

*Do you want to get well? | John 5. 1-9*

(Coming out of song: Good Plans) Singing that song puts life in a great perspective. Knowing that no matter what I may face, He has good plans. How many of you believe He has good plans for you??

What's up City Hope family!! It is so good to see your smiling faces this morning. It's good to see those of you who aren't smiling as well.

Thank you for being here...Your presence matters. I want to thank those listening to our podcast as well.

I want to remind everyone that there is freedom in this place. You don't have to come in here like you have it all together and life is great. You don't have to come in here out of tradition and go through the motions. Come in messy. Walk out marked by Jesus. That's the goal.

We want you to come in here just as you are and walk out knowing you have experienced Jesus. Not just reciting some songs and shaking some hands. That's the only way any of our lives grow and get better...through Jesus!

Before we jump into the message today, I want to take a moment to celebrate a couple of things.

**(Men's Event Pics)** – We held a men's event pig roast and saw 50 men come and enjoy a word from the Lord, great fellowship, and great fun. Had several guests with us and it was all around a wonderful time.

**(Easter Services Graphic)** – April 20 is Easter. Come back from spring break and invite someone. 3 identical services: 8, 9:30, 11:30. Kids min only at 9:30 and 11:30. Jump in and serve.

Today we are going to look at an amazing story about Jesus....in John 5. This is a very rich passage of Scripture.

Let me encourage you to read this passage this week and allow God to use it to speak directly to your heart.

Context: Jesus has called his first disciples to follow him. They went to Galilee. While in Galilee he called some more disciples to follow him and then he started performing some of his miracles. He went to a wedding and turned some water into wine.

He then went to the temple in Jerusalem...people were buying and selling in the temple, that fired Jesus up so he overturned their tables and told them to scram.

He then headed back to Galilee and met a Samaritan woman along the way. She became a believer in Jesus as did many others in that town.

There was an official in the town had a very sick son...Jesus healed that young man...and many more people believed in Christ.

Jesus is showing his power. Putting his compassion on display. Giving people hope. Exhibiting His love. This is who Jesus is and what He's all about. This is where we are picking up today.

Stand with me in honor of the reading of God's Word: **Read John 5.1-9 | After this, a Jewish festival took place, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup>By the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem there is a pool, called Bethesda in Aramaic, which has five colonnades. <sup>3</sup>Within these lay a large number of the disabled—blind, lame, and paralyzed. <sup>5</sup>One man was there who had been disabled for thirty-eight years. <sup>6</sup>When Jesus saw him lying there and realized he had already been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to get well?" <sup>7</sup>"Sir," the disabled man answered, "I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I'm coming, someone goes down ahead of me." <sup>8</sup>"Get up," Jesus told him, "pick up your mat and walk." <sup>9</sup>Instantly the man got well, picked up his mat, and started to walk....**

Pray

This is quite the incredible story. Let's dig in here from the beginning.

**Vs. 1-2 | After this, a Jewish festival took place, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup>By the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem there is a pool, called Bethesda in Aramaic, which has five colonnades.**

**(Show picture of Jerusalem map)** This helps us have an understanding of where things are located. At this porch or colonnade what was going on?

**Vs. 3 - Within these lay a large number of the disabled—blind, lame, and paralyzed.**

Sidenote: Notice there is no verse 4. Many scholars believe that verse 4 was not in the original note from John. The oldest and most reliable manuscripts of the New Testament do not contain verse 4. Likely, they represent superstition of the day about healings that were believed to have happened at the pool of Bethesda.

So here we have this water and porch steps where a lot of struggling people were at.

**(Show picture of people on steps going in water)**

**(Show picture of man jumping into water)**

**Vs. 5 | One man was there who had been disabled for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and realized he had already been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to get well?”**

At first glance, it seems like Jesus asks this odd question; Do you want to get well? Of course he wants to get well! Why would he not want to get well? He’s been in this same situation for 38 years.

I wonder why Jesus asked this. If you look a little deeper...I think what Jesus is doing is very profound.

The decision was his, not Jesus’.

He’s allowing the man to make the decision for himself. Of course, when we read it, we are like duhhh. But it had to be the man’s decision.

Throughout life...you are faced with decisions, and you have to make the decision and live with it. Decisions are a really big deal. We make hundreds a day.

Jesus wanted him to say yes, but it was his decision.

*Illustration – Story of the girls jumping off the bridge at Norris Lake. They all processed the decision differently.*

Not only was it his decision, it was a huge decision.

This man laying by the pool is faced with a life-changing decision. Here is why I'm saying life changing.

So Jesus asks, do you want to get well...He was telling this man; you have been this way for a really long time...**Are you ready for a new life?** Are you ready for me to come in and radically change you.

The thought of being made different sounds good until it's time to make the decision.

Here is where some of us get stuck. **We want God to change our circumstances but not change us.**

Oh God...change my spouse. Oh God...change my financial situation. Oh God...breakthrough with my child because they are out of control. – God change my situation.

But the question Jesus asked...do you want to get well...not do you want to just feel better.

Here is the point... **Sometimes comfort in dysfunction is easier than the cost of transformation.**

Some people are more attached to their condition than they realize.

**Healing changes everything.**

When Jesus truly steps onto the scene of our lives...new things happen.

Jesus asks the questions and then look what happens next...**Vs. 7 | “Sir,” the disabled man answered, “I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I’m coming, someone goes down ahead of me.”**

His first response to this life-altering question...Blame other people.

Church, you have a choice...keep blaming or start moving. Let God do something new in and to your life...stay the same.

**You will never walk in freedom while pointing fingers.**

Let me give you a little secret...take a look at the people around you. Everyone in your row has issues. We are all sinners in need of a Savior.

I want to push on some of you a little bit here...Are you making an excuse? Blaming others or even blaming God?

Illustration: There was a man named James who had grown up around church but never wanted anything to do with it. When asked about faith, he'd say, "Christians are fake. They preach love, but they judge people. They talk about grace but live with pride. Why would I want to be one of them?" One day, a friend who had been walking with Jesus for years sat down with him over coffee and said, "James, can I ask you something? Have you ever been to a gym?" James laughed, "Yeah, of course." His friend leaned in and asked, "Did seeing out-of-shape people at the gym stop you from working out?" James smirked, "No, that's the whole point—they're there to get better." The friend smiled, "Exactly. The church isn't full of people who have it all together—it's full of people who know they don't. We're not perfect, but we know the One who is. Don't reject Jesus because of broken people trying to follow Him. We're all in process." James was quiet. That hit different. That day didn't end with a dramatic altar call, but it cracked something open. A few months later, James gave his life to Christ—not because people were perfect, but because Jesus was.

Don't let the imperfection of people (the Church) keep you from the perfection of Christ.

**Jesus doesn't call us to follow His followers. He calls us to follow Him.**

Back to our scripture...Jesus didn't ask about his downfalls or his doubts, or his demons...He asked about his desire.

Do you want to get well? Do you want a new life?

So, the man blames everyone else and then Jesus gives an ultimate response: **Vs. 8 | Get up," Jesus told him, "pick up your mat and walk."**

Get Up!

This man was waiting for the water to be stirred. He had a system. A plan.

Jesus shows up and bypasses all that. He just says, “Get up.”

Sometimes, we’re so locked into what *we think* healing should look like that we miss when Jesus is offering something better.

**Stop talking yourself out of it. Start listening to the One calling you into it.**

Sometimes as a pastor I get to see things. I see when you’re locked in and when your mind is thinking about 1000 other things.

I see when God is stirring in your heart. And week after week, year after year, people hear from God and walk away and do nothing about it.

It’s your decision. It’s your relationship. We can’t make you fall in love with Jesus but part of my job is to set up the date.

That’s why after every service we say, if you need to respond to what Gods saying...do it today.

Look at this last verse for today. Jesus said get up and look what happened...

**Vs. 9 | Instantly the man got well...**

**The miracle’s not in the method. It’s in the Master’s voice.**

Listen to the Masters voice.

*Response:* Do you want to get well?

Salvation | Relationships | Soul | Mind | Body | Purpose | Finances | Addictions

**2 Corinthians 5.17 - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.**

The freedom and invitation for a new life are there...but it’s your decision to make.