

Pastor Jim Jackson, 7/27/25
Days With Jesus, Day 11—Healing The Handicapped Heart
John 5:1-16

The man laid at the HOUSE of mercy

Arriving from Galilee, Jesus approaches Jerusalem from the north at the Sheep Gate. Just outside the gate there was a large pool called Bethesda (“House of mercy”) where infirm people would sit under roofs waiting for the water to move. As the pool was a mikvah (ritual bath) not spring-fed, any movement was said to be by angels and the first one in would be healed. *Whether by mineral, medicine, or miracle, God can use the natural or supernatural to heal the hurting* (Ex. 15:26; Ps. 103:2-4; 147:3). A man laid at the pool for 38 years with an ailment that didn’t allow him to get into the water. And he had no friends or family who would wait with him for a miracle. Even when no one else believed, he never gave up on God. *Never give up hope in the goodness of God* (Job 13:15; Jer. 29:11; Rom. 8:28; 12:12; 15:13)! God isn’t hard-hearted to our pain. His desire is to be loving to us *in* our pain and to show us who we are *through* our pain. Mental anxiety, emotional insecurity, financial instability, and physical disability are God’s tools to mold our character and remind us that this world isn’t our home. God isn’t sadistic, He is savior. *God’s goal in using hardship is to produce a right heart that is eternal before a right body that is temporary* (Rom. 5:3, 4)!

The man met the GOD of mercy

Walking through the crowd, Jesus doesn’t heal everyone but stops at the well-known man and asks if he wants to be healed. He responds with an excuse, but Jesus responds with power. *People don’t need a healing, people need a Healer!* As the man gets up, Jesus tells him to take his mat. But when the religious leaders see him walking with a mat, instead of celebrating the miracle, they rebuke him for carrying a load on the Sabbath, which broke their man-made rules. God’s original intent in the Law was to simply rest from occupational work and worship God on the Sabbath (Ex. 20:8-11). But former rabbis added human rules (oral law) to God’s law creating legalism and control. *Legalism doesn’t protect God’s holiness, it just promotes human pride*. Later, Jesus finds him walking around the temple and is happy for him but warns him about using his new body to sin against the One who healed him. It does no good to have more health but use it for more sin (1 Cor. 6:20). *God’s grace and mercy should be used for God’s glory and magnification!*