

Sunday Morning Message

June 12, 2022

The Healing at the Pool of Bethesda (Part Three – The Witnesses)

The Gospel According to John

Text – John 5:30 - 47

Congregational Reading – John 5:30 - 47

Introduction (vs. 30 - 32)

In the first message from chapter five of John's Gospel (vs. 1 – 15), we examined an important story about a man who was healed by Jesus of an infirmity he had for thirty-eight years. The Bible does not specifically state what his infirmity was, but we believe it had something to do with the fact that man could not walk because when he was healed Jesus told him to take up his bed and walk. This healing took place in Jerusalem at a pool called the Pool of Bethesda, which was near the sheep gate on the Temple mount. The fact that this man was healed was certainly a wonderful event, but not everyone was thrilled that about it; the religious leaders were actually upset about it because it took place on the Sabbath day.

Last week we reviewed Jesus' discussion with the religious leaders that followed in the aftermath of this healing. In this dialogue, Jesus accomplishes a few things: First, Jesus rebukes these religious leaders for their indifference to this man and his physical condition, along with their insistence upon upholding their interpretation of the Sabbath day laws. Jesus did not actually break any commandment from the Old Testament Law by healing this man; he just went against the tradition of first century Judaism in their application of those laws. These Jewish religious leaders were known to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. They were more concerned about their little rules than the suffering of one of their people.

A second purpose revealed in this passage is what Jesus taught about Himself while rebuking these religious leaders. In vs. 16 - 29, Jesus clearly taught His deity and equality with the Father. Jesus made certain claims to these folks about who He is, and because of these claims that Jesus makes the Jews begin to plot to have Him killed. Jesus also gave us here in this passage some wonderful truths regarding the resurrection.

As we continue examining the discussion that Jesus had with these religious leaders, we see that Jesus calls some witnesses to the witness stand who will back up his claims about who He is.

Read vs. 30 – 32.

Transition

*"One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: **at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.**" (Deuteronomy 19:15)*

In the remaining verses of chapter five, Jesus will present four witnesses that will definitively prove beyond any reasonable doubt that He was in fact God incarnate – the Messiah of Israel.

By the way – the word, “witness,” is very interesting. It is a key word in John’s Gospel, used forty-seven times. It is the word martyr (Greek - μαρτυρέω – *martyreō*. A martyr is someone who gives his life, which is the ultimate witness of Christ. Christ was a martyr, and so were many millions of believers since the time of Christ. They gave their lives defending the fact that Jesus was who He claimed to be.

I. The First Witness – John the Baptist (vs. 33 – 35)

The people of Israel, including many of these religious leaders all came out to hear what John had to say.

Read John 1:19 – 36.

Practical Note – notice that Jesus stated that John was a “burning and shining light.” That is what all of us are supposed to be – bright lights that point people to the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

II. The Second Witness – His Works (v. 36)

So far in John’s Gospel, we have seen Jesus turn water into wine, and we have seen him heal the nobleman’s son, and in this passage, we have watched this paralytic man rise and walk. These miracles reveal that Jesus was who He claimed to be.

Back in John, chapter three, Nicodemus who was also a religious leader, a Pharisee, admitted that *“no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him”* (John 3:2).

In my New Testament Survey class, we discuss the miracles of Christ:

[The following notes are from my New Testament Survey class.]

No study of the Gospels would be complete without a thorough examination of the miracles that Jesus performed. There seem to be three primary purposes for these miracles: First, they provided **proof** that Jesus was Who He claimed to be, though it is important to note that He did His miraculous works in the power of the Holy Spirit of God. (Matthew 12:28) These miracles demonstrated Christ’s authority in both the natural and spiritual realm. They also were a fulfillment of **prophecy**. (Isaiah 29:18; 35:5; 61:1; Matthew 11:5; Luke 7:22) The Old Testament foretold that the Messiah would heal the sick, etc. The third reason is that Jesus had a **passion** for people. He loved them, and He desired to help them.

The only miracle (besides the Resurrection) that is recorded in all four of the Gospels is the **Feeding of the 5000**. Interestingly, each gospel writer has included some miracles that are unique to his gospel account. Of the 44 accounts that we have included here in this study over half of them (22) are unique to one writer. **The miracles that are only mentioned by one gospel writer are in bold face**. Each miracle is listed in its approximate chronological order within each category. A complete chronological order of all events will be given in a later lesson.

The miracles that we have categorized in this study are the ones where specific people or groups of people are dealt with. There were many other miracles that the Lord performed, and they are mentioned more generally in the Scripture. Note the following examples:

- 1 Many Healed at Sunset in Capernaum (Matthew 8:16 – 17; Mark 1:32 – 39; Luke 4:40 – 41)
- 2 **Crowd in Galilee (Matthew 4:23 – 25)**
- 3 Many Touching His Garment (Matthew 14:34 – 36; Mark 6:53 – 56)
- 4 **Crowds in Galilee (Matthew 9:35)**
- 5 **Few Faithful in Nazareth (Mark 6:1 – 6)**
- 6 **Multitudes on the Mountain (Matthew 15:29 – 31)**
- 7 **Crowds in Judaea (Matthew 19:1 – 2)**
- 8 **Many in Jerusalem (Matthew 21:14)**

I **First** Miracle

- A **In Order of Sequence – Turning Water into Wine (John 2:1 – 11)**
- B In Order of Significance – The Resurrection (Matthew 28:1 – 10; Mark 16:1 – 20; Luke 24: 1 – 53; John 20:1 – 31)

II **Fitness** Miracles

You will notice that some of the miracles that were performed involved both a healing of a physical infirmity as well as the casting out of a devil. Often when a person was possessed by a devil they were also plagued by physical and mental infirmities.

- A **Restoration** to the **Diseased** (and other physical infirmities)
 - 1 **Official’s Son (John 4:46 – 54)**
 - 2 Peter’s Mother – In – Law (Matthew 8:14 – 15; Mark 1:29 – 31; Luke 4:38 – 39)
 - 3 Leper (Matthew 8:1 – 4; Mark 1:40 – 45; Luke 5:12 – 15)
 - 4 Man Sick of the Palsy (Matthew 9:1 – 8; Mark 2:1 – 12; Luke 5:18 – 26)
 - 5 **Man at Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1 – 17)**
 - 6 Man with Withered Hand (Matthew 12:9 – 13; Mark 3:1 – 6; Luke 6:6 – 11)
 - 7 Centurion’s Son (Matthew 8:5 – 13; Luke 7:1 – 10)

- 8 Woman with Issue of Blood (Matthew 9:20 – 22; Mark 5:24 – 34; Luke 8:49 – 56)
- 9 **Two Blind Men (Matthew 9:27 – 31)**
- 10 **Dumb Man (Matthew 9:32 – 34)**
- 11 Syrophenician's Daughter (Matthew 15:21 – 28; Mark 7:24 – 30)
- 12 **Deaf Man (Mark 7:31 – 37)**
- 13 **Man Born Blind (John 9:1 – 41)**
- 14 Blind, Dumb Man (Matthew 12:22 – 24; Luke 11:14 – 15)

Note – this miracle could have been included in the next category (Removing of Devils) as well

- 15 **Blind Man of Bethsaida (Mark 8:22 – 26)**
- 16 **Stooped Woman (Luke 13:10 – 17)**
- 17 **Man with Dropsy {Edema – excess of water} (Luke 14:1 – 16)**
- 18 **Ten Lepers (Luke 17:11 – 19)**
- 19 Blind Bartimaeus (Matthew 20:29 – 34; Mark 10:46 – 52; Luke 18:35 – 43)
- 20 Malchus' Ear (Luke 22:47 – 53; John 18:10 – 11)

B **Removing of Devils**

- 1 Possessed Man in Capernaum Synagogue (Mark 1:21 – 27; Luke 4:33 – 37)
- 2 Demoniacs (Matthew 8:28 – 34; Mark 5: 1 – 20; Luke 8:26 – 39)
- 3 Lunatic Boy (Matthew 17: 14 – 21; Mark 9:14 – 29; Luke 9:37 – 42)

C **Raising from the Dead**

- 1 **Widow's Son (Luke 7:11 – 17)**
- 2 Jairus Daughter (Matthew 9:18 – 19, 23 – 26; Mark 5:22 – 24, 35 – 43; Luke 8:41 – 42, 49 - 56)
- 3 **Lazarus (John 11:1 – 45)**

III **Further Miracles**

A **Feeding Miracles**

- 1 5000 Fed (Matthew 14:13 - 21; Mark 6:32 - 44; Luke 9:10 - 17; John 6:1 – 13)
- 2 4000 Fed (Matthew 15:32 – 39; Mark 8:1 – 10)

B **Fruit-Tree Miracle – (Matthew 21:18 – 22; Mark 11:12 – 24)**

C **Famous Miracles**

- 1 Calms the Sea (Matthew 8:23 – 27; Mark 4:35 – 41; John 8:22 – 25)
- 2 Walks on Water (Matthew 14:22 – 33; Mark 6:45 – 51; John 6:15 – 21)

D **Fishing Miracles (and Final Miracle)**

- 1 **First Catch of Fish (Luke 5:1 – 11)**
- 2 **Money in the Fish's Mouth (Matthew 17:24 – 27)**

IV **Final Miracle - Last Catch of Fish (Final Miracle – John 21:1 - 14)**

All these miraculous works declare that Jesus was God.

Miracles were universally acknowledged to be proof of divine authority:

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing

them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" (Hebrews 2:3-4)

III. The Third Witness – Father (vs. 37 – 38)

At Jesus' baptism, the Father spoke from Heaven.

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:16-17)

You will notice also at Jesus' baptism; we can clearly see the Trinity.

The Father will again speak from Heaven when Jesus is on the Mt. of Transfiguration with Peter, James, and John:

"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." (Matthew 17:5)

Peter later wrote about this experience on the mount:

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (2 Peter 1:16-17)

IV. The Fourth Witness – The Word of God (vs. 39 – 47)

The Old Testament clearly revealed what Israel should expect in their Messiah. However, they rejected the Truth that was evidently revealed right in front of their eyes. These people knew the Bible intellectually, but they had not received the Truth into their hearts (v. 38).

Friend, if you want to know the truth, you will need to examine the Truth of the Word of God with an open heart.

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. ... If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (John 8:31-32, 36)

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17)

The Truth was available and very apparent to these religious leaders, but they just could not see it:

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Corinthians 4:4)

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." (Matthew 13:15)

If you truly want to know the Truth, then open your Bible with an open heart and an open mind, and God will reveal it to you.

Conclusion

Four witnesses have been called, and they all clearly point to the fact and prove that Jesus was who He claimed to be. John the Baptist said that Jesus was the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world. The works that Jesus did, including his healing of this man by the pool of Bethesda declared that Jesus was the God. At Jesus' baptism the Father declared that Jesus was His only begotten son. And if that wasn't enough, the Scriptures, which the Jews held to be the absolute truth of God, revealed repeatedly that Jesus was who He claimed to be.

The evidence is all in. The witnesses have all spoken. It was now time for these religious leaders to make their decision. Would they submit themselves to the sovereign son of God, or will they reject the Truth that was so clearly presented before them?

What about you friend? What are you going to do with the evidence presented by these four witnesses today? Will you believe the Truth, or reject it? Will you receive the Lord Jesus Christ into your heart today as Lord and Saviour, or will you continue with your life as if the Messiah had never come? The choice is yours. But the evidence presented by Jesus in this passage today demands your verdict. What will you do with Jesus?