



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 7: Pick Up Your Mat  
Suggested Week of Use: January 15, 2023  
Core Passage: John 5:5-16

---

### News Story Summary

Overnight on Christmas Eve and into Christmas Day, Jay Withey, a mechanic from Cheektowaga, New York, was credited with showing compassion and ensuring the safety of more than twenty individuals and two dogs. All had been stranded in their cars for several hours due to a deadly and historic blizzard on Christmas Eve. Jay had been stranded himself around 7 p.m. When he begged several homeowners to let him and a stranger that he had picked up sleep on their floor, they all said no. Early Christmas morning, after most of the vehicles had run out of gas, Jay broke into a local school so individuals ranging in age from their 20s to 70s could get out of the cold, use a bathroom, and sleep. He also found some cereal and apples to share from the school's cafeteria. During Christmas Day, Jay worked to make sure everyone was able to get to safety. After seeing Jay blow snow away from the cars of the stranded people, one local resident even begged forgiveness for turning him away the night before. Before he left the school around 8 p.m., Jay left a note apologizing for breaking in. But local law enforcement officials later praised his heroic efforts that certainly saved lives.

For more about this story, search “Jay Withey Cheektowaga Blizzard.”

### Focus Attention

To supplement **FOCUS ATTENTION**, write “Compassion” on the board. Ask: *What are some examples of compassion that you have experienced or heard about recently?* Record responses on the board. Discuss how showing compassion can represent God to other people. Share the news story about Jay Withey helping people stranded in a New York blizzard. Note that in one account of the story, Jay described himself as “a religious person.” Ask: *How can believers offer compassion to others?* Use this story as an introduction to today's session about Jesus showing compassion to a disabled man.

### Summarize and Challenge

To supplement **SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE**, lead volunteers to share about opportunities when they were able to demonstrate compassion toward someone else. Discuss what it feels like to show compassion. Lead adults to discuss the “Respond” questions on page 81 of the Leader Guide. Ask: *How did Jay Withey demonstrate compassion in the regular activities of his day? What motivated his actions?* Challenge the group to look for opportunities to show compassion and to demonstrate the love of Christ for others in the coming week.