

Pool of Bethesda

Introduction

- I want to share from the healing of the man at the pool of Bethesda - and focus on Jesus' teaching at that time
- Probably a familiar story - but the words Jesus gave are powerful
- See **5:24** *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.*
- Let's dive in. Take a bible and open it to John 5. I'm reading out of the ESV - same version in your pew

Message

Background

John 5:18-25 (ESV) (18) *This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.*

- What has happened: Jesus heals the man at the pool of Bethesda (see 2-9a). Let me read through the passage
- **John 5:2-9 (ESV)** (2) *Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. (3) In these lay a multitude of invalids--blind, lame, and paralyzed waiting for the moving of the water; for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and stirred the water: whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was healed of whatever disease he had. 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." (8) 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. Now that day was the Sabbath.*

- Jesus commands the man to carry his mat
- This was *breaking the sabbath* The carrying of his mat on the sabbath was contrary to Jewish law
- Stems from the 10 commandments - Honor the sabbath and keep it holy. They'd all kinds of rules around this
- They question the man - who did this, but Jesus had already left (9b-11)
- **John 5:9-11 (ESV)** (9) *And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. 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.'"*
- So Jesus is (by his actions) claiming to be a greater authority than the law - by which they live
- Jesus finds the man a little later and says **John 5:14 (ESV)** (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."*
- The man goes back to the Jews and explains it was Jesus who'd healed him
- In v16-17 - They begin to persecute Jesus because he'd told the man to carry the mat - break the Sabbath
- In v17 - Jesus says **John 5:17 (ESV)** (17) *But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working."*
- Now - v18 - They are frustrated because He (Jesus) is calling God his Father
- It is the teaching that comes next that interests us

So there are many powerful truths in the teaching he gives on this occasion

Let's read through each one of them

Jesus does only what the Father does (v19-20a)

- **John 5:19-20 (ESV)** (19) *So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. (20) For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing*
- Again in v17 - He has called God His Father
- They struggle with this, and yet their own scripture declares that we are sons of God
- What the Son does has come from the observation of the Father.

- Whatever the father does - The Son does in the same way....
- so what he does (heal the man and charge him with carrying the mat) is what the Father does.
- Their "Law" forbids him to carry the mat, but the Father's will and action is that he is whole
- They can't perceive it - because they don't have that revelation
- The Father loves the son - and reveals everything - even more than this!

The goal of this miracle is to make the marvel (v20b)

- **John 5:20 (ESV)** (20) ... *And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel.*
- See v20b - The goal (v20b) is to amaze them.
- To cause them to wonder and be in awe (and although not stated - to cause them to put their faith in Jesus).
- See the miracles he did. These were done so those who observed may recognize Jesus as empowered by God!
- At the end of the Gospel - there's this statement about the miracles
- See **John 20:30-31 (ESV)** (30) *Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; (31) but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*
- This is why Jesus was entrusted to do miracles.

Ultimate miracle: Life!

- **John 5:21-23** (21) *For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. (22) The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, (23) that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.*
- The ultimate power is to give life from the dead.
- The Father has that power (remember this was even disputed - the resurrection)
- Jesus affirms the father has the power to raise the dead - and Jesus claims He has that power
- Jesus has the power and "authority" to raise the dead.
- He has the power to *choose* to raise "whomever" he wishes.
- In fact the Father has entrusted the Son with the role of Judge - the Father judges no one, but leaves that to the Son.
- Therefore the Son is entrusted with the **authority** (choose) and **power** to raise

the dead!

- Jesus is He is the one who will judge everyone and choose those who will be raised! And he himself will raise them
- Again, the goal of giving Jesus this power is to cause people to worship Him
- This was again would be construed as blasphemy!

The promise (v24)

- **John 5:24** (24) *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.*
- Here the one who claims the authority and power to raise the dead - tells how to obtain that resurrection...
- It's not through the careful observance and practice of the law (note this brings us back to the original situation - carrying your mat on the Sabbath)
- Instead - it is putting your faith in the word of Jesus, believing God has sent him!
- See **John 5:24 (ESV)** (24) *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.*
- Jesus can make this promise - because He is the one to whom judgment has been entrusted
- Jesus can make this promise - because He has paid the price to fulfill the Old Covenant that stood opposed to us

Conclusion

Jesus claims to be the path to life eternal

- In this passage he supersedes the law
- Jews thought that by observing it they might earn eternal life
- He claims to have the power to raise the dead, and the authority to choose

Do we believe

- He tells us if we will believe - he will give us life eternal
- See **John 11:25-26** (25) *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, (26) and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"*
- That's the question: do we believe

- Stop trusting in something other than Jesus! It will not work