

# Do You Want To Be Healed?

Fairview Missionary Church | Angola, IN

Scripture: John 5:1-15

Speaker: Sam Schertz

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Good morning. It's good to be with you today as we dig into God's word. It's been a nice hot summer this year. Can I get an amen? And before we begin, our message, I would just like to take a survey of the congregation by a raise of hands, how many of you love a good pool party? Anybody? Awesome. Well, my family, we were blessed this year. Someone in the church gave us their above ground pool, and remember, I have 5 children, 76421.

Can you say pool parties all the time? We love a good pool party. And you may say, how does that connect to God's word? Well, today, we are going to be looking at a story about one of the greatest pool parties of all time. So if you would turn in your bibles to the book of John, chapter 5 versus one through 15, John, chapter 5 versus one through 15, while you do that, I'd like to give you a brief introduction or brief overview of the book of John, John is one of the four books in the Bible that we call the gospels.

And the gospel, the word gospel just means good news. And it's the good news of Jesus life, death, and resurrection and more importantly, and more personally, it's the good news that you and I, by faith in Jesus, can be forgiven of our sins, and have eternal life with God. Now, the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the other three of the four, are referred to as the synoptic gospels.

And they're referred to in this way, because they're very similar in their style and in their content. They come around to forming the same general synopsis or summary of Jesus life, death, and resurrection. But the Gospel of John in contrast to those other three has a very different style, a very different style of writing, and even different content.

There are stories that are found in the other three gospels that are left out of John's gospel. And there are stories we find in the Gospel of John that we see in no other gospel. And John tells, at the end of his gospel, the reason for his style and content of this gospel, he says, but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the messiah, the son of God. And that by believing you may have life in his name.

So like John, that's my prayer today. My prayer is that as we look at this passage, God would move us to admire Jesus as the son of God. And in that, that he would breathe life into our souls today. So would you pray with me towards that end? Lord, we come to you and we thank you for this opportunity. God, it is good to sing with your people. It's good to lift our voices and praise.

And so now lord, we come, and we dig into your word. And I asked lord that as I speak, that anything that I would say that is of Sam and not of you, lord, that you just removed that from my thoughts, removed that from my mouth. And lord, that your words would flow in power today. We ask that in Jesus name, amen. So let's begin reading and John chapter 5, beginning with verse one.

Sometime later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. It could also be referred to as feasts. You see, there were three main festivals or feasts in the Jewish tradition that every male, 18 and over was required to come to Jerusalem for. They were required to travel. This was the feast of Passover, the feast of Pentecost, and the feast of tabernacles. And John doesn't specify which one of these feasts he's talking about here.

And I want to be honest with you, the specifics of that don't really matter to our story. But what I want you to understand in is this was a busy time in Jerusalem. There would have been lots of people traveling to the city for this feast. And I also want us to see that Jesus is being obedient to the laws and Jewish rules of the time.

Though he was God, though he created all things he was being obedient to what was set in place at the time. We continue in verse two, now there is in Jerusalem near the sheep gate, a pool, which in an Aramaic is called Bethesda, and which is surrounded by 5 covered colonnades. John is giving us a specific location for this pool party. Our story is taking place near the sheep gate of the city of Jerusalem.

And I want you to understand this gate was not named like a Disney parking lot. It was not like Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse, sheep gate. This was named for the purpose that it served. You see, as people would be traveling to the city, they would bring their lambs that they would sacrifice at the temple. And the sheep gate where they would enter with their sacrifice.

Now, John says that this gate, there was a pool near this gate. You know what I mean? Say, pool party. This pool was named Bethesda. Which Bethesda literally means House of mercy. We'll get into that later. Now for years, scholars could not find any pool near the sheep gate, and many critics would say, this is another example of how the Bible is not true. John must be making this up.

We must have our facts wrong. Well, as God would have it, and in his humor in the 1800s, they found the pool. Go figure. And the reason they hadn't found it for so long is actually they had built multiple buildings right on top of the site of this original pool. And I want you to understand that this is no small pool. We're not talking about like the baptismal or even your backdoor pool.

This was a pool that was over 40 feet deep. Larger than the size of an Olympic swimming pool was massive, absolutely massive. And there was an upper and a lower portion to this pool. And John says that around this pool where 5 covered colonnades, now a colonnade is just a row of pillars or multiple rows of pillars.

So I want you to imagine around this massive pool, basically a porch. Pillars with a roof, surrounding this pool. And the way we get 5, it's kind of interesting. Imagine a porch on each end, a porch on each side, and one in the middle dividing the two sides of the pool. We read on that in verse three. Here, a great number of disabled people used to lie.

The blind, the lame, the paralyzed, the big crowds of disabled people coming under these 5 covered colonnades, blind, lame, paralyzed. John is being specific about what was wrong with them. This is not like, hey, Billy has a rash. Let's take him down to the pool. These were serious life altering disabilities.

Now, in most modern Bible translations, if you look in your text right now, you might jump directly from verse three to verse 5. You say, can we not count? Why is verse four missing from the text? Now it's usually found in the footnotes of your Bible or as a little link in your mobile device. And the NIV, which I'm reading from, does not include verse four.

And I just want to encourage you, that is not an attempt to take away from scripture. To somehow pull away from what God has given us, it's actually an attempt to be the most careful and accurate with the word of God. Originally, the King James version was translated with the manuscripts that were available at the time.

And as we've discovered, more manuscripts and older manuscripts even predating what we had, oftentimes in these manuscripts, verse four is either partially missing or completely missing. And so scholars have said, you know, in an effort to be most accurate, we're going to leave verse four kind of as a footnote. And we'll leave what we can confirm is in all of these manuscripts accurately.

One possible explanation for this is imagine a scribe copying a verse, and he maybe makes a note on the side to make sense of what's happening. And maybe two to three scribes later, someone might say, hey, I think

he ran out of room and he had to write it over here. Let me just lump that in. Either way, I'm going to read verse four to give us some context today. And they waited for the moving of the waters.

From time to time an angel of the lord would come down and stir up the waters. The first one into the pool after each such disturbance would be cured of whatever disease they had. I think this makes great sense of these 5 covered colonnades being full of disabled people. These people were waiting in anticipation for a miraculous healing. Let's continue to read in verse 5.

One who was there had been an invalid for 38 years. This guy has been crippled for 38 years. Now, John does not specify that he's been at the pool for 38 years. He might have been. I would imagine, though, that he has come to this pool in hopes of being healed. In verse 6, we read when Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time.

He asked him, do you want to get well? Some translations do you want to be healed? Jesus was moved with compassion for this man. 38 years. And he asked this question, do you want to get well? And I don't know about you, but I just stop and I say, what kind of question is that? This guy's been crippled for 38 years. Maybe some body language or vocal intonation of Jesus would help us out?

Is he excited? Do you want to get here? Is he critical? Do you want to get healed? Is he stoic? We're not given the specifics, but I do believe that in this one phrase, Jesus is making two things very clear. The first is that Jesus is making a very personal connection with this one man. On this day, it was not like an Oprah Winfrey healing invitation.

You know, "you get a healing, and you get a healing, and you get a healing." Jesus is walking through a crowd of disabled people, and he speaks to one man, and he says, "Do YOU want to be well? I believe that as Jesus did this, he modeled for us being led by the Holy Spirit, not by the need around him. There were many disabled people, Jesus could have healed this day.

But instead, he has a pointed conversation with one man. Later in the same chapter, John describes this as it says, Jesus gave them this answer. Very truly, I tell you the son can do nothing by himself. He can do only what he sees the father doing because whatever the father does, the son also does.

Jesus only did what the father called him to do, and he did that by the directing of the Holy Spirit in his life. And yet, how many times as Christians do we try to solve every problem around us? We feel the weight of every person's need, every person's hurt, and we think, I must do something about everything, and we can find ourselves in a place of complete burnout.

Trying to be everything to everyone. Jesus modeled letting the Holy Spirit guide his steps. I love how pastor Gary Hamrick puts this. "Ministry can't be driven by the power of human need. It must be directed by the power of the Holy Spirit." And I believe we far too often ignore the holy spirits role of leading and directing our steps.

Galatians 5 25 says if we live by the spirit, let us also keep in step with the spirit. The implication is yes, we've received the Holy Spirit and he gives us life, but now he wants to be your daily personal, intimate, guide on what you're to say, who you're to help, how you're to live. And Jesus modeled that for us in this passage.

The second thing I see in Jesus question to this man is that Jesus is questioning his perspective. I envision the implied question, are you okay with this? Are you really interested in being well? Or have you just accepted that this is who you'll always be? Leads us to a hard truth this morning, and that is that some people don't want to be healed of their sin.

They've decided there are two in love with their sin to want to really be free from it. They'd rather stew in the bitterness than feel the life-giving power of forgiveness. They'd rather stay in their drunkenness than

know what it means to be whole and sober. They'd rather the dopamine hit over and over again from sexual sin. Than the purity that's offered in Christ.

Some people don't want to be healed. We want to be rid of the consequences of our sin. But many times, I don't think we really want to be rid of our sin. Look at the man's response to Jesus in verse 7. Sir, the invalid replied, I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I'm trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.

I see in this man's response and implied, "I want to. I do. But I've tried. Nobody else cares. And I never make it. And I've just come to realize this is always who I'm going to be." There's a despair. We read on in verse 8. Then Jesus said to him, get up.

Pick up your mat and walk. Do you see that exclamation point? Get up. You're done being the victim here. I'm not like everybody else. I see you and I do have mercy on you. Picture that. By the sheep gate, you have the lamb of God at the pool of mercy offering mercy to this man.

The beginning of verse 9, we read at once the man was cured and he picked up his mat and walked. This man was healed in an instant, think about it. John began his gospel referring to Jesus as the word of God. God's avenue through which he communicates with humanity. The one through whom God spoke and all life came to be, and that same Jesus speaks.

And this man is healed. Get up. And the man obeyed Jesus. He didn't just sit around and say, no, thanks. I think I'll stay at the pool. He responds in faith and obedience, and I think to myself, what a beautiful place to end this story, right? Well, we're going to continue reading. The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, and so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, it is the Sabbath, the law forbids you to carry your mat.

No. Come on, say it with me now. No. Come on, this feels like every Hollywood movie where the main character has made a huge lapse of judgment and everything is just crumbling around them. And I think to myself, what was Jesus thinking? He definitely knew it was the Sabbath. He was well acquainted with the religious leaders of the time. How could he not see this coming?

But remember, Jesus only did exactly what the father had called him to do by the leading of the Holy Spirit. There are no missteps in the life of Christ. Remember, it's very intentional interaction. Jesus knew exactly who he's going to see. He knew exactly what he wanted to do for the man. And he knew exactly the consequences of what he had done.

Now, there are two main reasons I can see for Jesus doing this on the Sabbath. And I'd like to read a verse that gives some context first. In Mark two, 27 through 28, we read, then he said to them, the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the son of man is lord even of the Sabbath. You see, God intended the Sabbath to be a blessing to humanity.

And Jesus in this passage is coming. And he's comparing the lifeless legalism of the religious leaders of the time to the merciful life giving power that's found in him. The religious leaders over time had perverted the intent of God's law. They'd made it something controlling and demeaning and for self righteousness and Jesus comes in he brings mercy and healing.

The second thing I see is that Jesus is exposing his divinity again, that he is God. Because who has the final say over what happens on the Sabbath? The one who is lord of the Sabbath. Jesus is saying, I'm not like what you've seen before. And I'm God.

We read on in verse 11, but he replied, the man who made me well said to me, pick up your mat and walk. I envisioned this guy saying, hey, I know you're mad, but I was crippled for 38 years. Nobody else showed me mercy. This guy comes. He shows me mercy. He heals me of my disability.

I'm obeying him. This leads us to the truth that Christ changes our obedience from a responsibility to a response. It's no longer just a set of rules for this man filled with guilt or pride or condescension. It's a response to what Jesus has done for him.

A humble act of gratitude and obedience, I personally love talking to someone who has been radically healed by Jesus. I'm talking somebody, maybe it was their faith experience of saying yes to Jesus. And they just talk with a sweetness. Of man. Look at what Christ has done for me. Maybe it's someone who's been rescued from a sin struggle. And they just humbly say, you gotta meet this Jesus.

You have no idea who I used to be. There's a tenderness, a humility and an invitation to those around them. We read in verse 12, so they asked him, who is this fellow who told you to pick up your mat and walk? These guys are ticked off, they had to know it was Jesus. Can I just say that? They had to know it was Jesus. Nobody else was going around. Healing people at that time.

Nobody else was challenging their authority so publicly, they were frustrated and they wanted a confrontation. We read on, then, in verse 13, the man who was healed had no idea who it was. For Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there. I love this. What? This guy did not even know who healed him, didn't even know it was Jesus.

But in this statement, I see Jesus intentionality once again. Coming through the crowd, I'm here for you. Get up and then Jesus intentionally just slides back into the crowd. Jesus continues this pattern of intentionality then in verse 14. Says later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, see you are well again.

Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you. Jesus once again seeks this man out intentionally and all the crowds at the temple and I believe that Jesus is making two things clear. The first is, I know the real you. I know why you were crippled. Jesus is saying that this man's disability was a result of sin in his life.

Now please don't misunderstand me. We do not believe that all sin and are all sickness and disease and difficulties withheld health are a result of sin. But scripture does directly say that at times it is. And in this man's situation, Jesus is saying, I know the real you. I know why you're crippled.

And the second thing I see Jesus saying is that I care more about your soul than your earthly body. The something worse that Jesus is referencing is hell, eternal separation from God. And he's saying to this man, I want more for you than just your body to be well. I want you to know me and I want you to experience the fullness of eternity with me.

Now I want us to be clear on our understanding of physical healing. I think this can be a tricky part here. You see, when Christ died on the cross, and he rose from the grave, we believed that he did pay for all sin. And included in that is all sickness, all disability, all infirmities, and I asked the question then, if Jesus paid for every sickness in every disability in every disease, why are Christians always healthy?

Why are we always the healthiest of people and always receiving a healing? And the reality is that God desires to make all things new. That is true, and that has been purchased by Jesus Christ. To make a new heaven and a new earth someday, and one day to give us new bodies, no longer bound to this life of sin and death.

And then for the believer, it's actually God's mercy that we don't live forever in this life. Death, the very punishment for sin at scripture says has lost its sting because we read that to be absent from this body is to be present with the lord. God has turned the tables.

I believe that this presents the truth that God is far more interested in our intimacy with him than in our temporary comfort. As a matter of human experience, personal experience and history, we see that believers have found greatest intimacy and dependency on Christ in the moment of their greatest trials.

The church is persecuted. It expands. You're dealing with a health crisis. You find yourself on your knees at the feet of Jesus daily. Emotional trauma drives us to our king. These things have a way of ripping our gaze off of the temporary things of this life to what matters for eternity. And Jesus wanted this man to know, yeah, I care about your body, but I'm way more interested.

That you know me intimately. God desires intimacy with us. Far more than he desires our physical comfort. We conclude then with verse 15, the man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well. As we closed today, I'd like to talk directly to the issue of sin crippling the church.

We are God's people. Called to be his ambassadors. To spread the good news to a lost and dying world, scripture refers that we are God's ministers of reconciliation, literally we are to be helping reconcile people to God by the blood of Jesus and by faith in Jesus. And instead of running this race with perseverance, I think we often find ourselves sitting at the pool.

Crippled by our sin. Not experiencing the fullness of life that God has for us. And we tell ourselves, I've tried so many times, it just never works out. And this is just who I'm going to be. For me, that was almost two decades of sitting at the pool, crippled by sexual sin.

And for 15 of those years, I desperately wanted to be healed. And just like this man, I found myself answering the questions, I've tried, I just never get it right. This is just me. This is always who I'm going to be. By God's grace, I heard the words of Jesus Christ to me.

Saying, get up. I have intentionally come to meet with you and I can. Heal you. Now, what does that look like practically? Sometimes I believe that God can take it. Someone who struggled with alcoholism and immediately they no longer can even taste it.

Someone who is radically healed from their sin struggle, more practically speaking, and in my life, I want to give you three steps that this looks like. One, it's about learning to operate in the authority of Christ. To say Christ has purchased my healing from the sin. He has defeated it, he has all authority, and as Jesus said, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me so I give it to you.

Christ has authority over my sin. And then I have to realize that that's by the ministry of the Holy Spirit in my life. This is not about Christians saying I'm going to try harder next time, and we're going to be shiny, happy people. No. This is about saying, I can't do this alone. Jesus, I need you through the power of the Holy Spirit, to do what I can't. And I need you to fill me, and I need you to move in my life.

And then practically speaking, that's through the biblical tools that God has given us for victory. And I want you to know that this third step oftentimes happens in community. It's about getting with other people who have walked a mile and can say, let's get into God's word. Let's acknowledge the authority of Christ, believe for power in the Holy Spirit, and then let's see what God has already given us for our victory and let's walk in that.

By God's grace, I can say I'm not the man I was. And I'm running again. And I'm not sitting by the pool anymore. I'm still human, I still am on this journey, but I thank God that he called me to get up. I don't know what you're struggling with today. But I want to tell you that God is speaking to you intentionally through his word.

And he asks you the question, do you want to be healed? And if you say in your heart, yes, I want to be healed more than I want my sin. I'm tired of sitting crippled by the pool. And I know I can't do this on my own. Then I want to encourage you that Jesus words to you today are get up, get up, it's time to start living again.

It's time to start running again for the kingdom and for the gospel. It's time. It's time that the church was salty again. And that the church was light again to those around us. Going to make a very bold and practical invitation right now. If you're hearing my words, you're a male and you're over 18.

And you say, I've been sitting by the pool of sexual sin. Maybe it's lustful thinking or pornography or you fill in the blank. I want to invite you to a Wednesday night class we're starting. Or we're going to be doing these very things. There's room for 16 men, I can't open it up to everybody, but 16 men who would say, I'm done.

I hear the words of Jesus to me today telling me to get up. And I'm ready to start running again for my marriage for my home for my family, for my friendships, for the gospel. I'm asking you to take a step of faith today, and your bulletins, there's a QR code with an invitation to that class. Would you be bold? Would you step out? What if God did a restoring and healing work in our church?

What if the men and women of God were men and women of integrity? That instead of feeling uncomfortable when we hear the word and uncomfortable when we worship, that we'd be surrendered and saying, I am all in. I'm done sitting by the pool. What would the gospel initiative of this church be in that place? What would our community look like? How would they view us? I don't think they'd view us as "the stuck-up church on 200."

I think they'd see us as the humble, healed people who invite others into that. Maybe your struggle is not sexuality today, and you just say, I still want to say yes, lord. I want to be healed. I want to invite you...come! As pastor Joel said, we're going to have the prayer team on each side. Come pray with someone. Or if you want to just do business with the lord privately, come to the altar, but let's believe again that Jesus is God and there's life in his name.

Would you pray with me this morning? Lord, I thank you that you are a merciful God. Lord, I just ask that this would not be misinterpreted today as throwing stones. But lord, just as you came with mercy and compassion for this one man and said, get up. Lord, I just ask that you would invite us each to do that today again.

And lord, in your authority, by the ministry of the Holy Spirit and through the truth of your word, I pray that as a church we would rise again. And we would be salt and we would be light in a lost and dying age. Lord, we ask for this in Jesus name. Amen.