

## Introduction:

### I. Remember the Flow of John's Gospel

#### A. Theological not Chronological

1. We will see that Jesus was in Judea, then Galilee, and now Jerusalem
2. Yet, in chapter 6—when we get there. Haha—we will see that Jesus is back in Galilee (6:1)
3. We must remember that what we are reading is not necessarily chronological, though, those elements are present at times in John's Gospel.

### II. Critical Thinking

#### A. Are the Liberals Changing the Bible?!

1. No.
2. Most modern translations, particularly for our church (CSB, NASB, NIV and ESV) do not contain v. 4.
  - a) Only the KJV and NKJV contain the verse.

#### B. Why the Change?

1. ESV Footnote, "The material about an angel of the Lord stirring the water and bringing healing appear in some early manuscripts but not the earliest. Thus, v. 4 should not be considered scripture."<sup>1</sup>
2. Most general verses that we see "removed" from the KJV or NKJV are not because of alterations from modern translators but because the earliest, most reliable manuscripts tend to be favored since they are closest to the original wording of the inspired authors.

#### C. No Need to Worry

1. Some times, changes like what we see in v. 4 can be worrisome but we have to trust that, if the earliest, most reliable manuscripts we have do not contain that verse, then we are faced with choosing to treat it as scripture or not.
2. Equally, we must realize that the verse does **not** impact the meaning of the text nor the overall message of John 5 and the gospel as a whole.

#### D. Support for Authenticity

1. We can gloss over vv. 1-2 pretty quickly as mere information, but the knowledge of the region, the actual pool of Bethesda, and even knowing the Aramaic is a nice little detail for us modern readers to conclude that we are reading someone who was not only involved but knew what was going on intimately rather than superficially.
2. Never forget our context and the overall message of John's Gospel and its relation to the entire gospel message for the benefit of all who believe (1:12-13).

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<sup>1</sup> This is an ESV footnote from my study bible. I am sure other study bibles say the same or do not take as strong a stance as mine does.

## Exegesis of John 5:1-18

### I. Jesus' Travels and Location (vv. 1-2)

#### A. Jesus Attends a Jewish Feast

1. the inclusion of this detail seems insignificant, but it is not.
2. In one sense, Jesus' location does not impact his ability to perform miracles but the location he decides to travel to proves crucial when you consider v. 3.

#### B. Archaeological Finds

1. In the Northeastern quarter of Jerusalem near the church of St. Anne there were adjacent pools and these pools not only match up with Jesus' whereabouts but the narrators intimacy with the information or that he is an eyewitness.
2. We do believe that the author is the apostle John and is an eyewitness.
3. Such details and archeological finds are nice apologetic details for the believer and the reliability of the NT.

### II. The General and Specific Character(s) (vv. 3 and 5)

#### A. First Thing's First:

1. Verse 4 is omitted.
2. As I noted above (and will mention in the lesson), we see here that verse 4 is not in the modern translations.
3. One commentator notes that not only is this verse not in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts, but the ones that do contain the verse have many variants within them.
  - a) He even goes on to say that the verse itself, despite making into later manuscripts, is not original by content and by wording.
  - b) While it is good that the scribes who copied the manuscripts kept everything, we can see what seems to be original in the wording of the NT and what is not and this is a good thing.

#### B. The General Characters

1. The blind, the lame, and the paralyzed (
  - a) The blind is easy to understand in terms of a group description.
  - b) When the author makes reference to "the lame" he is not merely referring to people that cannot walk.
    - (1) Rather, it is general physical inability in various forms.
  - c) The paralyzed is not about immobile people, but rather those who have a disability rooted in disease.
    - (1) Withered, is another idea the author has in mind.
2. The "Invalid" Man
  - a) CSB refers to this man as "disabled."

- b) Verse 8 queues us in to the disability the man suffered from, namely, he could not walk.

### III. Jesus Heals the Lame Man (vv. 6-9)

#### A. Jesus Knew the Man's Condition

1. Another meaning for the Greek word *Gnisko* denotes the idea of “learning.”
  - a) The commentator I am reading renders the translation as Jesus learning.
2. This may seem odd to us at first glance, but Jesus learning is not abnormal (Luke 2:52).
3. What we see, in essence, is a balance of Jesus' humanity (learning) and yet His omniscience as God (Jesus already knew this fact about the man given His divine nature)

#### B. Jesus' Question (v. 6)

1. This is the second time we see Jesus initiate such a conversation—the first being the Woman at the Well (John 4)
  - a) We saw, last week, that the Royal official came to Jesus with the request, rather than the other way around.
2. The key focus in Jesus' question might seem to be “well” but really what Jesus is indicating, perhaps, is the ideal of “becoming” well.
  - a) The question is striking, given that the man was near the well but, as we will learn, he was not able to get in it.

#### C. The Man's Response (v. 7)

1. Here, we see another person missing what Jesus is truly asking.
2. The man, rightfully, sees Jesus as a mere passerby (denoting Jesus as “sir”).
3. The man seems to think that it is the “stirred” waters that will heal him, yet misses the point of the one asking him about being well.
  - a) Now, the man is right to be *koi* since he thinks Jesus to be a mere passerby who isn't all that interested.
  - b) Despite the spiritual blindness and sickness, Jesus acts!

#### D. Jesus' Divine Command (vv. 8-9)

1. The sudden abruptness of Jesus' command is stunning to a degree.
  - a) This is the same divine authority with which Jesus, the Word, created the universe (1:3)
2. Each command is emphatic “!”
3. The man's response is immediate (v. 9).
4. Jesus' divine command is not ignored—and, moreover, it is intentional.

### IV. The Conflict With the Jews (vv. 10-13)

#### A. Sabbath “Rules”

1. The Jews expressed their frustration with what they saw the healed lame man doing (v. 10).
2. The man's response is quite simple:
  - a) "The man who healed me told me to pick up my mat and walk."
3. The Jews, continually frustrated asked the man who the person was who told him to pick up his mat, but the man did not know who it was because Jesus, in essence, snuck away in the crowds (v. 13)

#### V. Jesus Finds the Healed Lame Man (vv. 14-16)

##### A. The Call to Sin No More (v. 14)

1. Notice Jesus' expectation after the person is made well—cease to sin.
  - a) Now, the idea here is not sinless perfection.
  - b) Rather, stop sinning in a habitual manner that was once part of who he was as a "lame" man.
  - c) The Spiritual aspect is just as clear as the physical aspect—healing, spiritually, obligates the one with faith to strive to not live in the habit of sin.

##### B. The Man Reports to the Jews (v. 15)

1. The man tells the Jews that it was Jesus who healed him.

##### C. The Jews Attempt to Persecute Jesus (v. 16)

1. The tension builds between Jesus and the Jews by this very statement.
2. The cry from the Jews is not Jesus' power but His breaking of the "law" by doing such things on the Sabbath.

#### VI. Jesus' Response to the Jews (vv. 17-18)

##### A. Jesus and the Father (v. 17)

1. The statement by Jesus is stunning!
2. Jesus says that the Father works on the Sabbath and not only this, but He also.
3. That is, the Father is drawing people to the Son (a topic that will come to greater light in chapter 6) and the Son is saving them (3:34-36)

##### B. Jesus is Equal With the Father (v. 18)

1. This statement of v. 17 is clearly understood by the Jews—they see He makes Himself equal with God.
2. Not only is God able to do whatever He desires on His time ("working on the Sabbath") but Jesus' claim that the Father is His Father is horrid to the Jews.
3. The Jews think they understand God but they do not since they deny Jesus' claim in anger and desire for murder.
  - a) They desire this "all the more..."
  - b) Strong and terrifying words regarding their spiritual condition.