

# Summary

In this sermon, Pastor Chris draws from John chapter 5 and the story of the Pool of Bethesda to illustrate how Jesus, the living water, brings healing and mercy to those who are willing to respond to His voice. The pool, whose name means 'House of Mercy' in Hebrew, had become a place of misery for the blind, lame, and sick who gathered there hoping for a miraculous stirring of the waters. Among them was a man who had been there for 38 years, so accustomed to his condition that he had begun to make excuses rather than simply answer yes to Jesus's question: 'Wilt thou be made whole?' Pastor Chris challenges the congregation not to become comfortable in their chaos, allowing their struggles, sicknesses, or past hurts to define their identity. Just as Jesus walked into the House of Mercy and brought real, living-water healing to the impotent man, He still walks into our places of need today. The call is to stop trusting in stagnant, stirred-up circumstances and instead respond in faith and obedience when the Lord says 'Rise.' Only one man in that multitude responded to Jesus that day, and the pastor urges every person present to be that one who reaches out, lays their burden down, and receives what God is ready to pour out.

## Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today as a group of people who each carry our own burdens, questions, and needs. Just as You walked into the House of Mercy and saw every person lying by that pool, You see each one of us right now. Lord, we ask that You open our hearts and minds to what You want to speak to us today. Remove any distractions, any pride, or any excuses that would keep us from hearing Your voice clearly. May Your Holy Spirit guide our conversation, and may we leave this time changed by Your presence. In the name of Jesus, amen.

## Ice Breaker

If you could visit any body of water in the world, whether an ocean, a lake, a river, or a waterfall, where would you go and why?

# Key Verses

- John 5:2-4
- John 5:5-9
- Malachi 3:10

# Questions

- The man at the Pool of Bethesda had been in his condition for 38 years. Have you ever found yourself so used to a difficult situation that it started to feel normal? How did you recognize that it was time for a change?
- Jesus asked the impotent man, 'Wilt thou be made whole?' (John 5:6). Why do you think Jesus asked a question that seemed to have an obvious answer? What does that question reveal about the importance of our own willingness in receiving healing or change?
- Instead of simply saying yes, the man made excuses about why he could not get into the water. In what areas of your life are you most tempted to make excuses rather than step out in faith?
- Pastor Chris described how the pool had become stagnant when the fresh water stopped flowing in, and how that stagnation caused the religious and wealthy crowd to leave. What happens to a church, a family, or an individual when the 'fresh water' of God's presence is no longer flowing? What are some signs of spiritual stagnation?
- Pastor Chris pointed out that the man's identity had become tied to his condition, just as the woman with the issue of blood and the crippled man by the gate were known by their afflictions. Have you ever allowed a painful experience, a label, or a past failure to define who you are? How does God's Word speak to your true identity?
- Jesus told the man to 'Rise, take up thy bed, and walk' (John 5:8), commanding immediate obedience. Why is obedience to God's voice so important, and what can happen when we delay or ignore what He is calling us to do?
- Pastor Chris noted that there was a multitude of people at the pool that day, but only one responded to Jesus. What do you think kept the others from calling out to Him? What keeps people today from responding to what God is offering them?
- The sermon ended with a strong invitation for people to lay their burdens down and not walk out of the 'House of Mercy' empty-handed. What is one specific need, burden, or area of your life that you feel God is calling you to surrender to Him right now?

# Life Application

This week, identify one area of your life where you have grown comfortable in a difficult situation or where you have been making excuses instead of trusting God. Write it down, pray over it each day, and take one concrete step of obedience in faith, whether that is reaching out to someone for accountability, spending extra time in God's Word, or simply saying yes to what you know God has already been asking of you. Let this be the week you stop lying by the pool and start walking in the healing and freedom that Jesus offers.

## Key Takeaways

- Jesus, the living water, walks into our places of misery and brings real mercy. Just as He entered the House of Mercy at Bethesda, He meets us right where we are when we cannot get to Him on our own.
- Comfort in chaos is a spiritual danger. When we grow accustomed to our struggles, we risk losing the desire to be made whole, and we can end up communicating only with others who are equally stuck.
- Our identity must be rooted in Christ, not in our pain, our past, or our problems. Allowing a sickness, a sin, or a season of suffering to define us robs us of who God has called us to be.
- Obedience to God's voice is the key that unlocks healing and breakthrough. The impotent man received his miracle the moment he acted on the command of Jesus, not before.
- God is ready to pour out blessing, but it requires a willing and responsive people. Among the entire multitude at the pool, only one man responded to Jesus, and that response made all the difference.

## Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, we thank You for being the living water that flows into every dry and stagnant place in our lives. We thank You that You do not wait for us to find our way to You, but that You walk right into our House of Mercy and call us by name. As we leave this discussion today, we ask that the truths we have talked about would not stay in this room but would take root deep in our hearts. Where we have been lying by the pool, give us the courage to rise. Where we have been making excuses, give us the faith to say yes. Where our identity has been stolen by pain or by

the past, remind us of who You say we are. Pour out Your Spirit on each person here, on their families, and on every need that was spoken or left unspoken today. We trust You, Lord, and we choose to praise You even before we see the answer. In the mighty name of Jesus, amen.