bethesda when the healing waters stirred (v. 7). Whatever the illness, one wonders why Jesus would ask such a dumb question. *Of course* the man wanted to be made well; who in his condition would not?

But maybe it’s not such a dumb question after all. Some people who suffer illness actually thrive on the pity that comes their way. Losing their disability would deprive them of the attention. They have become comfortable in their affliction, and would prefer to stay in that condition. So in asking this question, Jesus was confirming that this man really did want to be healed. A miracle, if granted, would not be wasted on him.

This story illustrates a similar scenario in the lives of those damaged by sin. Jesus can perform amazing transformations in the lives of such people. But it can happen only to those who honestly seek a different direction. So the first question Jesus asks of every sinner who comes to Him is, “Do you want to be made well?”

It is a legitimate question, because the response of most sinners is, “No, thanks.”

In some cases, people realize they have a sin problem, but are terrified of the changes a new life will require of them. Having to make and maintain these changes in their behavior is more than they are willing to face, so they prefer to maintain the status quo, painful though it may be.

Most people, however, reject Jesus’ offer because they do not recognize the destructive role sin plays in their lives. They have a vague sense that something is amiss in their lives, but cannot identify the source of the problem. They blame others for the various issues that arise in their life, or convince them-

selves that a little more money or a few more thrills will gain them the satisfaction they seek. Or course, they never quite find what they are looking for, because the invisible hand of sin keeps pushing them down. These people can never be made well, because they won’t admit they have an illness that needs to be healed.

The first step toward improving our lives is admitting we have a problem that needs to be addressed. That problem is *sin*, a violation of God’s purpose for our lives. Once we admit that we don’t know it all, and that our own bad attitudes and behaviors are the chief culprit, we can finally gain access to the healing that will allow us to grow into a richer, more satisfying life. That healing, of course, is the forgiveness that God offers us through His Son, Jesus Christ. The awareness that God accepts us despite our imperfections is a powerful motivation to do better.

“Do you want to be made well?” Until we can answer that question honestly, we will never experience the growth we seek.

– David King