

# PALOMINO VALLEY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

Sunday, April 7, 2024

John 5:1-9

**“Get up, pick up your pallet and walk.”**

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## Today

On Palm Sunday we learned more about Jesus' entry into Jerusalem along with His disciples on the first day of the week. He was greeted with shouts of joy as the crowds welcomed their Messiah riding on a young donkey as they waved palm fronds and spread their coats and the palm fronds on the road before Him.

During the next few days, Jesus cleansed the temple of the money changers and sellers of animals, upsetting the Sadducees who were paid by these business people. He performed signs of various healings, and He confronted the Pharisees about their hypocrisy, further enraging them, and they planned to kill Him.

On Thursday evening, Jesus ate His last Passover supper with His disciples, during which time Judas left to betray Him. During that supper Jesus instituted the New Covenant, freeing us from a works righteousness to a covenant of grace.

His betrayal was carried out at the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus was praying. He was arrested, brought to several unjust trials, including being falsely accused before Pontius Pilate who sent Him to King Herod.

Herod, in turn, sent Him back to Pilate, who, at the demand of an angry religious crowd, had Him scourged, and finally crucified to suffer death, then He was buried in a new tomb.

On the third day after His death, the greatest event in the history of the world took place; God's power was demonstrated when Jesus rose from the dead, and He is alive forevermore! Resurrection Day! God's promise of eternal life for everyone who believes has been fulfilled!

Another of God's promises will happen, perhaps sooner than we might think; the return of the living Christ to defeat all evil and establish His kingdom on earth. Amen!

We return now to our study of the gospel of John. We have completed the first four chapters, and we will begin at **John 5:1-9**.

In the last part of *chapter 4*, It is still early in His ministry, and Jesus had just healed a nobleman's son, and when the nobleman was told by his slaves his son was healed, he returned to his home and he and his entire household believed in Jesus.

Let's read our text for today together:

**John 5:1** *After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.*

**Vs. 2** *Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porticoes.*

**Vs. 3** *In these lay a multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame, and withered, waiting for the moving of the waters;*

**Vs. 4** *for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool and stirred up the water; whoever then first, after the stirring up of the water, stepped in was made well from whatever disease with which he was afflicted.*

**Vs. 5** *A man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years.*

**Vs. 6** *When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had already been ill a long time in that condition, He said to him, "Do you wish to get well?"*

**Vs. 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."*

**Vs. 8** *Jesus said to him, "Get up, pick up your pallet and walk."*

**Vs. 9** *Immediately the man became well, and picked up his pallet and began to walk.*

As we read John's account of Jesus healing the lame man by the pool, we might wonder why He healed only one man when there was multitude of ill people laying near this pool?

We don't know. Perhaps He did heal others, but John chose to mention only this man. John wrote in *John 20:30 Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book.*

In reading through this passage several times, it became apparent that this account goes deeper than just another miraculous healing that Jesus performed. It is really a study in our human nature. It's a story about how Jesus wants to transform our lives. It's a story about healing.

Let's consider it.

After healing the son of the king's servant, the nobleman, Jesus returns to Jerusalem for the feast. He probably entered Jerusalem through the sheep gate. All the sheep to be sacrificed enter through this gate to be washed before sacrifice.

The pool, Bethesda, is fed by underground springs, and it was divided into two parts; one part was used to clean the sheep, and the other part was for people to bath in. The name, Bethesda, is a Hebrew name meaning "*house of mercy, or house of kindness.*"

This is where the lame man was laying, along with many others who were suffering various types of afflictions; all waiting for the water to stir so one of them could go into the water and be healed.

When Jesus approached him, He already knew the man had been lame for the past 38 years, all the while laying in the shelter of the porticoes, waiting to be the first to enter the pool when the water stirred so he could be healed.

Think about this for a moment. This sick man has been there for 38 years, always watching and waiting, but could not get to the pool on his own. Year after year, he watches others being healed, yet he is still laying there.

Jesus saw that this man has not only a physical problem, but he has emotional problems as well. He is emotionally wounded, feeling helpless, abandoned, perhaps with a sense of shame. He had the emotional scars of the past, seeing others healed, yet he could not help himself.

No doubt, he has experienced frustration, even anger and bitterness. He said he has no friends, no man to help him into the pool.

Notice his reply to Jesus' question. Jesus asked him, *"Do you wish to get well?"*

Rather than answering, "Yes!", or "Sir, will you help me into the pool?", he replies with an excuse.

**Vs. 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."*

Here is a man who is surrounded by hurting people; all with some type of affliction, but no one to help.

After waiting and doing the same thing, over and over again for 38 years, this man could not come to the conclusion that something else must be tried. He needed the divine healing power of Jesus, because he was helpless in his own power.

Notice, Jesus did not say to the man, "You need therapy, or you need medication." He did not say, "Get a grip on yourself!" or, "Crawl down to the pool and get in!"

**Vs. 8** Jesus just gave the man one short command; *"Get up, pick up your pallet and walk."*

**Vs. 9** *Immediately the man became well, and picked up his pallet and began to walk.*

The apostle John recorded the truth about what happened to the lame man at the pool of Bethesda 2000 years ago, and the same is true today.

The world is full of hurting people; people with emotional scars of all kinds, from the wounds of illnesses, the tragedies of deaths of friends and family members, the experiences of being lied to or cheated, false accusations, bad decisions

leading to difficult times, betrayed by a friend, being rejected by family members for various reasons, divorces; all kinds of things that create emotional scars.

Let's bring this closer to home. The same problems exist in the church. People hurt because they carry emotional scars, and some of those wounds are deep, and remain sore for a long while.

None of us are exempt. The person next to you, and the person in front of you, and in back of you, all have scars. Those scars may be covered up because they are uncomfortable to reveal, but they are there, nonetheless.

If you happen to one of those who suffer, know that you are not alone.

There is a saying, "Time heals all wounds." I don't believe that. Time only allows the wounds to scab over, and they may hurt a little less, but they are there.

Then, one day, just one innocent comment, or some small incident, or someone's behavior rips that scab off, and we bleed once again.

What did Jesus do when He came to the pool of Bethesda? He saw the man lying there. He sees you. He sees all of us; nothing is hidden from His eyes, and He is not oblivious to your pain and scars. He knows them all, and He has the power to heal them, and He is willing to heal them.

During my years of operating half-way homes for drug and alcohol addicts, most, if not all those who lived there tried to cover up their pain and scars with drugs or alcohol. They may have found relief for a few hours, but then they suffered again.

Comments would be offered by other residents, and even one counselor: "If you were truly spiritual, you would not feel so bad." "You need more faith." "You need to pray more." And the comment you have all heard, "Just let go and let God."

Did Jesus say anything like that? No. He asked the man one question, and it's the same question He asks each of us; "*Do you wish to get well?*"

He asked the man that question because some people do not want to get well; they do not want to be healed. Why? Perhaps for a number of reasons. One major reason to not want to get well is that our pride dictates we hold on to our hurts, nurse them, and aggravate about them.

If we say "Yes" to Jesus, it means we must admit our wounds and hurts to ourselves, and to God, and yes, perhaps even to a trusted friend.

It means we are willing to make a choice; choosing healing over continuing to hurt.

It means we are willing to forsake our pride, and forsake nursing our anger and bitterness about our misfortunes, and truly believe Jesus can and will heal us. The lame man at the pool *believed* Jesus when He said to him, "Get up, take up your pallet and walk." The question is, Do we believe Jesus can heal us; can He make us well? And, do we want to be made well?

Jesus taught about one sure way to be healed from the emotional wounds of the past; a way that requires a decision and an action on our part. It is a decision that we are to employ frequently in our daily lives.

It is a responsibility that we are each accountable for to God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; a decision that brings freedom and peace within our souls, and with God.

Jesus' teaching is found first in *Matthew 9:12 And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.*

Other versions say, *forgive us our debts, or, forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.*

The apostle Paul wrote to the churches about forgiving.

*Colossians 3:12-13 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and believed, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience;*

*Vs. 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.*

There would be no reason for Paul to write this unless he knew there would be men when we do and say things that offend others in the church.

There are times when we struggle with forgiving others, again, because of our pride, but consider the humility of Jesus.

The Jewish religious crowd hated Jesus, crying out, "Crucify Him!" Pontius Pilate had Him scourged, tearing His flesh and bleeding. He was spat upon, and a crown of thorns shoved down on His head.

Then they nailed Him to a cross and mocked and taunted Him. From His cross He looked down and said, "*Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.*" (Luke 23:34)

Have any of us received an offense equal to, or greater than that which Jesus received from those who hated Him? I think not.

Scripture reminds us; *Psalm 147:3 He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.*

The prophet Isaiah, inspired by the preincarnate Christ, reminds us that our most Holy God and Savior dwells with us for the purpose of reviving our hearts:

*Isaiah 57:15 For thus says the high and exalted One who lives forever, whose name is Holy, I dwell on a high and holy place, and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit in order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.*

### Conclusion

While studying Scripture in preparation for this message, I was strongly convicted by John's account of Jesus' encounter with the lame man at the pool of Bethesda; the pool of mercy and kindness.

I pray that God is saying to this assembly, and to all those listening and watching today, that it is time to leave all your wounds behind. It is time to answer Jesus' question, *"Do you wish to get well?"* It's your choice.

If so, *"Get up, pick up your pallet and walk."*

It is time to believe with your whole heart that Jesus can heal whatever wound, whatever offense, whatever pain that is hidden in your heart, even the pains that have lingered for many years. Let Him set you free!

In so doing, the health of our assembly will blossom and grow robust, and our love for one another will be a bright light; the light of Christ, in our community.

Amen!

**Let us pray-- Our Father in heaven, our one, true, living God; God of love, mercy, and grace, we approach Your throne in awe of Your majesty. We acknowledge, Father, Your absolute sovereignty over all things, both spiritual and physical.**

**We come to celebrate Your perfection, Your Holiness, Your righteousness. We come to thank You for our salvation through Your only begotten Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and for Your guidance and provision through Your Holy Spirit.**

**We come to You this morning to thank You for all the blessings You have poured out upon us; Your mercy and grace in our salvation. We thank You, Father, for Your discipline when we stray from Your path of righteousness.**

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**Our Father, many in our nation have turned away from You to follow false gods; idols of all kinds, and we have pursued, even unaware at times, the lusts and temptations and lusts of a world dominated by Satan and his demons.**

**Please forgive us Father, and revive our hearts. Compel our nations' leaders to repent of their deceptions and lusts for personal gain, and to honor our Constitution.**

**Close the mouths of those who lie to us, and replace those who refuse to follow You; those who refuse to honor our Lord Jesus Christ, and those who follow false religions; all those who hate truth, with those who are dedicated to follow and obey Your Word.**

**We pray, Father, You will heal our land and heal its people.**

**Finally, Father, we pray You will protect the church, of which Jesus Christ is the head. We pray You will bless this assembly as we study Your inspired word, the Holy Scriptures, and embed it in our hearts and minds so that we may grow to spiritual maturity; that we may become the very image of Your Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen!**

Worship

*Benediction: **2 Corinthians 13:11** Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Amen!*

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