

# Do You Want to Be Healed?

*John 5:1-9*

**Thought for the Day:** God, in His sovereign wisdom, grace, and mercy chooses whom He will for spiritual healing.

The third of seven signs (miracles) recorded by the Apostle John in his Gospel is an illustration of the salvation and spiritual healing available to us through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **1 After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.**

- According to Old Testament instructions, all Jewish males were required to go to Jerusalem to attend three feasts: (1) the Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread; (2) the Feast of Weeks (also called Pentecost); and (3) the Feast of Tabernacles.

## **2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades.**

- Bethesda literally means "house of mercy" or "house of pity."
- "Some Bible teachers think that these five porches represent the Law of Moses and speak of its inability to help man out of his deep troubles." (*MacDonald, p. 1446*)
  - The Old Testament Law and rituals were never intended to be a means of salvation.
  - Rather, they pointed to our need for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **3 In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed...**

- This story illustrates our own spiritual hopelessness and helplessness apart from the healing touch of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**[Not found in the earliest and most reliable ancient manuscripts] ...waiting for the moving of the water. 4 For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. (NKJV)**

- In reality, the pool was fed by an intermittent spring which periodically stirred the waters and over time, people came to believe that its waters had healing powers.
- "You can imagine what a pathetic sight it was to see so many people in need of help, struggling to get into the water, and yet only one [supposedly] being able to receive healing power." (*MacDonald, p. 1447*)

## **5 One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years.**

- "After thirty-eight years, this man's problem had become a way of life. No one had ever helped him. He had no hope of ever being healed and no [hope of] helping himself. The man was paralyzed in sight of healing. His situation looked hopeless; that is, until the day that Jesus made his way through the crowd. Among all those trying to be healed, Jesus found the one who couldn't help himself."

"No matter how trapped you feel in your infirmities, God can minister to your deepest needs. Don't let a problem or hardship cause you to lose hope. God may have special work for you to do in spite of your condition, or even because of it. Many have ministered more effectively to hurting people because they [themselves] have triumphed over their own hurts." (*The Life Application Commentary Series*)

## **6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?"**

- Jesus could have healed everyone who was there that day, but chose not to. For His own sovereign reasons, He chose to heal only this one man.
- We do not understand why Jesus chooses to save some, but not all. We do not understand why He chose to save us, and not others. We must allow Him to be the sovereign God that He is. (Deuteronomy 29:29)
- "Jesus' question shows us that he will not force himself upon anyone. He seeks permission before intervening in that person's life. Standing before a man whose desperate need was so apparent, Jesus asked an embarrassingly obvious question, 'Do you want to be made well?'"

"We must acknowledge our dependency and decide if we want Christ to heal us. Jesus wants more than to make some 'minor' corrections in our lives — he offers radical transformation (2 Corinthians 5:17). Only when we admit our need will we receive the amazing power of his grace and the miracle of salvation and eternal life." (*The Life Application Commentary Series*)
- "Jesus knew that this was the greatest longing of the man's heart. But He also wanted to draw out from the man an admission of his own helplessness and of his desperate need for healing. It is much the same with salvation. The Lord knows that we desperately need to be saved, but He waits to hear the confession from our own lips that we are lost, that we need Him and accept Him as our Savior. We are not saved by our own will, yet the human will must be exercised before God saves a soul." (*MacDonald, p. 1447*)

## **7 The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me."**

- "The man admitted that he needed help. His hope for healing was stuck behind his hopelessness of ever having help to get to the water in time. He had one important trait that many people lack: He knew he needed help. Not only was he unable to help himself, he also hadn't been able to persuade anyone else to help him." (*The Life Application Commentary Series*)
- The truth is, our efforts to save ourselves, to heal ourselves spiritually, are ineffective and worthless. Like this poor, sick man, we have to come completely to the end of ourselves, admit our inability to heal ourselves, and cry out to the Lord to save us!

## **8 Jesus said to him, "Get up, take up your bed, and walk." 9 And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath.**

- There is no indication that this man was expecting to be healed or that he had to exercise any faith at all before he was healed! He was already healed *before* he got up, took up his bed, and walked.
- "The Savior never tells anyone to do a thing without giving the power to do it. Even as He spoke, new life and power flowed into the body of the invalid. He was healed immediately. It was not a gradual recovery. Limbs that had been useless or weak for years now throbbed with strength. Then there was immediate obedience to the word of the Lord. He took up his bed and walked. What a thrill it must have been for him to do this after thirty-eight years of sickness!" (*MacDonald, p. 1447*)
- The only thing preventing us from being saved by the Lord is our own unwillingness to accept His gift of spiritual healing. "Do you want to be healed?"