

John 5:1-15

The Healing at the Pool

Notice that verse 4 is missing. Why do you think it has been removed in many of our modern translations? Do you think it should be put back in the text, or do you think it was not part of the original text?

Read verses 6 and 7. Given that people who were “professional” beggars could make a good living back in Jesus’ day, do you think Jesus’ question to the paralyzed man was rhetorical or sincere?

Notice how the man assumes Jesus is “playing by the rules” and that his being made well has to do with his ability to get in the pool. Combine this with his addressing Jesus as “sir” and you have someone who does not know who Jesus really is and what he is capable of. Now, look back at verse 1, where we learn that Jesus was in the heart of the Jewish nation, in Jerusalem. What is John saying about the Jews as compared to the Samaritans (from Chapter 4)?

When Jesus told the man to “pick up your mat and walk”, he was doing more than telling the man to get up and go home. He was telling the man to do something that the Jews believed was a violation of the Sabbath Laws. The man, who had believed the Jewish myths concerning the angel stirring the waters to

make the sick well (even though it had done no good for him for 38 years), abandons the added Sabbath regulations in favor of obedience to Jesus.

The Jews who told the man that picking up his mat was forbidden by the Sabbath law were wrong. It was their interpretation of the Sabbath law that forbid the carrying of the mat. Even today, many so-called “Orthodox” Jews prohibit the doing of many common tasks in the name of Sabbath observance. How do we “Remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy”? (See: Hebrews 4:3-11 and Colossians 2:17)

This passage shows the escalation in hostility between Jesus and the Jews. We saw this hostility in a very minor form in 4:3 and we will see it grow throughout the remainder of the Gospel.

Jesus says the man is continuing to sin after his healing when He sees him again in 5:14. What was it that the man did that made him a sinner?

Did the man stop sinning when he told the Jews that it was Jesus who made him well, or was the man turning Jesus in to the authorities to get back at him?