

## Be Made Whole

- Jesus heals a man in the account we'll be reading from today
- There are some very interesting details in the passage
- Details that give us insight on Jesus' ministry in the world
- The man was waiting, hoping for healing, but it came in an unexpected way
- He knew his own plan to obtain healing was flawed
- And said as much 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 in His ministry
- Jesus explains why their claims were not valid
- As He gives us insight on His relationship with the Father, and His role in salvation and judgement

### 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
- One way or the other, 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

- The One who commanded this bed be carried?
- The One who had authority to make the command?

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.

- Jesus commands that the one healed “sin no more”
- And offers a word of warning
- The man tells the Jews the name of his healer
- Whom they then sought to kill for violation of the Sabbath
- Praise God, His healing work is done seven days a week!
- He takes no day off from acting in kindness toward us
- He takes no day off from performing miracles
- While His people rest and worship Him, His love and power remain 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
- But there is more to be said...

John 5:19-21

19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him

greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

- Far from correcting their impression that He made "himself equal with God," He explains it
- One writer says of this section...

"When it is said that he can "do nothing" of himself, it is meant that such is the union subsisting between the Father and the Son that he can do nothing 'independently' or separate from the Father. Such is the nature of this union that he can do nothing which has not the concurrence of the Father, and which he does not command. In all things he must, from the necessity of his nature, act in accordance with the nature and will of God. Such is the intimacy of the union, that the fact that 'he' does anything is proof that it is by the concurring agency of God. There is no separate action - no separate existence; but, alike in being and in action, there is the most perfect oneness between him and the Father."

- The power of life and death are in God's hands
- The Father and th Son give life to who they will
- As for Jesus, we see Him prove this in the gospels, raising those that were dead to life
- His ministry remains a life-giving ministry, spiritually raising men from the dead
- Providing life through salvation

John 5:22-23

22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

- Jesus says more about the authority granted Him for judgement a few verses later
- It is through the Son, and His work on the cross, that men are given a way of escape
- He can cleanse men from sin and provides rescue from judgement unto condemnation
- This is the reason God sent Him, not to condemn, but to save
- With this in mind, how can any man propose to honor the Father, but fail to honor the Son?
- These that were critical of Jesus claimed to honor God by keeping the Sabbath
- But if we don't properly reverence the Son, it reveals that we don't properly reverence the Father who sent Him

John 5:24

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

- His life-giving ministry is affirmed in this verse
- Along with His oneness with the Father
- And His power to deliver from condemnation
- This should have been good news to anyone listening
- But He goes on...

John 5:25-27

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

- Aren't you glad that dead men can hear His voice?
- For, when we were dead, we heard His voice
- And He made us alive
- God has also given Him power to judge
- And His judgement is always perfect
- He knows all things and sees all things

John 5:28-30

28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,  
29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

- By "all that are in the graves" He means...

"All the dead, of every age and nation. They are described as 'in the graves.' Though many have turned to their native dust and perished from human view, yet God sees them, and can regather their remains and raise them up to life."

- Some, who have known Him, will be raised to life everlasting
- Others, who have rejected Him, will be raised to everlasting death
- All will be judged rightly and righteously, and finally
- There will be no mistake about their final destiny

- Because the Son will only carry out that which is the perfect will of His Father

John 5:31-38

31 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

32 There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

33 Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.

34 But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

36 But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

- If Jesus were just a man, speaking, saying these words with no affirmation of their truth
  - They would rightly be questioned
  - He could justly be regarded as suspect
  - But precisely the opposite is true in Jesus' case
  - The circumstances and manner of His birth were foretold
  - Prophecies of His early life were fulfilled
  - The early miracles of His ministry revealed His identity
  - Even the one pointing to Him, proclaiming Him the Messiah (John) was foretold
  - And His Father continued to confirm His sonship
  - Soon, after His death and burial in our place, raising Him from the dead
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- The reason these that questioned Him failed to see
  - Is because they failed to know and believe the scriptures
  - As Jesus confirms...

John 5:39-40

39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

- Jesus, the Messiah, is found in the Hebrew scriptures of the Old Testament
- His identity should not have remained a mystery to them
- These should not have simply been words from a man
- But rather the fulfillment of God's words to His people

- Unfortunately, many chose to reject Him
- His words they did not heed - to search the scriptures
- For if they would have, perhaps they would have found Him Lord

Christopher Harper, March 2021