



John 5 1-16

New International Version

5 Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. ² Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda^[a] and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. ³ Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. ^{[4][b]} ⁵ One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?”

⁷ “Sir,” the invalid replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.”

⁸ Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.”⁹ At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, ¹⁰ and so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat.”

¹¹ But he replied, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’”

¹² So they asked him, “Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?”

¹³ The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

¹⁴ Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, “See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.” ¹⁵ The man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well.

¹⁶ So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him.

“Christians are made, not born.” Tertullian



Sermon Notes

THE QUESTIONS JESUS ASKED

Socratic Method: asks probing questions in an effort to expose the underlying values and beliefs which frame and support the thoughts and behaviors of the student

Beyond **Information** to **Ideals** and Values

Q1: What would **YOU like to change about you?**

(Appearance, success, popularity, relationship...)

Q2: What would **GOD like to change about you?**

(Anger, insecurity, self-promotion, addiction to consumption, fear, greed, pride)

ADMIT your sick

“I protect myself by refusing to know myself.” Floriano Martins

BELIEVE it is possible (blessed life must be earned)

“‘If you can?’” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for one who believes.”
Mk 9:23

Worst thing: Not to reject the Kingdom, but to leave it untried.

CHANGE your direction

“Most people see themselves a certain way their entire lives. When they go through a massive change, such as losing weight, they have to learn to see themselves in a new way. It is one of the biggest struggles in life.” Jennifer Hudson

Count On It!

I've been told that the best way to spot a counterfeit dollar is to know the genuine version forward and backwards, inside and out. The same goes many things, I'm sure. When I rehearse truth; lies or half-truths stick out as abnormal.

This is one reason why getting to know the true character of God is life changing. When I rehearse what is true about Him, I know how to process the world around me.

Count On It!

"Heaven and earth will disappear, but My words will remain forever" (Luke 21:33).

A woman received directions to a home for a baby shower, complete with the street name and the house number. But she never found the correct house and went home embarrassed. The next day she discovered some pranksters had switched several street signs in the area. She failed to reach her destination even though she had true directions.

If you have ever had an experience like that, you may be skeptical whenever you receive directions to an unfamiliar setting. That is how many people approach what God has said. They are not at all sure that His truth is absolutely accurate or applies to modern life. *Maybe He has forgotten about a turn, a detour, or a switched street sign, they think. Times change, so how can we rely on truth given centuries ago?*

Because God knows the end from the beginning, not one of His statements ever turns out to be a misdirection. He does not shade the truth or leave out an essential part. His absolute truth applies to every

situation in history.

I encourage you to read Psalm 119, the greatest chapter in the Bible about the endurance and truth of God's Word. Verse 160 says, "*All Your words are true; all Your just laws will stand forever.*"

Not only is God's truth absolute, but it lasts forever! We can count on it for eternity.

Your View of God Really Matters ...

Which is a more reliable compass: God's truth or your experience? In light of that, do you interpret God's truth through the grid of your experiences, or do you interpret your experiences through the grid of God's truth? Today, choose your starting point wisely.

"A man who denies his past is a man who truly denies himself a future, for he refuses to know himself, and to deny knowledge of oneself is to stumble through life as handicapped as the blind mute." — Tobsha Learner, *The Witch of Cologne*

The Intimacy of the Table

The table is one of the most intimate places in our lives. It is there that we give ourselves to one another. When we say, "Take some more, let me serve you another plate, let me pour you another glass, don't be shy, enjoy it," we say a lot more than our words express. We invite our friends to become part of our lives. We want them to be nurtured by the same food and drink that nurture us. We desire communion. That is why a refusal to eat and drink what a host offers is so offensive. It feels like a rejection of an invitation to intimacy.

Strange as it may sound, the table is the place where we want to become food for one another. Every breakfast, lunch, or dinner can become a time of growing communion with one another.

You may have heard of product placement in movies. Movies actually get paid to insert the names of products into the story somehow. I just read this story this week. A company actually offered pastors the chance to win \$1,000 and a free trip to London if the pastor would send proof that they mentioned a particular movie in their sermon. I won't tell you what the movie was, but it's a good movie. It's connected to faith issues, but we live in such a commercially driven society that somebody is actually offering to pay pastors to do product placement in sermons! A perfect example of how consumed we are with our own blessings! That's not God's plan. God's plan is to give you a blessing so you can *be* a blessing.

See, the reason blessing is so central in the Bible is it's the answer to an ultimate, inevitable human question. The question is this: **What is the good life? Who has the good life? Is it people with money, people with looks, people with health?** *Blessing* is the Bible's answer to these questions. Blessing is different than success because it starts with God. It doesn't start with me. It's grace. It's different than success because it's given so I can bless the world. It's not about showing how blessed I am.

May the Lord God Almighty, in his mercy obliterate every word, statement, experience, and invisible barrier you may have constructed that is keeping his blessing from reaching your heart. May the unrelenting love of God pursue you and surprise you with his compassion for you. May the forgiveness of Jesus Christ restore and renew your hearts. May the living waters of the Holy Spirit fill you and flow through you to a struggling and broken world. May God's peace rest upon you, and may the Lord fill you with his joy. May his joy become your strength. In the name of the Father and the Son and Holy Spirit, Amen.

Top 10 New Years resolutions for 2014

1	Lose Weight
2	Getting Organized
3	Spend Less, Save More
4	Enjoy Life to the Fullest
5	Staying Fit and Healthy
6	Learn Something Exciting
7	Quit Smoking
8	Help Others in Their Dreams
9	Fall in Love
10	Spend More Time with Family