

John-10
“Do you want to get well?”
John 5:1-9 (NIV)

Hey Newsong!

I want to take a moment and welcome our first-time guests and those who are watching us online!

So glad that you're here! We're walking verse by verse through John's Gospel...it's going to take us a year to do it, but we'll be better for it!

John was a disciple of Jesus...He had a front row seat to His ministry and His miracles...not only that, John was Jesus' best friend!

Series Verse

31 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.

What we've learned so far is that Jesus loves people...all kinds of people!

In chapter two...He blesses a couple at their wedding

In chapter three...He has a conversation with a rich Jewish rabbi

In chapter four...He has a conversation with a Samaritan Woman at a well...Then He ends up ministering in that Samaritan town for three days...And they become believers in Jesus...

Last week, Pastor Barbara walked us through the end of chapter four. We saw how Jesus healed the son of one of Herod's officials...and that pagan official and his whole family become believers in Jesus!

We're learning a lot about Jesus as we see Him interact with and minister to people...

Rich people, poor people, powerful people, powerless people, religious people, young people, old people...

It just goes to show us that Jesus loves all people...and all people need Jesus!

John 5:1-9 (NIV)

Pray

As I've mentioned before, a lot of what we read in John's Gospel is unique to John...

Stories like Jesus changing water into wine, talking with Nicodemous, ministering to the Samaritan Woman at the well...these stories are not found in Matthew, Mark & Luke...

Now here in John Chapter 5, we have another miracle that is unique to John's Gospel...

John tells us that Jesus has gone back to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish Feasts...

Three times a year the Jewish people were required to travel to Jerusalem and celebrate Passover, Pentecost & Tabernacles...

And during these times the city and the Temple would be overflowing with people...

We see that John tells us that Jesus and His disciples were near the Sheep Gate...

“There were different gates around the walled city of Jerusalem. The Sheep Gate was located on the Northeastern part of the wall, and It was the gate through which men would bring their sheep for sacrifice at the Temple”-Gary Hamrick

John mentions that there was a pool nearby...more than likely this pool was fed by an underground fresh water spring...

It's called in the Aramaic language "Bethesda" which means "House of Mercy"

Notice the details in these first two verses...

5 Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades

-Jn 5:1–2 (NIV)

Something you may not know...

For hundreds of years liberal theologians and skeptics used John chapter 5 to prove that the Bible was inaccurate and untrustworthy...

And the reason was because this pool with five colonnades hadn't been found...so they claimed that this story in John 5 was ultimately made up story...

And if John made this story up..you really can't trust anything else John said...

This was their argument for years...that is until Archaeologists were digging near the Sheep Gate in 1888 and found a pool...then in 1956 archaeologists unearthed a rectangular pool that had (guess how many) five colonnades... just like John described!

Over and over again history and archaeology help prove that the Word of God is true!

I don't know about you...but whenever I read John chapter five, I kind of pictured the pool of Bethesda about the size of a baptismal tank...

You know...something you walk down into and then walk out the other side...the Pool of Bethesda is huge...it's larger than an Olympic sized swimming pool!

So this makes sense when we read vs. three...

3 Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed.-Jn 5:3 (NIV)

The Greek Word for “great number” is **play'-thos** it means a multitude of people...

It's the same word used in Matthew 14 when Jesus fed over 4,000 people...Mark uses the same word “play'-thos” to describe when Jesus fed over 5,000 people...

This means that at this time during this Jewish feast there are thousands of people laying around this pool...

This isn't people who are on vacation...enjoying the sun, cold drinks and food...John tells us that these people are sick, blind, lame and paralyzed...

Now if you're reading the NIV, ESV, or NLT you'll notice that there is no verse 4...it goes from 3 to 5...

What's up with that?

The modern translations omit the last part of verse 3 and all of verse 4 because they're not found in some of the oldest Greek manuscripts...

So because they appear in some and not all, the modern translations decided not to add them, and have a footnote...

Here's the way the NKJV reads

3 In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. 4 For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water;

then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had.-Jn 5:3-4 (NKJV)

Most scholars believe that a scribe must have added these words as a side note to help explain why all of these sick people were laying around the pool...

David Guzick comments... *“There was a legend that during the feast times, the waters would stir and the first person in would be healed”*

Have you ever noticed that wherever there's a legend...there's a crowd?

Bath House in Warm Springs VA...

Regardless of how the waters were stirred up...clearly something was happening to draw thousands of sick and suffering people, with the hope of being healed...

Can you imagine the desperation they felt?
If you've ever been around the sick and
suffering you know what this must have looked
like...

Many years ago Pastor Cyndie, Pastor Barbara
and myself were part of a missions trip to
Calcutta India.

While in Calcutta, we had an opportunity to
minister in a hospital that the original
missionaries built.

People were laying around on gurneys, some
with visible ailments, others you could just tell
by the look on their face that they were
suffering...

We traveled up to the children's wing of the
hospital...dressed as clowns, we made little
balloon animals, and prayed for both children
and parents...

Although many of the children were able to laugh and play along with us...some of them were so sick that they could only form a tiny little smile...

I will never forget the look of desperation on the faces of some of those parents...Many of them were either Hindu or Muslem...but in that moment...it didn't matter to them if we prayed in Jesus name...

They just wanted their child to be healed...

If you're a parent, you know what it's like to have a child who is sick...even if it's a bad cough or the flu...it's a helpless feeling to not be able to comfort them...

You would do anything for your child...You would travel to Jerusalem and bathe in the pool of Bethesda if you thought it would help!

You've got to think that around this pool there are desperate family members...

They've been praying and asking God for healing and their healing has not yet come...

They're yearning, longing, struggling, crying and praying...sitting there...watching the water...waiting for a sign...

Imagine all of these people packed close together...imagine what it sounds like...what it smells like...

They've come to Bethesda "The House of Mercy" but it looks like The House of Misery...

Some people have been stuck for a **LONG TIME**

5 One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years-Jn 5:5 (NIV)

38 years...the average lifespan in the first century was between 20 & 30 years old...So it's quite possible that this guy was born in this condition...

He's not stuck in a bad day...

He's not stuck in a bad week...

He's not stuck in a bad season...

He's been stuck for decades

This guy's tried it all...nothing has healed him...Perhaps he's tried every kind of treatment you can try...He's out of options...he's broke and he's broken....

So he's come to Bethesda the House of Mercy...as he's probably done multiple times a year every...single...year...

Imagine his frustration...

He's carrying the same mat...
He's coming to the same pool
He sees some of the same people...

And he's hoping that somehow, someday, that
today will be different...

Tire stuck in the snow

Maybe you're here today and you feel like
you're stuck... You're stuck and just spinning

In that same stronghold...
In that same addiction...
In that same mindset...
In that same relationship...
In that same cycle of sin...

It leaves us feeling weak, tired, and hopeless

Just because you've been stuck for a long time
doesn't mean you have to be stuck forever...

Jesus meets us right where we're **STUCK**

6 When Jesus saw him lying there...-Jn 5:6.

Here's what's amazing...

There's thousands of people at this pool...and
Jesus focuses His attention on this one man...

We see in the Gospels that there are times
when we see Jesus have compassion on the
whole multitude...and everybody gets fed...

Here we see that Jesus chooses one out of the
multitude...

Jesus sees individuals as well as multitudes!
You are not just a face in the crowd to Jesus!

This man wasn't even looking for Jesus...

Has no idea Who Jesus is...

But Jesus was looking for him!

He had a divine appointment with this man

You may be stuck...

Thinking that nobody sees your struggle...

Thinking that nobody sees your pain...

Thinking that nobody sees that you've been waiting for something to break...

Jesus sees you!

Jesus comes up to this guy...

And this guy no doubt has his eyes on the pool...

Jesus comes up to him and he asks a crazy question...

“Do you want to get well?”-Jn 5:6 (NIV)

I can picture the guy watching everyone jump in the pool as it's bubbling up again...And here's Jesus kind of boxing him out...

“Do you want to get well?”-Jn 5:6 (NIV)

The guys like ...a yeah! I'm here at Bethesda aren't I? This is why we're all here...we want to get well...

Here's the thing...this may seem like a crazy question...but it's a sincere question and here's why...

Not everyone wants to get better...

Not every stuck person wants to be unstuck...

Not everyone wants things to change...

There's a saying that "misery loves company"

Some people who are stuck like to sit around and talk about being stuck...with other stuck people...

Some people stay stuck because they want sympathy...They want the attention...They want people to hear their stuck story and feel sorry for them...

Some people stay stuck because they want charity...They want those who are compassionate to give them money, or food..

Not everyone at this pool really wanted to be healed...because being healed would be too much change for them...

Some people have been stuck for so long...it's the only way they know how to live...

In a lot of ways the Pool of Bethesda is like a local church...

It's where people come together...We come to God's House...The House of Mercy! We come to worship Jesus...to be changed by Jesus...

to be transformed into the image of Jesus...To be touched and healed by Jesus...To be unstuck by the power of Jesus!

But not everyone who comes to church wants to be changed by Jesus...

Not everyone who comes to church wants to be saved by Jesus...or serve like Jesus...or love like Jesus...

Some people come because they want community...

Some people come because they want sympathy...

Some people come because they want charity...

This man didn't just have a physical problem...He had a hope problem...

He couldn't muster up any strength to believe God that anything could be different at all...

Therefore Jesus comes to this man and makes an honest appeal of faith...where he simply asks him "Do you want to be made well?"-David Guzik

Jesus meets this man right where he's stuck...
And he asks him what seems like a yes or no question...

COMPLAINING is easier than **CHANGING**

Jesus asks do you want to be well? And instead of answering the question he shares his stuck story...

What's a stuck story?

The "stuck story" is all about why we are stuck in the condition we're in...

7 "Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me."-John 5:7 (NIV)

I'm here...but nobody helps me...

I'm here...but people cut in front of me...

I'm here...but I was born this way...

I'm here...but society is against me...

I'm here...but I'm a victim

That's the Stuck Story...

It explains why we're stuck, but offers no hope on how to get unstuck...

Some people only have their stuck story...

I'm stuck...

I was born stuck...

I'm always going to be stuck...

Jesus comes along and asks...

Do you want me to change that?

Do you want me to heal that?

Do you want me to fix that?

And some people actually say no...Because change is hard and it's easier to stay stuck

Please hear me...

To some degree we all have a stuck story we tell...

Some of us may be stuck because of something that has happened to us that was outside of our control...

I want you to know that it's okay to not be okay... You're here or you're watching online and you're stuck... you're hurting... you're broken...

But those things don't define you...

Those things don't have to have power over you...

It's okay to not be okay... but it's not okay to stay that way!

There's hope and healing found in Jesus!

One word from Jesus can change
EVERYTHING

8 Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” 9 At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked...Jn 5:8–9a (NIV)

This is an instantaneous healing...Sometimes God heals through a process...medication, surgery, physical therapy, counseling, diet and exercise...sometimes He heals through a process...

But sometimes God heals instantaneously...I've seen Jesus heal instantly...
deaf ears opened...deformed limbs
straightened...tumors gone...

I've met people who were addicted to drugs and alcohol...

They came to the altar to receive Jesus and were instantly delivered from their addiction...never to return!

We see in the Gospels that sometimes Jesus healed people because He saw their faith...

This guy doesn't have faith to be healed by Jesus...He thinks that the only way that he can be healed is by the pool...

Friend...don't think that Jesus only heals one way...God can heal anyway He wants to!

Jesus just looks at this guy...He's laying there stuck on that same mat...And Jesus says Get Up!

No pool...

No ceremony...

No ritual...

Just the authority of Jesus' Word!

Now we see this pattern again...

In chapter 4 John said that Samaritan village believed because of Jesus Word...

The official rested in Jesus' Word that his son was healed...

Now this man hears Jesus say "Get Up" and he responds to His Word...

Jesus told this man to do something that was impossible for him to do...get up, this guy couldn't do that...pick up your mat...na...walk?

But Jesus challenged this man in an instant...It's like He was saying...Can you believe Me to do the impossible in your life?

You know what the man doesn't do? He doesn't start to repeat his stuck story...Instead of saying I can't do that...He just instantly responds to Jesus Words "Get Up!"

Instantly that thing which had kept him stuck for 38 years was gone...John tells us that the man got up "at once"

You can respond to Jesus with I can't...and tell your stuck story...

Or you can respond to Jesus with You Can...and act upon what Jesus is telling you to do!

This guy walked away a changed man...
The mat carried him in...
He carried the mat out...

We'll finish up this story next week...
But you may have a question...and that question is why did Jesus only heal this guy?

Certainly Jesus cared for them all...
But here at the House of Mercy...Near the Sheep Gate, the Lamb of God walks in

And nobody recognizes Him...

Nobody calls out to Him...

“The scene at the Pool of Bethesda may have been much different if people would have called out “Jesus Son of God, Heal Me...”

Jesus Son of God, would You please meet my need. Nobody did that at the Pool of Bethesda. Jesus came in as if nobody noticed Him, and that’s why He approached one particular man”-David Guzik

None of them looked at Jesus...they all had their eyes on the pool...they were focused on the bubbling water...instead of the Living Water

They were focused on their way...instead of the True Way...

There’s a lot of people that are stuck because they’re waiting for some other way...

I want to do it my way...so I'm waiting
It's not the right time...so I'm waiting
I'm waiting for a sign or a wonder...

Don't wait another second...Jesus is available
right now to change your life and meet your
need...No more waiting...Call out to Jesus
Now!

Just like we go to the Dr. with the idea that the
Dr. wants to help us be well...that's the way we
come to the Great Physician...Jesus

You may be thinking...I've been there...I've
done this before...Do it again...and again...and
again...

You keep calling out to Him...You keep coming
close to Him...You keep praising Him...in the
midst of it! You don't have to stay stuck while
you're waiting!

Let us pray for you today...Whether it's physical, emotional, or spiritual...Let's call out to Jesus together! Let's follow James 5

13 Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. 14 Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven. 16 Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results-Jas 5:13–16 (NLT)

What's the Holy Spirit Saying To You?

