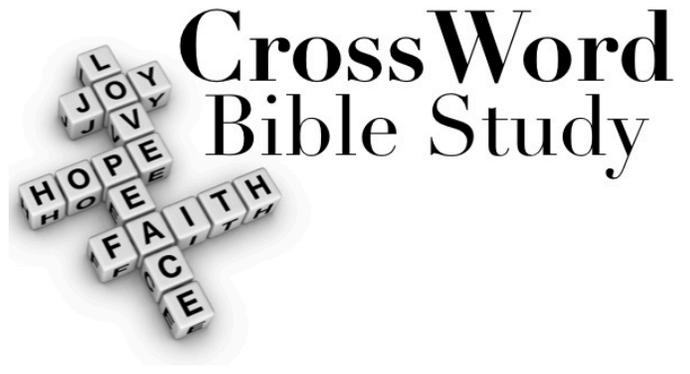




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## St. John's Gospel

Packet #7

Review of: John 5:1-47

Preparation for: John 6: 1-21

Lecture Date: Nov. 14, 2018

### REVIEW OF LECTURE ON JOHN 5:1-47

#### Introduction

In Chapter 5, Jesus travels back to Jerusalem for another feast of the Jews. This marks the beginning of the "festival cycle" that spans chapters 5-10 in John's Gospel; this cycle is characterized by a continued escalation in the conflict between Jesus and the religious authorities. Upon entering Jerusalem, Jesus comes across a man who has been an invalid for 38 years and unable to find the means to be healed. Jesus has mercy on him and heals him, and this causes an outcry among the Pharisees and religious leaders because this healing occurs on the sabbath, which they see as unlawful. Jesus takes it a step further by proclaiming that He is simply doing what the Father has given Him the authority to do.

#### "Do You Want To Be Made Well?"

Some early manuscripts include a missing portion of our Gospel story. Some bibles include John 5:4 and some do not. John 5:4 reads: "...waiting for the moving of the water. For the angel of the Lord went down into the pool from time to time and stirred up the water; and whoever was first to step in after the stirring of the water became healed, no matter what disease he had." This deleted material likely accounts for why the lame man complains to Jesus that he cannot reach the water in time. He wanted to get into the water to be healed but couldn't move there quickly enough.

Jesus comes to the man who has been invalid for 38 years and actually asks him if he wants to be made well. Some might think the answer obvious, but it is possible to be attached to

suffering, to cling to it for identity, and to take comfort in the pity one receives. Some use suffering to be excused from labor and other obligations.

Another possible explanation for why Jesus asks this man if he wants to be healed, is that Jesus wants him to take some part in God's plan for him. He wants him to make a decision to participate in God's plan. Jesus always wants us to take part in His plan but sometimes we want other things. Sometimes we say we want to be healed or we want Jesus' help but maybe we want it to happen on our terms or in our way. When Jesus asks this man, "do you want to be made well?" He is really asking him if he is ready to cooperate with Jesus' plan for him.

## **38 Years**

Most of the time that we talk about the Israelites wandering in the desert, we say that they wandered in the desert for forty years. It's a nice round number. However, in Deuteronomy 2:14, it says that they had wandered for 38 years. It's no coincidence that this man had been ill for 38 years. (John 5:5) He represents a lost and wandering people who are just on the cusp of a new reality that Jesus will bring to them. His illness and suffering represent the fact that he, and this people, are in need of healing that only Jesus can bring.

If you remember the Israelites' story, it's after a lot of wandering that Joshua leads them into the promised land. What you may not know is that the name Joshua and the name Jesus are the same Hebrew name: Yeshua. Jesus is the one who brings all people into a new promised land. Jesus is here to bring this lame man, and the entire world, into the new promised land of an intimate and life-changing relationship with the living God.

## **"Stand Up, Take Your Mat and Walk."**

Jesus' questions reveals that He isn't just looking for an excuse to perform another sign. He is looking at this man's heart. Rather than heal the man and be done with it, Jesus decides that this man's healing will be determined by his faith. "Stand up, take your mat and walk" is a challenge for this man to take a risk on Jesus and put his faith, his hope of healing into the hands of Jesus. This story shows that Jesus doesn't judge by some arbitrary standard or external feature but by the deepest choices people make about Him. If the man had not obeyed in faith, he would have been powerless to get up and walk. Obedience is therefore a sign of our faith in Christ's power. What Jesus did for the lame man is a sign of what He will do for all the spiritually lame and broken who come to believe in Him.

## **The Accusation of the Jews**

The Jewish authorities discovered the previously lame man now carrying his mat. The Jewish sabbath law contained 39 prohibitions, one of which was to carry any type of load from one location to another. When asked why he was breaking the law, the man explained that he was

told to by the man who healed him. The Jews begin their persecution of Jesus not just because He broke the sabbath law, but because He is now telling others to break the sabbath law. Moreover, He was making Himself equal to God by calling Him His own Father.

## **The Lord of the Sabbath**

It is fitting that Jesus' miracle on the sabbath takes place at the Pool of "Bethesda," because "Bethesda" can be translated into "House of Mercy." Jesus' act of grace and mercy is the perfect expression of what the sabbath is designed to do: a day of rest given to God's people in order for them to recall the goodness and mercy of the Lord. God's people weren't supposed to rest just for the sake of rest. The Sabbath was primarily a day to remember the Lord's goodness and mercy, and thus Jesus Himself is the embodiment of God's goodness and mercy.

In verse 17 Jesus says, "My Father is still working, and I also am working." It is from this statement that the Jews begin to accuse Him and say that He is making Himself equal with God. Jesus is doing precisely that in stating that since His Father is lord of the sabbath, He also is lord of the sabbath.

## **The Authority of the Son**

In verse 19 Jesus begins to explain the true meaning behind His previous statement that He is working because His Father is working, and thereby He claims to be equal to God. Jesus explains that His actions aren't independent from God, rather He is in perfect submission to the Father, and He as the Son, in turn, obeys. This perfect relationship of unity is based on the love shared between the Father and the Son.

Jesus' authority extends beyond healing on the sabbath to even raising the dead to life. This is classic Jesus who, upon seeing the shock and confusion that His statements are causing His audience, usually decides to take it a step further with something like, "Oh you think that's crazy? Wait till I show you this..." Jesus is affirming His identity by drawing the readers' minds to 2 Kings 5:7 and Ezekiel 37:13 which both state that only God can raise the dead. Jesus not only has power over physical life, but has the authority to grant eternal life to any who believe and put their faith in Him.

## **Witnesses to Jesus**

In verses 30-47 Jesus backs up his claims with evidence. Deuteronomy 17:6 stated that before something could be proven there must be at least two witnesses. Jesus uses this standard of justice against his doubters by citing John the Baptist who bore witness to the coming of the messiah, and they received his message with joy. Then He cites the Father who bears witness to Him, yet they don't recognize Him because they don't have the Father's love within Him.

Finally He cites Moses, on whom they have set their hope yet fail to recognize that Moses and all the Law point to Jesus.

### **Questions on John 5:1-47**

**Read Notes and References again and answer questions 1-4.**

1. Why does Jesus return to Jerusalem?
2. When Jesus saw the invalid and knew that he had been lying there a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" In John 5:6, why does Jesus ask the lame man who's been ill for 38 years if he wants to be healed?
3. What does Jesus mean when He says that His Father never stops working?
4. In John 5:25, Jesus says that the "dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live." What does He mean by this statement?

### **Preparation for John 6:1-21.**

**Also read: Luke 24: 28-35, Mark 6:45-52, Psalm 23**

#### **Memory verse for the week ahead**

"When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, 'This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world!' "

(John 6:14)

#### **A Crowd Follows Jesus to the Sea of Galilee**

**John 6:1-9**

1. Which of the disciples did Jesus ask about getting food? What was his response? And Andrew's response?
2. In John 6:10, Jesus tells the people to recline and they do so in the grass. How does this relate to Psalm 23?

### **Jesus Feeds the 5000**

#### **John 6:10-15**

3. The 5 barley loaves and 2 fish for this miracle are provided by a young boy. Why does Jesus perform this sign in this fashion? How can the followers of Jesus participate in His saving work?
4. In John 6:13, we read that twelve baskets of bread fragments are left over. Could the number 12 also be symbolic?
5. In John 6:14, what were the exact words of the people when they saw this miracle that Jesus performed?
6. Read Luke 24:28-35. What similarities does the feeding of the five thousand have with the Lord's Supper and the institution of the Eucharist?

7. The Feeding of the Five Thousand is the only miracle of Jesus recorded in all four gospels. Why do you think that is?

### **Jesus Walks on Water**

#### **John 6:16-21**

8. In John 6:18, what forces of nature were raging that cause Jesus to go after them?
9. What does it mean for us today that Jesus knew the situation they were in and acted immediately? What were Jesus exact words to His disciples when He came to them?
10. What does this walking on water miracle mean with respect to Christ's authority and power?
11. In this section of chapter 6, we see Jesus work two miracles: feeding 5000 and walking on water. Have you ever witnessed a miracle? If so, what was it?