

The Gospel of John: *Know Jesus and Live*

Part 12
John 5:1-16

I. Overview

- John's gospel can be divided into two major sections, the book of signs (John 1:19-12:50) and the book of exaltation (13-20). The book of signs is often divided into smaller sub-sections with different points of emphasis and purpose. For example...
 1. The Cana Cycle (Chapters 2-4)
 - The Cana cycle is what we have just finished. It began with Jesus turning water into wine at a wedding in Cana and it ended with Jesus healing an official's son in Cana.
 2. The Festival Cycle (5-10)
 - The festival cycle is called such because much of what is recorded in this section happens during Jewish festivals (5:1, 6:4, 7:2, 10:22). However, the purpose of this section isn't to discuss festivals. It is to demonstrate the "escalating conflict between Jesus and the Jewish authorities"¹ and show more signs that Jesus is the son of God and the savior of the world.

II. Where is verse 4?

- If you own an NIV, NLT, NET, or an ESV Bible you will notice that there is no verse 4. If you own a KJV, NKJV, HCSB, NASB you will have a verse 4 that reads something like this...
 - ❖ John 5:4 (HCSB)--*because an angel would go down into the pool from time to time and stir up the water. Then the first one who got in after the water was stirred up recovered from whatever ailment he had.*
 - 🕒 **Why isn't verse 4 in the ESV?** Many of the oldest and best manuscripts of John's gospel do not have this verse in them. What this tells us is that verse 4 was most likely not in the original. What likely happened is "a copyist drew a marginal note of explanation into the actual text."² In other words, the copyist was trying to explain why the invalids thought they would be healed if they got into the water first when it was stirred. The next generation of copyists saw this marginal note and likely thought it was a part of the Biblical text itself and thus verse 4 was born.
 - 🕒 **Why is verse 4 in the KJV?** Many of the oldest, most thorough, and most complete manuscripts ever discovered were discovered in the last 200 years.³ The KJV was translated before then which means that the translators were without the benefit of these manuscripts.
 - 🕒 **Does this mean the Bible isn't inerrant?** No. When we speak of the Bible being inerrant, we are speaking of the original texts themselves. Copyist have occasionally changed an "L" into an "I" or inserted a bit of marginal material into the text. However, we have so many ancient manuscripts (more than any other historical document BY FAR) that it is fairly easy to spot these copying errors.
 - 🕒 **Is this a big deal? Is this bad?** No. Copying errors like this are extremely rare and they never change the meaning of a text or change any significant doctrine.
 - 🕒 **Should I throw away my KJV, NKJV, and NASB?** No. They are all great translations. Any copying errors contained within don't change the meaning of the text or any significant doctrine.

¹ *ESV Study Bible Notes*

² John Piper, "Healed for the Sake of Holiness" (Sermon Manuscript)

³ For more on this see *How We Got the Bible* by Clinton E. Arnold

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III. Jesus and an invalid

1. A portrait of human depravity



The omniscient Lord among the multitude

- ❖ John 5:3-6--*In these lay a multitude of invalids — blind, lame, and paralyzed. 5 One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty- eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time*
 - Amidst the multitude, Jesus singles out one. Jesus knows everything about everyone there without exception...
 - ❖ John 2:24-25--*But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people 25 and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.*
 - Yet this man is singled out. Jesus knows exactly who he is after and he knows exactly what he is doing. He is preaching the gospel to us by picking out a man who perfectly portrays human depravity and calling him to repentance.



Unable

- ❖ John 5:5-7--*One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty- eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, Do you want to be healed? 7 The sick man answered him, Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.*
 - This man had been an invalid for thirty-eight years and despite the fact that he had placed himself next to the pool of healing, he was utterly unable to attain for himself the healing he so desperately needed. Likewise, people so often spend their whole lives dead in sin. They may surround themselves with people like Oprah, Dr. Phil, and a myriad of self help books, yet they are utterly unable to attain for themselves what they so desperately need...LIFE! Freedom from the sin that enslaves them.
 - ❖ Romans 8:7-8--*For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God 's law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God*



Unwilling

- What kind of reaction should we expect from someone who is desperately longing to be healed when healing is offered? We would expect that person to cry out “YES YES YES! Please heal me!” At the very least we would expect the person to say “Yes, I’ll take it.” This is not the reaction we see in this man.
- ❖ John 5:5-7--*One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty- eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, Do you want to be healed? 7 The sick man answered him, Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.*
 - Rather than saying “yes, I really do!” he makes excuses for himself.
- Remarkably, Jesus heals him anyway...
- ❖ John 5:8-9--*Jesus said to him, Get up, take up your bed, and walk. 9 And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.*

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- What kind of reaction should we expect from someone who receives the healing they have so desperately wanted for so long? We would expect something similar to what happened in Acts 3...
 - ❖ Acts 3:6-8--*Peter said, I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk! 7 And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. 8 And leaping up he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.*
 - However, this is not this man's reaction. He doesn't thank Jesus. He doesn't seem excited in anyway and when he is confronted about carrying his bed on the Sabbath he is quick to say "This wasn't my idea! This isn't my fault!"
 - ❖ John 5:9-11--*Now that day was the Sabbath. 10 So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed. 11 But he answered them, The man who healed me, that man said to me, Take up your bed, and walk.*
 - The man's ingratitude is further demonstrated by the fact that he ratted Jesus out...
 - ❖ John 5:12-16--*They asked him, Who is the man who said to you, Take up your bed and walk ? 13 Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. 14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you. 15 The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. 16 And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath*
- This man's reaction is a portrait of our own hearts before Jesus healed us from our depravity. None of us were seeking God (Romans 3:10). Thank God he sought us ought to make us worshippers who would worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

2. A serious warning

- ❖ John 5:14--*Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.*
 - Every illness or hardship in life is NOT a direct result of one's sinful behavior. We clearly see this in both the life of Job as well as in passages like...
 - ❖ John 9:2-3--*And his disciples asked him, Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? 3 Jesus answered, It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.*
 - That said, Jesus is warning this man that choosing to live a life of sin will sometimes bring about dire consequences. This is seen in other passages like...
 - ❖ 1 Corinthians 11:29-30--*For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30 That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.*
 - ❖ Acts 5:4-5--*...You have not lied to man but to God. 5 When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last.*
- Even more dire than potential consequences in this life is the terrifying thought of having to face Jesus as judge. If this man fails to heed Jesus's message of repentance, at the final resurrection he will have to face Jesus as his judge. The judgement will be rendered as follows...

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- ♣ John 5:29--*those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.*

3. A call to repentance

- ♣ John 5:14--*Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.*
 - Notice in this verse that “Jesus found him.” What this means is that he was looking for him. Jesus had unfinished business with this guy. Apparently Jesus’s whole purpose was not merely physical healing but something more. His purpose in healing him was so that he could look him right in the eye and say “See, you are well! Sin no more” It is as if Jesus is saying...
“My aim in healing your body is the healing of your soul. I have given you a gift. Its free. It came first, before my command. You didn’t earn it. You weren’t good enough for it. I chose you freely. And I healed you. Now, live in this power. Let the gift of healing, the gift of my free grace, be a means to your holiness.⁴”

⁴ John Piper, “Healed for the Sake of Holiness” (Sermon Manuscript)