

John 5:1-15 Notes
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Introduction

- 3 main parts of John 5: The Miracle, Accusation & Defense, Witnesses & Declaration
- Jesus' Life:
 - 4 Unprecedented sensation
 - 4 Authentication of claims
 - 4 Powerful teaching
 - 4 Uncommitted followers – excited over healings and free food
 - 4 Hostility & unrelenting campaign of lies by leaders
 - 4 Rising tide of opposition
 - 4 Death – culmination
- Chapters 1-4 present Jesus as Messiah
- Chapter 5 – major division, shift in attitude, growing rejection
- 3 main miracles (chap 5, chap 9 (blind man), chap 11 (Lazarus)) culminate in Jesus' death
- Jesus picked on their petty traditional regulations, rejected self-righteousness

v.1

- “After this,” “After these things,” “Some time later,” indicates these things occurred at some unspecified time after His ministry in Galilee. Synoptics record quite a bit of material from the time he returned to Galilee and healed the nobleman's son till now.
- “Feast of the Jews” only feast John fails to ID. Probably one of the big 3: Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles. Jewish males required to attend. Mentioned to explain Jesus' presence in Jer. There are 7 major Feasts that some say portray the work of Christ.
 - 4 Passover – Abib 14th – (also known as Nissan – Mar-Apr)
 - 4 Unleavened Bread – Abib 15th-21st
 - 4 First Fruits – Abib 16th
 - 4 Pentecost – 50 days after Passover – Sivan 6th (June)
 - 4 Trumpets – Tishri 1st (Sept-Oct)
 - 4 Day of Atonement – Tishri 10th
 - 4 Tabernacles – Tishri 15th-21st
- “Up” Jerusalem is at a higher elevation than Galilee.
- Note, Jesus fulfilled every “jot and tittle” of the Law for us! Matt 5:17 Including every ritual!

v.2

- Sheep Gate (see pict) – place where sacrificial sheep brought in. Mentioned in Neh. N. wall of Temple mount – in east main wall.
- Helping readers with time and geography again.
- “is” some use this to say that John wrote before 70 AD and the destruction of Jer. Sometimes called “historical present” tense done often by John.
- Bethesda, Betsaida, Bethzatha depending on manuscript. Most likely Bethesda (like our hospital in Md.) means “house of mercy” or “house of outpourings.” “Bethesda” is term found in Dead Sea Scrolls.
- Mini Lesson: “Beth” à house, “iah” à God, “el” à “God”
- 5 porticoes, 5 colonnades, 5 poches (pict)

v.3

- “used” to lie (back to past tense) – great numbers of invalids came here to be healed, much like our Lourdes of France or Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mex. City.
- Most Bibles don't include v.4 here because it is not in the best mss. Many of the words used are foreign to John's writings. It was deemed added by scribes to help provide an explanation. The pool was probably an intermittent spring that would surge and recede.
- And just like our healing places, probably some are really healed. Sometimes the strength of the mind can do amazing things.

v.5&6

- The man had been sick for 38 years! In his feeble condition. All we really know is that he couldn't move very well.
- Jesus "knew" (supernaturally) that this man was a long time in that condition. I believe Jesus picked the most extreme case to demonstrate his divine power.
- "Do you wish to get well?" What a strange question! Many "sick" people don't want to be healed. They don't want help out of their weakness. They like attention, welfare, don't like responsibility – like Palestinians – or work.
- "God helps those that want his help."
- It's the same with sin (a deadly sickness). Do you want to get rid of your sin? Many say no. Not yet.

v.7

- He seems to want healing, but doesn't grasp the offer. Like the woman at the well. He did believe in the water's healing.
- Doesn't look like Jesus' healing even crossed his mind. Must have thought Jesus would help him into the water.
- He didn't even know who Jesus was. Seems kind of hopeless in his tone. Almost given up – don't do that! (Some say he sounds like a crotchety old man answering a stupid question.) As Winston Churchill said, "We will never, never, never, give up." Keep holding your Savior's hand no matter where you find yourself: drugs, drink, lust, marriage, kids, job, health, on and on.

v.8

- Bam! "Get up, pick up your mat, and walk!"
- Jesus didn't say, "I'll help you," or "Let me make you comfortable," or "You want some food?" He goes to the core for repair.
- 3 powerful things are said:
 - 4 Do it – Just like Jesus created the world. Believe, act, move, change – Jesus calls for action. "Be doers of the word not hearers only."
 - 4 Don't go back – (pick up pallet – straw bed, roll, mat) No chance to lie back down. Make no provision for the flesh. (Rom 13:14)
 - § Covenant Eyes program – my friend.
 - § Burn bridges.
 - § The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak (Matt 26:41).
 - § Heart is deceptive (Jer 17:9).
 - § Dog returns to his own vomit. (2 Pet 2:22).
 - 4 Walk – Move forward. Do not expect to be carried.
 - § Look to Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith (Heb 12:2).

V.9

- "At once," "Immediately" the man did what Jesus said.
 - 4 Simple, pure, faith. Usually faith is expressed before healings, but not required.
 - 4 Chapters 5&6 are some of the most supreme/sublime examples of God's sovereignty: Look, the man is chosen & healed. He has the responsibility to act on God's activity (Ordo Salutis). There was nothing (that we know) special about this man. He was healed/saved before he even believed – God's sovereign choice.
 - 4 "Sabbath"
 - § Sabbath was a gift. Sabbath created for man and not man for the Sabbath.
 - § Sabbath is Jewish for cessation, cease, abstain. Great message – rest, delight, trust in the Lord (real meaning of resting in the Lord).
 - § Jesus picked their favorite pet peeve and continuously poked at it.
 - § 7 recorded healings on the Sabbath.

v.10

- Jews immediate response was a celebration, joy, happiness, dancing, praising God... NOT! They rebuked the man for carrying his mat.
- The Sabbath restrictions are their first thoughts.
- Remember the Mishnah describing the Sabbath restrictions, how insane – knots restricted if part of normal occupation – well bucket loop hole.
- This is the beginning of the Jews rejection and condemnation – sets the stage.

- Does their claim have any merit? Neh 13:15-18; Jer 17:21-22: no carrying goods – these passages were aimed at people conducting their ordinary business, livelihood, or occupations. Explain Sabbath in relation to trusting God.
- The folks were religious bigots, unconcerned with the mercy of God. Totally focused on the wrong things. We call this legalism – it is still alive and well today.
- John’s seemingly passive mention of the Sabbath is really a key here.
 - 4 Jesus refused to observe legalistic, man-made rules. Truth à Boundaries à Rules: rules rule! Become more important than the truth.
 - 4 He deliberately chose to heal on the Sabbath to confront them in their superficial, bankrupt faith. He healed 7 times (recorded) on the Sabbath. He could have waited or chosen any other day.
 - 4 Jesus not concerned with their precious rules and traditions – “He broke the old rules steeped in tradition.” – Secret Ambition – *Michael W. Smith*

v.11

- “The man was not the stuff heroes are made of.” [6] He shifts blame, but there is some logic: if the man can heal me, can’t he tell me to carry my mat? The healed man was in deep trouble. Working on Sabbath could be a death sentence. Excommunication was big deal in those days – isolation from community was to make life miserable.

v.12

- “Who would dare tell you to violate our rules (the Law of God)?

v.13

- The man didn’t even know who Jesus was! And yet God still healed him – the nerve.
- Jesus “slipped” away!? (8:59 – hid, slipped; 10:39 – escaped; 12:36 – hid). “He did not walk through Jerusalem bullet proof!” Real man just like us.
- What’s going through the healed man’s mind right here?

v.14

- Jesus found him! How would you like to know that Jesus was looking for you? He is! The “Hound of Heaven” is on your trail; he’s after you!
- Law required thanksgiving offering after healing so, man was at the Temple. He was thankful for God’s mercy. Jesus tested him maybe?
- Whoa! Powerful warning.
 - 4 Not all bad conditions (illnesses, job losses, etc.) are caused by our sin (John 9:1-3).
 - 4 But some are (Gal 6:7; 1 Cor 11:30; Deut 28:58-61)
 - 4 Some conditions are God’s test or correction.
 - 4 This man’s condition was probably the result of a specific sin – some sin was sapping the vitality out of his life. We don’t know and aren’t told. What’s worse than 38 years of debilitating disease? Eternity apart from God: Hell. Eternal consequences.
 - 4 What sins can cause direct physical harm? Lots. And even things like unwarranted guilt, bitterness, etc.
 - 4 The Lamp of Warning is raised.
 - 4 Corporate or national sins even; other’s sins (Jonah and his shipmates).

v.15

- My first reaction was, “What a rat fink!” 40 years sick, Jesus heals you, and you rat him out to the Jews that hate him. Ungrateful rascal.
 - 4 But look at the words: he told them Jesus healed him. He didn’t go back to that “carry the mat” thing.
 - 4 Also, he had to explain himself to their questioning and accusations. They were the authorities. “Submit to authorities placed over you.” Big lesson here.
- So, do you think this man is now a believer?
- Was he just an instrument a tool in a message?

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