

John 5 – v. 1-47

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. 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.”

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.”

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 ¹³ But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in *that* place.

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.” 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.”

¹⁸ Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

¹⁹ Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

²⁰ For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. ²¹ For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.

²² For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

²⁴ “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

²⁵ Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,

²⁷ and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. ²⁸ Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice

²⁹ and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. ³⁰ I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

³¹ “If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. ³² There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true. ³³ You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth.

³⁴ Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. ³⁵ He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.

³⁶ But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.

³⁷ And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. ³⁸ But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe.

³⁹ You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. ⁴⁰ But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. ⁴¹ “I do not receive honor from men.

⁴² But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. ⁴³ I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.

⁴⁴ How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that *comes* from the only God? ⁴⁵ Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is *one* who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust.

⁴⁶ For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”

Introduction

Chapter 5 opens a new section in John’s Gospel. This section runs right through until the end of chapter 10. In Chapters 2-4 Jesus is presented by John as having come from heaven to earth. He is the “Lamb of God” who has come to take away the sin of the world.

Jesus announces the arrival of His Messianic kingdom and teaches about membership of it.

In Chapter 3 we learnt that religion is not enough, you need to be born again. In Chapter 4 we learnt that it doesn’t matter how sinful you are, Jesus will forgive you if you repent of your sin and trust in Him as the Son of God. We also learnt that although Jesus can perform miracles to prove that He is God, He prefers if people will just trust His word without miracles.

In Chapter 5 – 10 the issues dealt with all relate to Jesus claim to be the Messiah and make Him equal with God. The claims of Jesus are challenged by the Jews who already consider themselves to be God’s Covenant people.

In order to fully understand chapter 5 we need some Old Testament background.

Let us turn to Isaiah 35: v. 3-7. In these verses Isaiah is talking about a future time when God will come to save the Jewish Nation.

³ Strengthen the weak hands,
And make firm the feeble knees.

⁴ Say to those *who are* fearful-hearted,
“Be strong, do not fear!
Behold, your God will come *with* vengeance,
With the recompense of God;
He will come and save you.”

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

⁶ Then the lame shall leap like a deer,
And the tongue of the dumb sing.
For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness,
And streams in the desert.

⁷ The parched ground shall become a pool,
And the thirsty land springs of water;
In the habitation of jackals, where each lay,
There shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

In selecting a paralyzed man to heal, Jesus clearly shows that the time of God’s rescue has come.

The next thing we need to understand before we come to the passage is about the Jewish Sabbath. Let us turn in our Bibles to Deuteronomy chapter 5 and read verses 12-15.

¹² ‘Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. ¹³ Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

¹⁴ but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates, that your male servant and

your female servant may rest as well as you. ¹⁵ And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

God created a special day once a week so that everybody could have a rest and reflect upon the goodness of God. They were also meant to remember God’s goodness in rescuing them from slavery in Egypt.

However the Jewish leaders had corrupted this special day and brought out rules and regulations which gave burdens to the people. These rules and regulations became more important than the God that they were supposed to be honoring.

With this Old Testament background in mind let us now study the passage.

1. Jesus proves His equality with God by healing a paralyzed man v. 1-18.

Jesus was in Jerusalem during an important Jewish Festival. He passed by a pool near the sheep gate entrance to the city. The name of the place was called “Bethesda” The Hebrew word means “House of Outpouring”.

They believed at this time that periodically an Angel went down and stirred up the water of the pool. Whoever stepped into the pool after the Angel had done this was healed of whatever disease they had.

There was a man by the pool who had been paralyzed for 38 years. Jesus knew that the man had been there for that length of time. (Jesus is All Knowing)

Jesus said to the man “Do you want to be made well?”

The man complained that he had nobody to carry him into the pool when the waters were stirred. He said that when I can arrange to be put in the pool, somebody else always gets in before me and I miss the opportunity.

Jesus said to the man “Rise, take up your bed and walk”

The text tells us that immediately the man was made well, took up his bed and walked. It was the Sabbath day.

The Jewish leaders were angry because they saw the healed man carry his bed on the Sabbath. They had made a law against doing this.

The healed man explained that the person who healed him told him to take up his bed and walk.

The Jewish leaders wanted to discover who this man was who was disobeying God’s Sabbath day. However the healed man didn’t even know who healed him. Later he discovered it was Jesus and reported this back to the Jewish leaders.

When Jesus met up with the healed man in the Temple He told him not to sin anymore because he could face something worse than being paralyzed.

That is the story as the Bible tells us.

There are some important things to note in this story.

Firstly the man was healed simply by Jesus speaking a word of “Authority” to him. (v.8)

The Bible is very clear that Jesus has ALL authority in Heaven and on this earth. (Matt. 28:18)

Therefore He has authority over your life and my life. He is the person that we are all ultimately responsible to.

Secondly the man’s illness is just part of the general condition of mankind. We live in a fallen world where sickness and death is part of the curse.

When Jesus told the man not to sin or a worse thing would happen to him, Jesus was probably referring to the judgment on the last day and not just another illness.

In this miracle we have the evidence of Jesus to reverse the effects of the fall of man on the last day. Last week we celebrated the resurrection of Jesus. If we put our faith and trust in Jesus, then one day He is going to reverse the effects of the curse of sin in our lives. Sickness and disease will no longer be a problem.

The third thing is that Jesus chose to do the healing on the Sabbath Day. Why? Surely that would upset the Religious leaders and their man made laws.

By Jesus healing on the Sabbath day and saying He was doing God’s work made Him equal with God.

The Sabbath was about “Rest” and “Rescue”. God told the Jews to rest on the Sabbath and meditate on their rescue from Egypt.

The healed man was able to go to the Temple and thank God for his healing and meditate on all that God had done for him.

Jesus makes a point that He is doing is Father’s work on the Sabbath. (v. 17)

God still wants us to have a day of rest to rest our bodies and meditate of Him and His goodness to us. However our rest day is not about rules and regulations on what we should do, or not do on the Sabbath. God wants us to have a relationship with Him every day, but our rest day is a time to spend quality time with Jesus and other believers on this special day.

In v. 18 it tells us that the Jews sought to kill Jesus after this incident. The reason for this is that He had broken the Sabbath Day Law and had made himself equal with God.

Jesus responded to the Jewish leaders with claims about Himself in verses 19-30.

He claimed to be equal with God. He claimed to give everlasting life, and He claimed to be the judge of all of the earth.

In John's Gospel this is the most important passage concerning the "Deity of Jesus Christ"

We need to understand this passage in order to understand the rest of John's Gospel.

In v. 19-23 the original Greek text is structured around 4 words. In English those four words are "Because" or the word "For" – both would work. I will use the word "Because" in English as it fits better into my British English.

The first BECAUSE goes like this. (v.19)

It is impossible for the Son to take independent action that would set Him over against the Father as another God, BECAUSE, all that the Son does is exactly the same as the Father wants and would want done.

This means that it is impossible for Jesus to act independently from the Father. This would deny His deity.

A famous Bible scholar by the name of "Westcott" says this "Perfect Son-ship involves perfect identity of will and action with the Father."

The second BECAUSE goes like this. (v. 20)

The Son (Jesus) can do whatever the Father (God) does BECAUSE the Father loves the Son. He also shows Him everything that He does, so that they do this equally.

The third BECAUSE goes like this (v. 21)

The Father raises people from the dead, and BECAUSE of this, the Son is also able to raise from the dead. The peoples understanding was that only God could raise from the dead. (2 Kings 5: v.7) Jesus is saying here that because He is equal with God He can do exactly same that God can do.

The forth BECAUSE goes like this. (v. 22)

The Father judges no one BECAUSE He has committed all judgement to the Son (Jesus)

The famous statement in Genesis 18: v. 25 is that "The judge of all the earth shall do right" When Moses wrote this statement he was talking about God. Now God who is the judge of all the earth has committed all judgment to Jesus, knowing that He will do exactly the same as God.

Finally in this section in v. 23 Jesus says that we should honor Him in the same way that we honor God. The Jewish leaders were saying that they were honoring God, but they did not honor Jesus. Therefore they were not honoring God.

We now move to v. 24 - 30 to see another of the claims of Jesus.

Jesus claims here that if we hear His words and believe in God who sent Him then we have "Everlasting Life". It is both a present possibility and a future assurance.

Jesus is very clear in v. 29 that everybody is going to be raised from the dead. Some people will be raised for eternal punishment and some will be raised for eternal life with Jesus.

People who reject Jesus now are going to get a terrible shock one day when they are raised from the dead for punishment. However those who trust in Jesus now are going to be truly blessed on resurrection day.

In v. 31 – 41 Jesus now points to who and what will validate these claims.

1. Jesus points to John the Baptist who declared and witnessed who Jesus is. (v.31-35)
2. The works of Jesus testify to who He is. The Jews have just witnessed the healing of a paralyzed man.
3. The witness of the scriptures. (Old Testament) Jesus said to the Jews that Moses wrote about Him. The first 5 books of the Bible, the Torah is all about Jesus. They thought they knew the books of Moses but they didn't. Had they really known the books of Moses they would have discovered about Jesus.

The Jews claimed to love God, but in fact their rejection of Jesus proved that didn't love God.

They were hypocritical in their faith.

Q. What are the applications of John chapter 5 to our lives here at O.I.C.?

1. We need to really understand in our hearts and minds that Jesus is equal with God.
2. We can only honor God and have eternal life by believing in the words of Jesus. Jesus is the eternal life giver and judge.
3. We need to understand that God's work on this earth is to rescue people for eternal life. This will happen when people listen to the words of Jesus about Himself and trust in His mission. The Mission of Jesus was to die on a cross for my sins and your sins and for all the people who are in the world today.

God is at work today through the words of Jesus. Do we really believe the words of Jesus? Do we pass the test of believing or like the Jews do we fail because we have our own ideas about God and about the way we want to live our life.

Are we making our own rules or are we in a relationship where love is the motivating force.

We are born into this world with a broken relationship. Sin separates us from God.

God in His love and mercy sent Jesus to mend that broken relationship. He did that by letting Jesus His Son take the punishment for our sin.

If we want a right relationship with God we must understand who Jesus is and what God has done to bring us back to Himself.

Will you trust the words of Jesus today from the passage? Jesus promises eternal life, forgiveness of sin, and a future home in Heaven.

If you are a Christian and claim to love God and Jesus then you will want to do what God wants to do. That is to rescue people from their sins.

We can't rescue people ourselves but we can introduce people to Jesus who can rescue them.

God wants to work through us if we will allow Him to do so.