

Message #1061  
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"DO YOU WANT TO GET BETTER?"

{John 5: 1-15}

Trinity Presbyterian Church

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## INTRODUCTION

Jesus is in Jerusalem to attend a Jewish celebration.

...on his way he comes to the Pool of Bethesda

...a beautiful sight surrounded by five covered colonnades

...many people gathered around the pool hoping for a miracle

You will note, if you look carefully, that verse 4 is not included in the text--you will find it in the margins-- "Here a great number of disabled people used to lie--the blind, the lame, the paralyzed {vs 3} ...and they waited for the moving of the waters. From time to time an angel of the Lord would come down and stir up the waters. The first one into the pool after each such disturbance would be cured of whatever disease they had."

...the verse was probably inserted at a later time to explain why so many people waited by the pool.

Those who gathered around the pool were superstitious believing that when the water was troubled it was caused by an angel who visited the pool and the first one who got into it when it was so troubled would be healed.

Actually, the Pool of Bethesda--like many similar pools in the Jerusalem area, is an intermittent spring.

...at times water is released in surges from hidden reservoirs in the hills around the city

...this would cause the springs to rise and fall suddenly

...this is what gave rise of the superstition about an angel troubling the pool

Undoubtedly healings did occur.

There are places today where people go who claim healings--

...the Lourdes in Southern France has a spa that people claim has healing powers.

...The Shrine of Guadalupe in Mexico City has thousands of crutches stacked along its walls where people have been healed.

...There are those who conduct healing crusades

Jesus told His disciples-- "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move! Nothing will be impossible for you!" {Matthew 7: 20-21}

...if people believe

...if people have faith they are going to be healed

...if they are in a place where healings supposedly occur

...many will be healed!

I believe it...I've witnessed it!

"One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years."

We don't know what was wrong with him

...he is called "an invalid"

...he was weak...feeble...unable to stand

...he may have had cancer, tuberculosis, or multiple sclerosis

...in any event--he had not walked for 38 years!

WE MUST SEE OURSELVES IN THIS STORY

Of all the people gathered around this pool waiting, Jesus singled out this man.  
...the crowd was large

...but, Jesus took time for one lone individual

This reason this story is in John's Gospel is not only to reveal to us who Jesus was...but, to show us how God proposes to deal with human helplessness and weakness.

...JESUS IS DRAWN TO THE HELPLESS

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

{Matthew 11:28}

...WE ALL NEED HELP

...WE FIND OURSELVES PARALYZED AT TIMES

...AT TIMES WE'RE EVEN LAME--AND WE DON'T WALK VERY WELL SPIRITUALLY

"When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, He asked him, 'Do you want to get well?'"

"DO YOU WANT TO GET WELL?"

At first, this seems like such a strange question.

...why else would the man be at the pool?

...Jesus is probing at the man's heart

...maybe the man really didn't care anymore

...perhaps he had given up

...some even have suggested that he had accepted his plight and enjoyed the attention he received because of it Believe it or not, there are invalids for whom invalidism is not unpleasant.

...it lets others do all the worrying

...lets others work and they reap the benefits

I know of people today who do not want to be healed...

...they don't want God's help with their problems

...they don't want to be helped out of their weakness

...they cling to their addictions

...they hold tight to their habits

...they're not ready to "let go and let God"

...they hold on for dear life to that which had control of them--and they'll never be healed

...it's as if they're afraid to let go

...their habit is their security

Perhaps the question should read: "Do you want to be changed?"

This man apparently wanted to be healed but the task was overwhelming for him...

"'Sir,' the invalid replied, 'I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. When I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.'"

...he'd tried every remedy and it seemed totally impossible

**MANY PEOPLE HAVE GIVEN UP!**

There are those among us who have given up on their situation.

..."I can't quit!"

..."I don't want to quit!"

..."Even if I wanted to, I can't!"

I don't know what you're wrestling with this morning...perhaps it's alcoholism

...it's ruining your life...dividing your family...your home

...you've tried to stop...gain control...and you can't

...it has a power over you.

Maybe it's smoking

...maybe it's drugs

...it may be pornography--{According to Dr. Laura Schlessinger--the fastest growing

addition in America}

Perhaps it's your marriage that's falling apart...and efforts to mend it seem futile...the situation is helpless...hopeless as far as you can see.

#### JESUS METHODOLOGY FOR HEALING

Note what Jesus said...and did NOT say to this man.

Did He say, "Oh, come on, I'll help you get into the pool the next time the water is troubled?"

...nope!

...He didn't offer that kind of help.

...He could have, but He didn't!

Did He say, "Hang on, keep coming here! Perhaps some day you'll make it in time.

Some day it will all work out. Some day you'll be right at the edge of the pool when it's troubled and all you'll have to do is

fall in?"

...nope...He didn't say that either!

Did He say, "Let's at least make you comfortable. Let's get you a new mattress to lie on, put a few flowers around you and bring you two meals a day?"

...nope...he did not!

These may be suggestions others may have given...not Jesus!

Notice carefully Jesus' methodology...

First: He asked an impossible thing

Second: He removes the possibility of a relapse

Third: He expects continued success.

"Then Jesus said to him, 'Get up! Pick up your mat and walk!' At once the man was a cured; he picked up his mat and walked!"

#### CONCLUSION--HOW TO BE HEALED

First: Jesus tells the man to do what appeared to be impossible--yet, when a person trusts in God: "ALL THINGS ARE IMPOSSIBLE!"

...required trust

...required great faith

Secondly: Jesus tells him to pick up his mat--he wasn't to leave it there until the next day in the event he had a relapse!

...Jesus says to pick it up

...get rid of it.

This is very important for all of us.

...don't make any provision to go back on what you have done...or what God has done for you

...if alcoholism is your problem--go home and destroy the problem

...if drugs are the problem--have a grand flushing ceremony

...if pornography is your vice--put blocks on your computer...don't go in the area of town where you're enticed Burn your bridges

...cut off any possibility of going back

"Take up your bed"...and don't look back

Third: "WALK!"

...stand on your own two feet

...fix your eyes upon the Lord

...and WALK!

There are so many things in the world which can defeat us...if we allow them. We must rely upon Christ's power to conquer that which has conquered us!

...what has you under control?

...what do you need to release?

...what are you wrestling with in your life this morning?  
"DO YOU WANT TO GET WELL?"