

"The Healing of the Crippled Man"

Part 3/Conclusion

John 5:1-18

Introduction: For the last 2 studies we have been looking at the healing of the lame man at the pool of Bethesda. Last week we considered the reaction of the Jews when Jesus healed the man. Jesus healed him on the Sabbath which was the favorite piece of legalism of the religious leaders. They were not concerned about the man who was healed but they were angry because he was healed on the Sabbath.

Notice John 5:9-12

The Jews were not rejoicing that the man was healed but they were upset because he was healed on the Sabbath. In verse 12 they never asked how he was healed or who had healed him, they just wanted to know who told him to take up his bed and walk. It is interesting here that they did not deny that the man was healed. In all the miracles that Jesus did they knew they were real miracles. It was not that they did not believe in the miracles, but the problem was they did not believe in the Miracle Worker.

➤ The Growing Animosity

Notice John 5:13

Here we see that this man did not know who healed him because Jesus had conveyed himself away and was gone into the crowd. This man should have known who healed him considering he was a Jew. He should have been familiar with the Old Testament. Not only should he have known but so should the Jews who questioned him. They professed to know the Old Testament, but they missed Who had done the miracle. Let me show you why they should have known.

Psalms 103:2-3

² *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:*

³ *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;*

Psalm 147:1-3

Praise ye the LORD: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.

² *The LORD doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.*

³ *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.*

Jeremiah 30:17

¹⁷ *For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after.*

These are just a few verses but from these verses we can clearly see that it is the Lord who heals. There is no other Healer. This man and the religious leaders should have known this, but they missed the Healer.

Application:

We see the same thing today in the lives of many people. God enters their lives, and He rescues them from a situation that is humanly impossible to get out of, and they miss the fact that God is the One who rescued them. In Romans 2 we read Paul's Words about the reformed sinner, and we need to see something that he records here.

Romans 2:1-3

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

² *But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.*

³ And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

⁴ Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

Here in verse 4, we see that God works in the lives of unsaved people to get their attention. He rescues them or He provides what they need, and they are accountable to recognize that it is God showing grace to them. This is to lead them to repentance. But too many times, they see it as "luck" or they believe that in their own power they escaped. They missed the hand of God just like the man in John 5.

Notice John 5:14

As we read this verse there is a question that comes to mind. Was this man's disability because of his sin? Most believe it was because of his sin. Let us keep in mind that this man is in the Dispensation of Law. His responsibility was to walk according to the Law. This does not mean that he could be saved by keeping the Law. It means that man's responsibility in that dispensation was to walk in obedience to the Law. With that understanding let us notice what the Law stated.

Deuteronomy 28:58-61

⁵⁸ If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD;

⁵⁹ Then the LORD will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.

⁶⁰ Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee.

⁶¹ Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

Some people will therefore say that this man's sin brought upon him the paralysis he was dealing with. The problem with drawing that conclusion is that the religious leaders were deep in the sin of legalism and they were not in the same state.

Notice John 5:14 again.

What was it that Jesus was warning this man about that could be worse than what he had faced the last 38 years? Eternal damnation! If the man would continue the path he was on, which was unbelief, he would die in his sins which would be much worse than 38 years of paralysis. The words "SIN NO MORE" mean, "Do not continue to sin" and that gives the idea that there was a habitual act of sin that was in this man's life. But is that not true of every unbeliever? So, it is possible that this man's condition was due to sin, but we cannot be sure.

With this, however, we must be very careful. We cannot look at people who are facing physical problems and determine that their issues have come upon them because of sin in their lives.

John 9:1-3

And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.

² *And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?*

³ *Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*

John 11:1-4

Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

² *(It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)*

³ *Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.*

⁴ When Jesus heard that, he said, *This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.*

In these 2 passages we see that neither man was suffering because of personal sin in their lives. But in both situations, it was for the purpose of the glory of God. Notice the words of Charles Swindoll.

"Some have taken Jesus' warning to mean that sin had caused the man's illness, but Jesus later denied a moral cause-effect relationship between sin and physical disabilities (John 9). A simpler explanation is that Jesus knew the man's heart. Having delivered the man from his physical affliction, Jesus sought to save the man from eternal spiritual suffering. The "worse" Jesus had in mind was hell. Jewish theology of the day correctly taught that sin deserves punishment; however, the rabbis incorrectly attributed physical illness to God's wrath. The true and ultimate punishment for sin is eternal torment after death."

Let me raise another question here. Did the man get saved here? I do not believe the man was saved. Many people have been touched by the hand of God in one way or another and walked away without getting saved. When Jesus told the man to "sin no more" he was calling for him to do the impossible humanly speaking. The reason was because the man needed to see his need of a Savior. He needed to understand that God required perfection and he could not attain perfection apart from Jesus Christ.

Notice John 5:15

This is one of the saddest verses in the Bible. This man stood in the Light of the Savior and walked away and went directly to the darkness, to the Jews who despised him for being healed on the Sabbath. He never offered one word of thanks to Jesus for his healing.

In this he certainly pictures the multitudes today who enjoy the blessings of God but never stop to consider where they have come from or Who it is that has bestowed them upon them. God reaches out and blesses them, and they turn away from Him to the darkness.

Notice John 5:16

This was the occasion for the religious leaders/Jews to set their sights on Jesus. From this point forward they were determined to kill Him.

Notice John 5:17

The statement which Jesus makes here tells us that He was completely focused upon the will of the Father. He did not enter a discussion with the Jews about the Sabbath because there was something far more important and that was to do the Father's will. He was doing the work of God when He healed the man.

Notice John 5:18

The Jews became even more angry because Jesus had made Himself equal with God. But instead of being angry they should have rejoiced at this statement. He was letting them know who He was.

Isaiah 9:6

⁶ For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Matthew 1:23

²³ Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Conclusion:

Jesus healed the man on the Sabbath to expose their legalism and to also make them aware of who He was. But the sin in their lives prevented them from seeing Who stood before them. They had all the evidence, but they refused to believe. This shows the depravity of man's heart. I am convinced that these religious leaders did not know the Scriptures. Their traditions took precedence over God's Word.