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 - All notes, etc. available at: www.htchurch.com/john
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Recap

- We finished Jesus’ conversation with the Samaritan “woman at the well.”
- He explained that His true food was to do the Will of the Father.
- The Lord then teaches the disciples about the harvest. Sometimes we can expect a supernatural reaping... the fields are already ready for harvesting!
- Many of the Samaritans receive Jesus as the Savior of the World.
- Returning to Cana, Jesus heals a nobleman’s son from a distance.
- The nobleman kept progressing in his faith! Unsympathetic characters such as the nobleman can have more faith than those to whom the promises belonged.
- The Gospel is all: Jewish religious leaders, Samaritans, and even Gentiles!

Chapter 5: A Turning Point in *John*

- After the Prologue, we saw Jesus begin His ministry. Chapter 2 through Chapter 4 shows us the *Cana Cycle*. It’s a time of Jesus beginning to display His glory.
 - After Chapter 4 comes a period of successful ministry which John doesn’t discuss.
 - The next part of John is called the *Festival Cycle*, because in it Jesus interacts with the Jewish people at several different feasts. He reveals Himself as the One to whom these feasts actually point.
 - Starting with Chapter 5, Jesus will see increasing opposition to His ministry.
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At The Pool (John 5:1-4)

1 After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. 3 In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, 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.

- We don't know how much time elapses between the end of Chapter 4 and here.
- This is the only Feast that John doesn't identify for us. It might have been Passover, Pentecost, or Tabernacles.
- Bethesda means a house or a place of mercy. The Pool of Bethesda wasn't conclusively identified until the 1960's. You can have confidence in your Bible!
- This pool had five covered porches, one of which covered a wall or dam in the middle of the pool, dividing the pool into two sections. This division could have served to divide the sexes or create a water reservoir.
- Some assert that the story of the angel stirring the water is purely legendary. But those verses appear in an edition of the Gospels that comes from about 175 AD.

Do You Want To Be Made Well? (John 5:5-7)

5 Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" 7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me."

- John is fond of giving numbers and times in his gospel. Is there any symbolism to the number 38 in this story?
 - Learned readers of *John* knew that God punished the children of Israel by causing them to wander in the desert for 38 years.
 - Deuteronomy 2 indicates that although Israel was in the desert for 40 years, their wanderings were only 38 years out of those 40.
 - If there is a symbolic significance to the number 38, it could speak of the futility of life without the power and freedom of Christ.
- John may simply be emphasizing how long this unfortunate man was sick.
- Jesus knew that the man had been there for a long time, and He sought him out.
- “Do you want to be made well?” What was the purpose of this famous question?
- We want to be led of the Spirit but of course always sensitive in how we approach people and discuss their illness with them.
- The man might also have fallen prey to superstition. His focus was on the help of Man: “*I have no man...*” Only an encounter with Christ can change my life!
- Here is another one of John’s “water stories.”
- Jesus is greater than religious superstition and folk religion. But that’s almost an aside; the true importance of this story is Jesus’ lordship even over the Sabbath.
- This will intensify the conflict between Jesus and the religious establishment.

Take Up Your Bed! (John 5:8-10)

8 Jesus said to him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk.” 9 And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath. 10 The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, “It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed.”

- In verse 8, Jesus again ministers healing by a simple word of command.
- When we train people in healing ministry, we don't teach them methods. We teach people to wait upon the Lord and dialogue with the Holy Spirit.
- This is not only a healing, but it's also a miracle – a miracle of healing.
- Notice that John never mentions the man's faith. The man didn't even know what was happening. The only thing that had happened was that Jesus spoke.
- The man took up his bed, which would have been a bedroll or a mat.
- No work could be done on the Sabbath, with its 39 different categories of work that were forbidden. Each one of the 39 categories was debated and hammered out to cover particular situations.
- Carrying a mat violated the Sabbath, at least the way the rabbis interpreted it.

Jesus Made Me Do It (John 5:11-13)

11 He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'" 12 Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk?'" 13 But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place.

- This man is not as likable as the man whom Jesus will heal in Chapter 9. He is quick to blame Jesus!
- Technically, Sabbath violations were punishable by death. And those who *encouraged* such violations were treated worse than those who *committed* them.
- Notice what a religious spirit will do to your mentality!

Sin No More (John 5:14)

14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, “See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.”

- First, notice the love and care of Jesus, how He actually finds the man in the Temple – despite the man’s apparent lack of gratitude.
- There’s no getting around the fact that Jesus was warning him that continued sin could bring something worse upon him.
- There is no simplistic answer to the question of whether sin will bring sickness and death as a judgment. Some sickness comes simply because we live in a fallen world. Sickness is not necessarily a sign of God’s disfavor – any more than health is a sign of His favor. We could also say the same about wealth and poverty.
- We don’t necessarily tie death and sickness to sins that a person has committed. Jesus spoke about this, so we don’t put condemnation on people. However, we must recognize that some sickness and death does indeed come as a judgment.
- God may judge a person in order to bring him to a place of repentance. It seems that in this case, Jesus knew there was sin at the root of the man’s illness.

The Father And The Son Are Working (John 5:15-17)

15 The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. 16 For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. 17 But Jesus answered them, “My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.”

- Whether through fear or because of anger at Jesus, the man goes (immediately, it would seem) and informs the leaders that it was Jesus who had healed him.
- Now, for the first time, the leadership actually wants to kill Jesus – because He had told a man to carry his bedroll on the Sabbath.
- Jesus’ reply is perhaps the most direct claim He has yet made to the religious leadership. He’s claiming to be on the same level as the God of Israel!
- The rabbis believed that God did a kind of work on the Sabbath, seeing He still needed to use His Divine power to sustain the Universe. But Jesus said, “My Father has been working until now, and I have been, too!” This makes Him equal with God, because the only person working in Israel on the Shabbat was Yahweh the God of Israel.
- This is a clear claim to have Divine authority and to be above the Sabbath itself!

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