

“HEALING AT BETHESDA”

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During my message Sunday, I mentioned the man healed at the pool of Bethesda. It wasn't in my notes, the story just came to me as I was preaching, and encouraging people to respond while the Spirit of God was moving.

I decided to re-visit that story today. It is found in John chapter 5, if you would like to read it.

On the day that Jesus visited the pool, he found a man who had been crippled for 38 years. For 38 years he had been in that condition. For 38 years he had wanted to be healed. For 38 years, he had lived with disappointment and then Jesus walks on the scene.

What did Jesus ask him? John 5:6 When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, "Would you like to get well?" NLT

That seems like a strange question to ask a crippled man. "Would you like to get well?" As strange as it is, I've known people who would rather remain like they are, than to be healed and made whole.

John 5:7-8 "I can't, sir," the sick man said, "for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me." Jesus told him, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!"

Jesus wasn't interested in his excuses, He just wanted to know if he truly wanted to get well. The man did, and he was healed of a condition that had plagued him for 38 long years.

You would think that everybody would be happy about this. Wrong!

John 5:9-10 Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking! But this miracle happened on the Sabbath, so the Jewish leaders objected. They said to the man who was cured, "You can't work on the Sabbath! The law doesn't allow you to carry that sleeping mat!"

See how foolish people can sometimes be. These religious people were more concerned about their laws, doing things their way, when they should have been happy and rejoicing over the fact that a miracle had taken place in their midst. That a man's life had been changed forever.

Then when they found out that it was Jesus who healed him, they began to harass Jesus for breaking their rules and tried all the harder to find a way to kill him.

The reaction of the Jewish leaders show that no matter how much proof God provides, there will always be some who refuse to see and accept the truth. Jesus was a bona fide Miracle Worker, but the religious leaders couldn't see the miracle. All they could see was that someone had violated a rule.

I never want a rule, a certain way of doing something to ever get in the way of God working a miracle or bring change to another person's life.