

WILT THOU BE MADE WHOLE

TEXT: JOHN 5:1-15

Introduction:

1. We know from John 5:1 that our Lord went up to Jerusalem for "a feast of the Jews."
2. We are not sure which feast this was. The *Scofield Study Bible* says, "Pentecost?"
3. It is interesting that John calls it "a feast of the Jews," and not a feast of the Lord.
4. We see something similar in John 2:13 where it says, "And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem."
5. The first reference to the Passover is in Exodus 12:11, where it is called, "the LORD'S passover."
6. The change from "the LORD'S passover" to "the Jews' passover" indicates the deplorable condition of Judaism during this period.
7. It would get much worse. Soon they would crucify Christ. Then they would persecute and kill His followers. And soon their temple and the city of Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Roman army.
8. The destruction of the temple and the city was the judgment of God just as our Lord had predicted. Our Lord pointed to the magnificent temple, and said to His disciples, "See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matthew 24:2).
9. Here in our story this morning, when our Lord arrived in Jerusalem, He went over to the pool, located next to the sheep market (John 5:2).
10. It is significant that our Lord went to the sheep market or "sheep gate" (cf. margin) because it was where the lambs used for the sacrifice in the temple were brought.
11. Isaiah 53:7 says, "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."
12. These sacrificial lambs entered into the city through this sheep gate.
13. The name "Bethesda" is also very significant (5:2). "Bethesda" is a Hebrew word meaning, "House of Mercy."
14. That is an appropriate name for it was here that our merciful and compassionate Saviour healed an impotent man, "which had an infirmity thirty and eight years" (John 5:5).

15. That is a very long time to lay around, unable to walk, unable to work, unable to even crawl down to the water without somebody jumping in ahead of him (5:7).
16. John 5:4 and the latter part of verse 3 are omitted from the NIV and other modern translations (cf. Scofield margin). This story, especially verse 7, wouldn't make much sense without verses 3 and 4. This is another good reason to stick with the Authorized King James Version.
17. Not only do the vast majority of Greek manuscripts contain this passage exactly as we have here in our Authorized Version, there is also much external evidence supporting these disputed verses (3b and 4). Certain church fathers, such as Tatian, Tertullian, Didymus, Chrysostom, and others, all referred to it in their writings. Edward F. Hills, in his book, *The King James Version Defended*, says that these "Church Fathers attached great importance" to these verses.

I. THE SINNER'S HELPLESS CONDITION

II. THE SINNER'S WONDERFUL SAVIOUR

III. THE SAVIOUR'S SERIOUS WARNING

I. THE SINNER'S HELPLESS CONDITION

1. This poor, hopeless, helpless impotent man is a picture of every lost sinner.
2. First of all, notice he was completely helpless (5:5, 6). The lost, unregenerate sinner is absolutely helpless. He cannot change himself. The prophet Jeremiah said, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil" (Jer. 13:23).
3. Job said, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble." And, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one" (Job 14:1, 4).
4. 3.The lost sinner cannot change himself, nor can he clean himself up. Jeremiah 2:22 says, "For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord GOD."
5. Proverbs 20:9 says, "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?"
6. Man cannot change himself; he cannot clean himself. And neither can he save himself. Romans 5:6 says, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

7. Beloved, we were “yet without strength,” just like this poor impotent man.
8. Andrew Murray said, "Christ wants us to look up to him as our only Helper. 'I have no man to put me in,' must be our cry. Here on earth there is no help for me. Weakness may grow into strength in the ordinary use of means, if all the organs and functions are in a sound state. Sickness needs special measures. Your soul is sick; your impotence to walk joyfully the Christian walk in God's way is a sign of disease; fear not to confess it, and to admit that there is no hope for restoration unless by an act of Christ's mercy healing you" (*The Ministry of Intercession*).
9. In Mark 2:17, our Lord said, "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."
10. Not only was this impotent man helpless, he was also hopeless. The Bible says he “had an infirmity thirty and eight years” (5:5). He was hanging around that pool a very long time waiting for something to happen.
11. Unsaved friend: Do not wait too long. The day may come when your opportunities will all be gone.
12. The Bible says, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:2).
13. I believe if they did a survey in hell, the drunkards and the thieves and the whoremongers would all be outnumbered by the procrastinators.
14. Like Felix, who told the apostle Paul, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee" (Acts 24:25).
15. The Bible says, "Felix trembled." He trembled but he would not repent. He is not only trembling in hell today; he is weeping and wailing and gnashing his teeth!
16. Like King Agrippa, who said to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28).
17. Not only was this impotent man helpless and hopeless, he was also friendless. This impotent man said to our Lord, “Sir, I have no man...” (5:7).
18. Beloved, there are a lot of lonely sinners out there just like this fellow. Let’s go out and tell them Jesus died for their sins. Let’s give them the Gospel. They need a true friend, and there is no better friend than the Lord Jesus Christ.

19. *There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus,
No, not one! No, not one!
None else could heal all our soul's diseases,
No, not one! No, not one!* -- Johnson Oatman Jr.
20. Sometimes we think that sinners are very popular, and they have many friends but this is not really the case. Think of the prodigal son. He thought he had plenty of friends but he was alone in that pigpen – just him and the pigs!
21. Everyone without Christ is just like that impotent man, whether they realize it or not. They are helpless, sin-sick, impotent, blind, halt, and withered.
22. And we Christians must remember that we too are helpless without Christ. Our Lord said, "without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).
23. The apostle Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).
24. Andrew Murray wrote, "Health is nothing but life in its normal, undisturbed action. Christ gives us health by giving us Himself as our life; so He becomes our strength for our walk. Isaiah's words find their New Testament fulfilment: They that wait on the Lord shall walk and not faint, because Christ is now the strength of their life" (*The Ministry of Intercession*).

II. THE SINNER'S WONDERFUL SAVIOUR

1. John 5:6 says, "When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?"
2. There was "a great multitude" in verse 3, but "Jesus saw him." This is a wonderful thought, that while there are billions of people in this world, Jesus knows us. And He loves us.
3. Here we see the impotent man met the Omnipotent Man.
4. And our Lord asked him a wonderful question, "Wilt thou be made whole?" (5:6). Notice, this man did not go to Jesus. Jesus went to him, and asked him, "
5. Jesus said in Luke 19:10, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
6. The Lord is seeking to save lost sinners. Therefore, He was speaking of more than physical healing. He wanted to make this man whole – not just healed, but "whole."

7. A person can be healthy physically, but very sick spiritually (cf. Romans 3:13-18). They need to go to the Great Physician and get straightened out.
8. Someone who is only healed physically, will one day die and go to hell. But when a man is "made whole," he is fit for heaven.
9. We know our Lord saved this man as well as healed him, because He told the man, "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more" (John 5:14).
10. I do not think our Lord would say this to the man, without first saving him.
11. Our first priority must be to get sinners saved, then we must tell them, "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more" (John 5:14).
12. This is the message we must preach to people who have been gloriously saved from the power of sin (cf. John 8:11).
13. First John 2:1 says, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not."
14. Romans 6:14 says, "For sin shall not have dominion over you."
15. Romans 6:6 says, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."
16. Romans 6:22 says we are now "made free from sin, and become servants to God."
17. Thank God Jesus saves us from the penalty of sin (hell), and the power of sin.
18. Thank God we have a wonderful Saviour who forgives us, pardons us, cleanses us, redeems us, saves us, heals us, intercedes for us, prays for us, and He answers our prayers!
19. He leads us and guides us, cares for us, comforts us, blesses us, and so much more!

*Christ has for sin atonement made
 What a wonderful Savior!
 We are redeemed, the price is paid
 What a wonderful Savior!*

*What a wonderful Savior is Jesus, my Jesus!
 What a wonderful Savior is Jesus, my Lord!*

*To Him I've given all my heart:
 What a wonderful Savior!
 The world shall never share a part:
 What a wonderful Savior!*

III. THE SAVIOUR'S SERIOUS WARNING (5:14).

1. "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."
2. This man had been an invalid for 38 years! And our Lord warned him, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."
3. One can only imagine what could be worse.
4. This warning reveals that the reason for his condition was sin. This does not mean that all sickness is a direct result of sin.
5. Now our Lord is telling the man to not sin again lest something worse happens. Therefore, this warning also reminds us that there are consequences for sinning.
6. No one is exempt. The LORD said that David was "a man after his own heart" (I Samuel 13:14). But when David sinned, he had to suffer the severe consequences of his sin.
7. Job 4:8 says, "Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same."
8. There are no exceptions to this rule.
9. Hosea 8:7 says, "For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind."
10. Galatians 6:7 says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."
11. The great evangelist D.L. Moody was preaching this text one day when a man stood right up in the audience and said: "I don't believe it."
12. Moody said, "My friend, that doesn't change the fact. Truth is truth whether you believe it or not, and a lie is a lie whether you believe it or not."
13. He didn't want to believe it. When the meeting broke up, an officer was at the door to arrest him. He was tried and sent to the penitentiary for twelve months for stealing.
14. D.L. Moody later said, "I really believe that when he got into his cell, he believed that he had to reap what he sowed. We might as well try to blot the sun out of the heavens as to blot this truth out of the Word of God. It is heaven's eternal decree. The law has been enforced for six thousand years. Did not God make Adam reap even before he left Eden? Had not Cain to reap outside of Eden? A king on the throne, like David, or a priest behind the altar, like Eli; priest and prophet, preacher and hearer, every man must reap what he sows. I believed it ten years ago, but I believe it a hundred times more to-day."

15. Moody said, "There are some passages in the Word of God that need no other proof than that which we can easily find in our daily experience. This is one of them. If the Bible were to be blotted out of existence, the words I have quoted would be abundantly verified by what is constantly happening around us. We have only to take up the daily papers to see them being fulfilled before our eyes."

CONCLUSION:

1. D.L. Moody told a story about a train that would have crashed, had it not been for the quick thinking of a man who lived near the railroad tracks.
2. One night this man saw that a landside had obstructed the railroad tracks. He saw by the clock that he hadn't time to reach the telegraph office to stop the night express, so he grabbed a lantern and started up the track, thinking he might be in time to stop the train.
3. As he ran toward the train, he fell and his light went out. He did not have another match, and he could hear the train coming in the distance.
4. He didn't know what to do.
5. As a last resort he stood on the bank, and the moment the train came up to him, he hurled the lantern with all his might at the engineer.
6. The engineer realized that something must be wrong. He took the warning, whistled down the brakes, and stopped the train within a few yards of the obstruction.
7. D.L. Moody then said, "I throw the broken lantern at your feet now! I beg you to take warning, make a clean work of sin, cost what it may. Take warning! You must either give up sin, or give up the hope of heaven."
8. But this warning must not be restricted to lost sinners. It is to believers as well, "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" (John 5:14).