

JOHN

Chapter 5

Note from Kathy

In this chapter, we are introduced to someone who had been suffering a long time. Jesus had traveled a long way to get to the temple. But our Lord is never so focused on his destination that he misses an opportunity to extend grace. Let's take a lesson from Jesus; people are of greater importance than agendas. Who needs a bit of grace today?

Pool of Bethesda

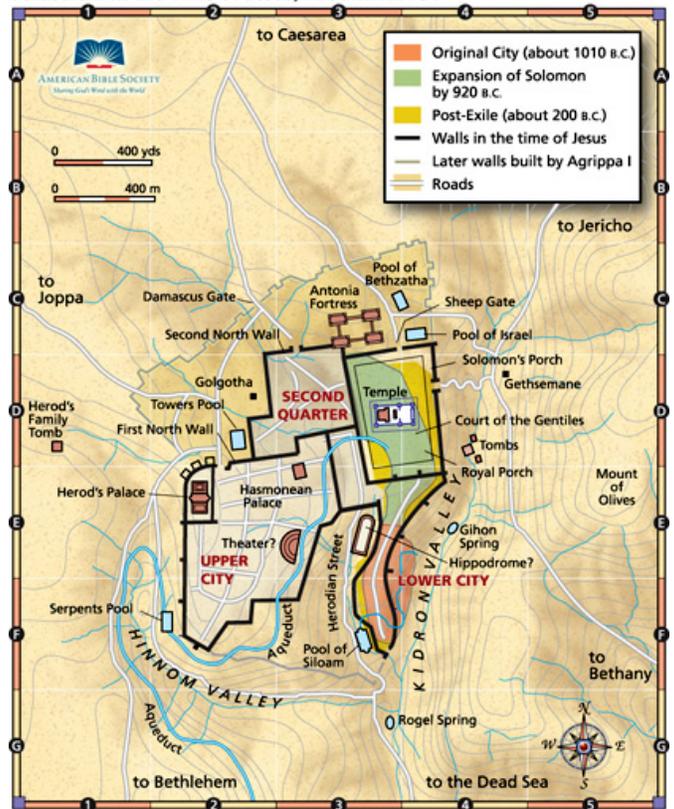
The Pool of Bethesda was actually two pools surrounded by four porticoes, with a fifth portico situated between them. It would have been an impressive sight. The lavish complex dated to the reign of Herod the Great, and is believed to have been in use before that as the site of an intermittent spring. The connection between the pool and the healing process is attested to not only in John's gospel, but also by archaeological remains indicating Romans sought healing there after taking over Jerusalem in A.D. 135.

-Archaeological Study Bible

Observation

1. We are not told which of the Jewish festivals Jesus was heading to Jerusalem to celebrate, but once again we see he was not in such a rush he could not take time for someone in need. Who did he meet as he was coming into Jerusalem that day? And where did he meet him?

Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus, Around A.D. 30



2. How long had this man been in this condition?
3. Did you notice the seemingly odd question Jesus asked the man that day?
4. What was the man's reply?
5. According to verse 8, what three acts of faith did Jesus ask this man to do?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

John 5:9

“At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.”

John 5:18-23

“For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God, ¹⁹Jesus gave them this answer, ‘I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. ²⁰For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these. ²¹For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. ²²Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, ²³that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.”

6. Verse 9 tells us the man was cured. What fact proved the man was truly healed?
7. Next, we read the conversation between the man and some Jewish leaders. What rule did the leaders point out?
8. The man could not explain everything that had happened. What facts was he sure of?
9. The man who had been healed was unaware that it was Jesus who had healed him. Later he runs into Jesus again while at the temple. What instructions did Jesus give him?
10. When the man met those curious Jewish leaders again, what information did he now have for them?

11. The text tells us the Jewish leaders began to look for ways to persecute Jesus. The word “persecute” in the Greek means to make to run or flee—to pursue in a hostile manner—to drive away. Jesus tried to help them understand what he was doing. Did they understand? _____
According to verse 18, what three things stirred their hatred?

As you read the following verses, briefly summarize what you learn about Jesus.

Verse 19

Verse 20

Verse 21

Verse 22

Verse 23

12. Look in your Bible at verses 24-30. Jesus very clearly presents the way to eternal life. What two things did he say a person must do to have this life?

1. _____ 2. _____

What are believers promised?

What will happen to all others?

Luke 19:10

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

John 5:42-43

“but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. ⁴³I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him.”

John 3:16-18

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.”

13. In your *Bible* circle the words testify and testimony in verses 31-40. Who were the witnesses testifying concerning Jesus.
- a. Jesus himself
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
14. Sadly, these men who spent so much time reading the Scriptures refused to see the truth even when it was right before them. What did Jesus tell them he knew to be true about them?
15. In verse 41 Jesus states that he has not come to receive the honor of men. Luke 19:10 clearly states his purpose for coming. Now read John 5:42-43. What does Jesus point out is their problem? What charge does he bring against them?
16. To their misfortune, what does Jesus say they are more concerned with obtaining? What should they strive for instead?
17. Jesus did not need to accuse these men to God. He wants them to know it is impossible for a person preoccupied with receiving the praise of men and utterly unconcerned for God’s praise to ever truly follow Christ as Lord and Savior. Where does that leave men and women who are like this? Read John 3:16-18.

Application

1. The chapter opened with a beautiful story of a man who had struggled for many, many years. He had been so long in this condition that it had become his way of life. Do you ever feel trapped in your infirmities, or do you feel paralyzed by something in your life? Have you lost hope? Bethesda means house of mercy. Why not come to the place of mercy?
2. Jesus asked the man if this healing was truly what he wanted. What miracle would you like to see today? A husband saved? A wayward child to return? A family relationship to be restored? Think about it. If it did happen today, is that what you really want?
 - a. If your newly saved husband got sold out to Jesus and said, let’s sell everything and follow Jesus—would you follow?
 - b. If your child returned home, are you ready to love and support them in a way that is truly God honoring?
 - c. If your family member sought restoration, could you forgive and forget the past offenses?

Mercy or Grace

Mercy is not receiving what we deserve—deliverance from judgment.

*Grace is favor that you don't deserve—extending kindness to the unworthy.
Show mercy and give grace.*

John 5:42

“but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts.”

Ephesians 2:8-9

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”

3. Later, in this story we see Jesus meet up with the man once again. He tells him, “Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.” Often we want Jesus’ miracle but in a very short while we return to the same sin that got us to the place we were. Has Jesus delivered you in some area, and yet, you are about to return to the sin that crippled you? Are you getting too close to the edge?
4. What boundaries might be helpful in order to keep you from getting into danger with a tempting sin? Highways often have small raised bumps just outside the painted line that make a loud, thumping sound when tires drive over them. This is just enough to alert the driver, so that she can make corrections. They also have guardrails in order to save a car from driving into oncoming lanes or plummeting over the edge into a ravine. Boundaries can be our friends; they help us stay focused and safe. Be prepared to share with your small group a boundary that has been beneficial to you.
5. It is often easier for us to ask for a miracle on behalf of one who has our sympathy—someone we believe deserves grace. But when it is one who has brought on their malady by a sin or careless and foolish action, we are a bit less sympathetic. Jesus extended mercy and then told them to stop sinning. Try to find an opportunity this week to extend mercy to someone before they deserve it, and share the experience with your small group. It need not be something huge.

While in traffic today I allowed a man to come into my lane of traffic when I noticed he turned on his blinker. You might say Kathy that wasn't mercy that was courteous driving. I would argue that it was mercy since he had denied me that same privilege just a mile earlier. This is a small thing, but if I practice extending mercy in small ways every day, then it will become a habit, and I will be prepared when I'm called upon by the Lord to extend a larger level of mercy.

6. Over and over we see Jesus pointing the Jewish leaders to the truth of his deity. Have you ever tried to share Jesus with someone who just would not accept that Jesus is the savior of the world? What is keeping them from the truth? Do you believe they might be suffering from the same problem Jesus pointed out in John 5:42? Do not get frustrated. Read Ephesians 2:8-9. Not everyone will accept salvation; it is a gift to accept or reject.
7. What verse or verses stood out to you from this chapter and why? Share this with someone this week. Perhaps you could call a friend and discuss what you both found in the chapter. This is what the Bible calls “iron sharpening iron.”