

Healing for God's Glory

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John 5:1-3

After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

There were a lot of needy people at the pool of Bethesda. It looked like a hospital that had no physicians: all those sick people, but who was helping them?

It's good to find something to trust in, where you can get your faith loose to really believe God.

Here's a group of people hoping for something. That's why they were gathered there. They all had one common thing in mind.

Now, we don't fully understand what took place here at the pool:

John 5:4

For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

All these needy people rushed to get to the water, because the first one who stepped in would be made whole, healed. It says that only one got healed when the angel came to trouble the waters. What about the others? If one got healed, what about the others? Wasn't healing available for everybody?

There didn't seem to be much hope here. Somebody would get healed — just one — and how often? Did the angel trouble the waters every day? Every week? Every month? The angel troubled the waters only at a certain season.

But these people were grasping at that, hoping that they would be the one to be healed. There was a lot of hope being manifest here by the pool . . . but they needed more than just hope.

Healing for Those Who Believe

Know that God provides healing for those who will reach out to believe and receive. It's not a matter of an angel coming down to trouble the waters. It's a matter of our faith in Jesus Christ

and in the promise that by His stripes we were healed. It's a matter of the power of God; it's a matter of the faithfulness of His Word and God moving by His Spirit.

This was what was needed here. These needy folk were used to gathering at this particular time with the hope that maybe they would be the one who would get healed this time. But there were a lot of disappointments by that pool.

Do you want to be disappointed? Do you want to come to the Lord expecting and then finding nothing there for you?

John 5:5

And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

Thirty eight years is a long time to be held under the bondage of something. We are only told that this was a certain man. His name isn't given; just that he was a certain man waiting at this pool. He had the same hope that all the others had: that he would get to the pool in time to be healed.

Now, this man is signaled out for our benefit.

At the time of this account, once again, it would only be one person who would get healed.

Healing by the Power of God

It's wonderful when one person gets healed, when one person gets touched by the power of the Holy Ghost. We would all rejoice with that one. But we don't want to put any limits to the power of God, to think that there is only healing for a select few, that only one would benefit from the troubling of the waters. We want to realize that Jesus has power to minister to all who are in need, all who hold their faith.

John 5:6a

When Jesus saw him lie . . .

This changes something: *when Jesus*. We can expect something to happen when Jesus comes on the scene, when the presence of the Lord comes close in a meeting.

Luke 5:17b

. . . and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

At the pool we find the Lord stopping by:

John 5:6

When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

The Lord just happened to pass through here at the same time the waters were troubled. It wasn't that He went here to minister to all the needy who had gathered. His attention was drawn to this impotent man. He knew this man had been in this condition for a long time.

And He knows how long you have been in that condition you're in. He understands and knows how much pain and suffering you have been going through. But, bless God, He also has power to heal, to take away all that sickness and disease. Thank God for the power of the Holy Ghost.

Will You Be Made Whole?

Jesus asked this man if he would be made whole. This is the phrase to get hold of: *Will you be made whole?* Will you put aside every reason why you can't be made whole, or why you think you can't? Will you put aside every excuse, put aside all that's in the back of your mind?

"I've been prayed for time after time, and I haven't gotten any better!"

There are always those who put up a front of some kind: a front of doubt, a front of unbelief, some front that prevents them from reaching out for what God has for them. But we've got to be in the realm where we're going to take what the Lord said and embrace it.

The Lord asked this man, "Wilt thou be made whole?" That's saying to him, "I'm willing to make you whole. Will you be?" He was willing to move for this man. He wanted to bring him to the point of receiving that which he needed — right now!

And right now you can have what you need. Somebody has come by who has the power to break the yoke and set you free. Will you let Him do it? I wouldn't want to see somebody stay sick, only because they really didn't want what the Lord had for them, that they didn't put any effort into believing and trusting they could be made whole.

This man did what is the normal reaction for some:

John 5:7

The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

He wasn't able to help himself to get down to the pool. Before he could ever even attempt to get there, somebody else had already gone into the waters and gotten healed. *I have no man*: He needed somebody to help him. But he didn't really realize how much he needed. That was more than what was on his mind at this time.

How many times did this man get disappointed like this? And how many times have you been disappointed?

For the Glory of the Lord

How important to know there's a reason here: the glory of the Lord. It's not just wanting to be healed, but wanting to be healed for the glory of the Lord: that He be glorified through what He has done for us; so that, when the Lord touches us, when the Lord ministers His power to us, we have that occasion to lift our voice from our hearts and glorify Him for what He has done.

Why is it so hard, in many places, to find the power of God in operation to meet the needs? One reason is that nobody ever gives glory to God. They take Him for granted, feeling He should move without their doing anything about it. They shouldn't have to believe or reach out to Him. And if He does meet their need, they see no reason to open their mouths to glorify Him. It's like there's no feeling after God, where the whole idea should be that we love Him, and that we honor and glorify Him.

I believe in this last day that this is a reason why many don't see the power of God at work in their midst. They want it, but they have a selfish motive.

So here's a man who was asked if he would be made whole, but he didn't quite get what Jesus was asking:

John 5:7

The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another stepped down before me.

He was thinking about how helpless he was, thinking about how there was nobody to help him get into the water.

So there's a thing that's holding this man up. If he could get this straightened out when the waters were being troubled, then maybe he could be healed. If a couple of men could just pick him up and run down there before anyone else could get into the waters . . . maybe then he could be made whole.

There must have been those who were healed when the angel would come to trouble the waters, or people wouldn't keep coming, hoping they would be the one this time.

Rise Up . . . in Faith

Now, as Jesus was passing by, He saw this man and wanted to help him. He was about to do something quickly. Then He would leave and continue on His journey.

John 5:8

Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

This is simple enough! Just rise, take up your bed, and start walking. He didn't need anybody to carry him down to the waters. All he needed to do was to believe Jesus and to do it.

Obeys from your heart. Let your faith rise up, and do as the Lord would tell you to do. If He said to rise up, then rise up!

This doesn't sound like a hard thing to do for most of us, but how long had it been since this man had walked? How long had it been since he had even stood on his feet? The Bible tells us he was in this state for thirty eight years!

Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. The man had told Jesus that he had no man to take him down to the pool. Those were the thoughts of his mind. But when he heard Jesus telling him to rise, take up his bed, and walk:

John 5:9

And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath.

How long did it take? Immediately! Did Jesus tell him to wait until next year to come back to the pool and try again? Immediately! This is important for our faith: *immediately*. We can expect that God is going to do it, and that He is going to do it now. This is the place for faith. It's not that we believe God is going to do it some day. There comes a time when God is ready to do it, and if He is ready, then He wants to do it now.

This is what Jesus did. And this man, when he finally got his heart set on what Jesus told him to do, was able to rise up: Immediately he was made whole, took up his bed, and began to walk.

This expression, *take up your bed*, is reflecting that there would be only one way he could rise up, when he had been unable all those years to rise up. Other than that, he's not going to be able to take up his bed and walk. Somebody else would have to take it up for him, and also take him up and carry him home.

But when Jesus comes along, He doesn't do half a job; He doesn't leave anything lacking. This man rose up immediately, took up his bed, and began to walk.

This sounds simple, doesn't it? But could it be that simple for somebody who hadn't stood on his feet for thirty eight years? And could it be that simple again and again and again? The great power of the Holy Spirit that anointed Jesus of Nazareth, again and again and again — on the same day, in the same meeting where multitudes were healed by this mighty power.

Whoever came along healing the sick like Jesus healed the sick? Such a manifestation of God's power! Such a manifestation of His love! Such an outpouring of His Spirit to break the yoke!

Why? These people needed to be healed, yes. But there was a greater reason: to glorify the Lord. Shouldn't He be glorified? Shouldn't the men of Israel recognize that this Man who was doing all this healing was not an ordinary man? This Man who works all these miracles couldn't be an ordinary person; He's got to have something from above.

Nicodemus said to Jesus, "No man can do these miracles which You do, except God be with Him." Nicodemus figured that out. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19).

I thank God there's the power and blessing of God. It's not for us to question, but to rise up and let Him do it again.

The Lord was telling him to do something that seemed to be impossible to do. You know, the power of words can be so great: It just depends on who's speaking.

Rise up, and walk. What's behind those words? Who was saying them? In this case, it was the Lord, Himself, who was saying them. Would it have mattered if it was a servant of the Lord speaking? Would it have mattered if it was the preacher speaking?

It *would* matter if they had nothing behind their words. If they have no power given of the Lord, their words would be mere words. But we can look at God's Word and see what Jesus would say about this:

The Works I Do You Shall Do Also

John 14:12

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

The works that I do shall you do. Jesus told them they would do the works that He did, and even greater, because He was going to His Father.

You see, a lot more things would get done after He went to His Father, because the Holy Ghost would move through a lot more of God's people to do those works.

We should listen to what Jesus said, taking everything He said to heart. Don't push anything off the pages of the Scriptures as something that shouldn't be mentioned. Jesus spoke those things to build faith in our hearts.

Opposition

Rise up, take up your bed, and walk. Immediately, this man did just as Jesus told him to do, and the same day was the Sabbath.

Now, that's not going to go well with some: *the same day was the Sabbath.* There were those who would not have wanted this miracle to take place, simply because it was the Sabbath day. The Pharisees believed it wasn't right to heal on the Sabbath day.

Jesus taught that it wasn't evil to do good on the Sabbath day, so doing good on the Lord's Day wouldn't be a bad thing, either. If God healed somebody on Sunday at church, wouldn't that be all right?

But remember, these Pharisees had tradition that taught them you couldn't do anything on the Sabbath day. You could just go to the synagogue and be morbid.

Well, I thank God that Jesus made a great example. Notice how many times the Scriptures record that He healed on the Sabbath. Thank God it was done! Thank God His power fell whatever day He chose to heal, even on the Sabbath day.

John 5:10

The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.

"Go back to that place where you lay, put your bed back down, and lie there until someone comes to carry you home." It's almost like this was what they were wishing this man would do — that it would have been better if he had never been made whole!

Maybe we are like these Pharisees sometimes. Maybe we're blind in one eye and don't see things like we ought to. Know this, if it hadn't been the right thing to do, Jesus, the sinless One, would never have done it. He healed the sick, even on the Sabbath day.

John 5:11

He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

This man could have left his bed lying there, but the Master told him to take it up and walk. He did what he was told to do — what faith would tell him to do. He believed, and got up on his feet, took up his bed, and began to walk.

Now, he's leaving this place where he had been helplessly lying. How much time during those thirty eight years had he spent lying by this pool? How many disappointments did he have down through those years?

One encounter with Jesus, and he walked away!

The Lord didn't heal everybody there that day. He only healed this man. There's no record of His healing any of the others.

John 5:12

Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

You don't suppose they already knew that it was Jesus who had done this miracle? They're asking this question because Jesus had done all this healing, and they didn't believe He was of God. Therefore, they didn't believe that all those healings were of God. They're looking for occasion to put Jesus out of the picture, to have Him killed. They didn't believe on Him; they

doubted Him; they couldn't accept His miracles; they couldn't compete with Him; but Jesus would continue on doing the work of God.

We should see for ourselves that, sometimes, Jesus does something for a reason. Why this man, and why at this time?

Looking at all the others who were there waiting to be healed, they were still waiting. But this man rose up and went his way because Jesus came by. The power of God touched this man.

John 5:13

And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

The Lord stopped to heal one man and then conveyed Himself away out of the midst of the multitude. He could have had a big healing meeting at that pool, but that wasn't His will for that day; that wasn't his purpose for that day.

If you looked at this man, you'd say, "That was certainly a special day in his life, that the Lord had a time when He would stop to meet this man's need."

What could make the difference between this man and all the others? Maybe he was lying there praying. Maybe he had prayed and prayed about somebody coming to heal him. We don't know what he did — other than that he met Jesus!

Sin No More

John 5:14

Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

There's a warning here: *Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee*. To go back to his sin, go back to his old way, might bring him back to a place where he would be worse off than he ever had been those thirty eight years.

I wonder if this isn't why some have the trouble they have: because they don't want to turn from sin.

There are many who are sick because of their sin. They didn't get sick because of something they ate, but because of sin. For example, there are many diseases that are brought about because of sexual sins. Many have venereal disease because of their fornication.

But we should want to live a clean and pure life before the Lord. If we get healed from some sickness or disease that was caused by our sinful past, we want to stay healed for His glory. We don't want to turn from Him, back to that sin. We want to live a life that gives Him glory, that our life might be filled with things that would glorify Him.

I John 1:7

But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.

What would you want Jesus to say to you? "Rise up, take up your bed, and walk"? Well, be in the place of hearing faith and taking hold.

Romans 10:17

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.