

# The Whole Question

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Preacher: Rev George MacAskill

[ 0 : 00 ] Gospel of John chapter 5. The Gospel of John chapter 5 and we'll read the first 23 verses.

After this there was a feast of the Jews and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there was at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda having five porches.

In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk of blind, halt, withered waiting for the moving of the water.

For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool and troubled the water. Whosoever then first, after the troubling of the water, stepped in was made whole of whatever disease he had.

And a certain man was there which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, he knew that he'd been now a long time in that case.

[ 1 : 35 ] He saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man when the water is troubled to put me into the pool.

But while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed and walk.

And immediately the man was made whole and took up his bed and walked. And on the same day was the Sabbath. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is the Sabbath day.

It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. He answered them, He that made me whole. The same said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk.

Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk? And he that was healed wist not who it was.

[ 2 : 47 ] For Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place. Afterward, Jesus findeth them in the temple and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole.

Sin no more, lest a worst thing come upon thee. The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole.

And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus and sought to slain him because he had done these things on the Sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My father worketh hitherto and I work.

Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him. Because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his father, making himself equal with God.

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the father do.

[ 4 : 01 ] For what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the son likewise. For the father loveth the son and sheweth him all things that himself doeth.

And he will show him greater works than these that ye may marvel. For as the father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the son quickeneth whom he will.

For the father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the son. That all men should honour the son, even as they honour the father.

He that honoureth not the son, honoureth not the father which hath sent him. May God bless to us the very reading of his own word.

We sing once more to God's prayer from Psalm 107. This time verses 16 to 22. Psalm 107 verse 16.

[ 5 : 15 ] Because the mighty gates of brass in pieces he did tear. By him in sunder also cut the bars of ironware.

Down to verse 22. And let them sacrifice to him offerings of thankfulness. And let them show abroad his works in songs of joyfulness.

Psalm 107 verses 16 to 22. Thank you.

Psalm 107 verse 16.

Psalm 107 verse 16.

[ 7 : 12 ] And let them from their place such Johns raise. Oh, that man to the Lord would give praise for his goodness then.

And for his works of wonder. And for his works of wonder done. And to the sons of men.

And let them from their lives. And let them sacrifice to him offerings of thankfulness.

And let them from their lives. And let them from their lives. And let them show abroad his works. In songs of joyfulness.

Amen. Now let's turn in our Bibles to the passage of scripture which we read.

[ 8 : 39 ] in the Gospel of John chapter 5 and as God would help me a little concentrate and read again verses 5 to 9.

John chapter 5 verses 5 to 9. And a certain man was there which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

When Jesus saw him lie and knew that he'd be now a long time in that case he said unto him, Will thou be made whole?

The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man when the water is troubled to put me into the pool but while I am coming another steppeth down before me.

Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed and walk. And immediately the man was made whole and took up his bed and walked.

[ 9 : 51 ] And on the same day was the Sabbath. Jesus saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

Why would Jesus ask such a question knowing that the man was in that condition for years?

Is it a bit redundant, do you think? It's worth looking very carefully at this miracle. Do you want to be made whole?

Is the question. It's not such a redundant question. It's not such a stupid question. Thirty-eight years incapacity moulds a certain mentality.

Expectations become soured. Disillusionment sets in. Cynicism begins to develop.

[ 11 : 07 ] And one can very quickly become quite sceptical after thirty-eight years. The question is actually quite important.

You see, especially as we apply it spiritually. You see, Jesus will not force his blessings upon anyone.

Christ has no unwilling followers. Christ has no indifferent disciples.

In fact, the term indifferent disciple is a contradiction in terms. A disciple by definition means a close lover and follower of someone.

Jesus will plead with someone. Jesus will challenge someone.

[ 12 : 20 ] But Jesus will not twist someone's arm to become a Christian. If you're determined not to be a Christian, Jesus will rebuke you.

Jesus will warn you. Jesus will challenge you. But he'll not twist your arm against your will. The whole nature of salvation is a change of heart.

A change of nature that you want to be saved. You'll want to be at one with Christ. You see, the question that he asks is not do you wish you were born healthy?

It's not do you wish you were never unwell and that this trouble never came upon you? That's not the question. Listen to the question.

Do you want to be made whole? You see, there's a process of healing.

[ 13 : 34 ] Are you prepared to go through the process of healing? Now as we apply that to the spiritual realm, to our spiritual paralysis, to our spiritual illnesses, perhaps far longer than 38 years.

You see, the question is not really do you want to escape from hell? That's not the question really. The question really is that the spiritual application is do you want to be made holy?

Do you want to be made righteous? Do you want to be sinless? That's the real question. Many want to arrive in heaven eventually.

Few want to change their lifestyle down here on earth. Have you got it?

salvation is a change of nature. Yes, it saves from hell. Yes, it takes to the bliss of glory.

[ 14 : 57 ] But essentially, it's a change of nature. And there's a process to go through. Are you willing to go through the process of being made holy?

there are some people anti God, anti Christ, anti religion, I suppose, could say and have said at this point, look, Jesus has all that power.

Why does he not stay another 20 minutes and heal the whole lot of them in that pool? Why does he just select this one man? Can he not wait another 20 minutes and heal the lot of them?

It's worth answering that question. It's worth looking at. You see, the miracle isn't really all about healing.

As I indicated already, the miracle is really about holiness. Really. You see how Jesus answers the question.

[ 16 : 16 ] In verse 17, Jesus answered them, My father worketh hitherto, and I work. work. And in verse 19, it is, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the father do.

You see what he's saying? Look, the father whom I serve, whom I'm obeying, whom I'm following, the father isn't healing anyone else today.

so I can't heal. You see, Christ is keeping his eye on the father. And what the father does, I do.

And if the father's not doing anything, I can't do anything. Jesus cannot work independently of the father.

The father isn't healing anymore today at this time, so he can't. He's keeping his eye on his father. Jesus cannot heal without the father.

[ 17 : 32 ] You see, they're one. And this is the whole argument that in the next few chapters, Jesus is going to enter into debate with. He and the father are one.

the Jews, you see, could not accept Christ was the son of God. They could not accept it. And incidentally, incidentally, all you need to remember when the Jehovah Witnesses come around your door and they debate with you that Jesus wasn't God, they'll agree with you, oh, he's the son of God, yes, he's the son of God, but he's not God.

Just remember verse 18. That's all you need to remember. The Jews sought the war to kill him because he not only had broken the side but said also that God was his father making himself equal with God.

The term son of God made him or constituted him or declared it's the same thing as being equal with God.

Verse 18. And the other verse you really want to use with any of the sects that debate over the deity of Christ is Hebrews 1 4 I think it is.

[ 19 : 07 ] No, 1 8. No, 1 8. Hebrews 1 verse 8. But unto the Son he saith thy throne O God.

Unto the Son. The Father says to the Son thy throne O God. There's it in the Bible. It's all you need to remember to refute those who claim the Son of God is not the same as being God.

You remember Hebrews 1 8 and John 5 18. Why did they put Jesus to death? Because he made himself equal with God.

Isn't it pathetic? Now to get back Jesus does not because his father is doing nothing he's doing nothing.

He's following the father. Now if we apply that to ourselves you know there's many ministers going off with stress.

[ 20 : 19 ] Many are overworking. Many have got what they call burnout. And it's a problem in industry those on management whom we think well all they do is push pens and make decisions.

It can be very stressful. Well we can learn a lesson from Jesus here in this stress ridden world. We can only do so much keeping our eye on our duty alone.

that helps us what to do our priorities keeping our eye on God. What has he called us to do?

Limit it to that keep it to that and he will give strength as he gives strength to his servants in the Bible to obey him if we keep our eye on him alone.

Now to go back to Jesus asking this question again will thou be made whole or sound or completely healed?

[ 21 : 28 ] them. Jesus is not really interested in partial recovery. Jesus especially in salvation is dealing with the whole man because you see our problem is deep deep deep and unless we get to the root then there's no permanent complete full recovery.

God looks at the heart because what is in the heart affects our behaviour. You know when you and I are assessing somebody maybe we're assessing somebody is he suitable for this job or that job or the next thing is he suitable we look at what he does and we say well now he did that but why did he do it what was the reason he did it we begin with the outside and try to work inward to what was the man's purpose in doing that God works in the reverse way he begins with the heart he begins with the inward part God sees the inward part and so often he never reaches the outward part because the inward isn't right we can't see the heart but

God can and God looks at the heart and so the question he's really asking here he's getting down to is really has God been at work in this person you see the Holy Spirit prepares sinners for a great work as he prepared Moses 40 years in the Midian desert before he even called them to the 40 years in the Sinai desert eh Moses is called it 40 80 years before he began his proper work 80 40 years preparation now you see if someone is to be blessed by Christ they themselves must be involved experientially God makes us realise things the

Holy Spirit convinces us of things so that we feel strongly about things we begin to love things that we don't used to love at all we begin to hate things that we never thought were wrong before we begin to do what you never did before unless you were forced to Jesus asks this question to stir the man up himself spiritually and to show him himself and what does the man's answer reveal well it revealed that a man knew his utter helplessness I can't do anything you see just one step into the pool and that was healed once a year if he just one step but he can't take that one step that was good he saw his utter inability his complete helplessness that's good but secondly note he lost all hope of recovery that's not good my friend will you remember despair is never a grace remember that we might tend to think someone's terrible that's got terrible conviction of sin we say oh he's just despairing the

Holy Spirit convicts of sin never to despair but to make you want healing desiring to be cleansed desiring to be forgiven desiring the only saviour there is the Lord Jesus Christ and that's how you can tell if a spirit if someone's conviction is of the spirit you see I'm sorry but the devil can convict of sin the devil can to make you despair to make you destroy yourself the Holy Spirit convicts to make you interested in a saviour to make you interested in Jesus to make you ask questions to make you say is there any hope has there ever been atonement made for sin the Holy

[ 26 : 56 ] Spirit's purpose in convicting of sin is to lead you to the place called Calvary to hope in Christ yes conviction can be very very deep but it should never make us despair the man waited for something to happen in the future waiting for this pool to be stirred but you see all he needed was right beside them in the present are you waiting for God to do something before you get interested in salvation God has done something Christ has done something he's told you there's a place where the Holy Spirit is present and we'll notice this man in the house in the temple the Holy

Spirit of Christ is present in this building here now don't resist him don't quench him don't grieve him he's right here the Holy Spirit and that Holy Spirit would never have been able to be anywhere on earth as he is now had Christ not come and died and I think it's A.E.

Hodge who says one of the fruits of Christ's death was he purchased the release of the Holy Spirit from heaven so that he could come down and awaken up sinners on earth to show them their sin with the intention of showing them Christ and what Christ accomplished at the place called Calvary he atoned for sin he paid for every sin of every person who will be in heaven and he comes in the gospel now and says come to me come to me I've done all the work I've done all the suffering just come to me believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved I suppose a man could have said when

Jesus said take up your bed and walk I suppose he could have said I can't I'm paralysed but the man obeyed he obeyed without thinking or asking the man did three things and Christ spoke and they all begin with the letter W this is the age of the WWW the world wide web he walked Christ said take up your bed and walk and he did it immediately he didn't argue he didn't say I can't he just did it he just obeyed he believed and he obeyed he walked verse 9 second W he witnessed how did he witness think about it how did he witness he was asked who saves you who did this who made you do this how are you how are you healed he he didn't know what his name was but it was the man that was here just a short while ago and he came

I don't know where he is now I don't know who he was and I don't know where he is he walked he witnessed thirdly he worshipped he went straight to the temple he knew he realised this this is divine power only power from heaven could heal me make me whole and he went straight to the house of God and as I've said already in the house of God in the house of God there's the Holy Spirit doesn't matter how many doesn't matter how few the Saviour takes it down to two or three when two or three are gathered together in my name there

[ 32 : 31 ] I am wonderful encouragement now there's a little sequel before we close verse 13 Jesus had withdrawn himself away Jesus never sought publicity people are very surprised why Jesus quite often told people now I don't want you to say a word about it well what he meant when he said the Jews you see as I was saying did not accept Christ was the son of God because they had in their imagination that when the son of God the Messiah would come he would give them political freedom from the Romans that he was going to give them physical deliverance that's what they had in mind and when Christ would have nothing to do with politics he said they thought he was an imposter but you see

Christ knew that if people discovered he's doing this miracles they'll all come and crown me they'll all come and make me a leader and my time has not yet come for that one day I'm to be crowned king of all the earth the lord of lords but that time has not come and you remember when the time came for him to pray the price when the time came for him to be cruelly dealt with and killed on a cross he said come let us go and meet them in the garden of Gethsemane he avoided them so many times because he knew the hour had not come but when the hour did come he said come let's go and meet them I think it's Matthew 18 it's in come let's now Jesus had withdrawn himself but

Jesus knew where to find him Jesus found him in the temple now Jesus withdraws Jesus withdraws but listen Jesus never abandons got it he may withdraw the sense and feeling of his presence but he never ever abandons he never forsakes you may sense his you may not feel his presence with you but that doesn't mean he's not there he cannot forsake he who has begun a good work in you will complete it continue it until the day of

Jesus Christ when he's exalted king of all the earth and what did he say to him when he found him in the temple he knew where to get him he knew he was there he found the man and he said sin no more you see we're back to what we said at the beginning it's about holiness it's about your lifestyle lest a worse thing come upon you can there be anything worse than 38 years on your back oh yes hell is far worse far worse far worse well one final thing just to look at it another way as it were what did this man do to be saved what did he do did he lift his hand what did he do he say something what did he do he did nothing

Christ did it all he just believed and obeyed and that's the gospel Christ Christ does Christ does it Christ has done it all at the place called Calvary do you accept that do you accept that do you believe Christ has done it all at Calvary he paid God for the sins of everyone who will believe upon him will you believe upon him believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved may God the Holy Spirit make his word effectual to every one of us let's bow our heads our

[ 38 : 08 ] Father in heaven please take the things of Christ and make them ours make them ours today may we not delay grant us your Holy Spirit's work in our hearts and our souls hear us in mercy answer us in peace as we pray all in Christ's name for your glory amen