

"Be Made Whole"

John 5:1-18

- Jesus heals a man in the account we'll be reading from today
- There are some very interesting details listed
- The man was hoping for healing, but not in the way it came
- He suggested his plan to obtain healing had a flaw
- While he spoke with the only One capable of healing him

- After the man was healed, critics nearby raised objections
- They were objections Jesus would face many times, which were not valid

- From John 5 verses 1 through 18 today, "Be Made Whole"

John 5:1-4

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

- Jesus walks among a multitude of sick people in Jerusalem
- They have come to the pool of Bethesda, it says here, waiting for something
- We may be asking ourselves, what is this phenomenon?
- One commentary says this...

"This pool was actually two large trapezoid-shaped pools with a twenty-one-foot-wide space between them. The whole structure was enclosed by porches on each side, with a fifth porch over the area dividing the two pools. The water was occasionally disturbed, perhaps from an underground source such as a spring with irregular flow or drainage from another pool. People believed one could be healed by getting into the pool when this disturbance occurred."

- It seems obvious that those waiting were hoping to be healed
- They made the attempt, perhaps, based on some stories they heard
- Stories of others being healed
- Of an angel being seen to stir up the waters
- For some, it may have seemed their only hope
- Their conditions may have been long-standing - or permanent

- We know this was the case for one such man...

John 5:5-6

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

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?

- We don't know this man's age
- He was at least thirty eight, and we assume older, based on something Jesus says later
- And this is a long period of time to deal with such an infirmity - 38 years

- Based on what happens next, we know he couldn't walk
- And based on what we've read so far, we assume the answer to Jesus' question is obvious
- He was hoping for healing

- But he had a significant problem...

John 5:7

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.

- This man is unable to get himself to the pool quickly
- Others, presumably, have some friend to help
- They are equipped in ways he is not
- This is the missing ingredient in his plan for healing

- Readers of this text have the benefit of recognizing the irony of all this
- He waits for healing, fearing it will not come, even while he speaks with the Great Physician
- The power is not in the water – or in any angelic phenomenon that may have occurred
- It certainly wasn't in a man able to deliver him to the water
- It was in the God of the Universe
- Someone with abundant compassion, abundant grace, and all power

- We see it on display next...

John 5:8-9

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

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

- No potential healing here, no simple hope for being first to the water
- This was total healing, actual healing, real healing from the Son of God
- And it happened immediately
- Far from laying near the pool, needing a helper to get him there
- He has picked up his bed and is walking

- But there is an interesting detail at the end
- One that was not overlooked by those nearby...

John 5:10-13

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.

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

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

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

- You may be asking what law was violated on this day
- It was likely they pointed to Jeremiah 17:21
- Which says the people of God should bear no burden on the sabbath day
- Nor bring them in by the gates of Jerusalem

- Are there not larger issues at play
- Have they looked directly past the healing that took place?
- Do they have no care for a man who has been disabled for 38 years?
- Where is their compassion?
- Where is their joy at the healing of a man?

- And what's more, what about the God of the sabbath?
- The One who did the healing
- And the One who commanded this bed be carried?

John 5:14-18

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.

15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

- Praise God, His healing work is done even on the Sabbath
- He takes no day off from acting in kindness toward us
- While His people rest and worship Him, His love and power are active

- Jesus' response further angers these that oppose Him
- By calling God His father, He clearly makes Himself equal with God
- This is only right – for He is God made flesh, God with us
- The way the truth and the life, and no one comes to the father, but by Him
- He is Lord over the sabbath
- His actions on this day, prove it

Christopher Harper, Take Note 2021