



The Dynamic Gospel Study Guide – Book of John

Chapter 5

1 Some time after these events, the calendar marked another important festival in Jerusalem, and Jesus decided to go.

2 Nearby the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem there is a bathing pool called Bethesda in Hebrew. At the time it had a total of five covered porches.

3 Incurable invalids were deposited there as a sort of outdoor rest home. People blind, paralyzed and emaciated from disease could be found there.

4 (It was said that at certain times an angel would stir healing powers into the water. Whoever could get there first and baptize themselves would be healed of whatever afflicted them.)

5 For thirty eight years a particular man had waited by the pool, unable to move.

6 Passing through the place, Jesus noticed this man. Among the invalids, he held the title of 'most patient.' Jesus asked him "Do you think you'll ever be healed?"

7 The man regarded the teacher who addressed him. "Master," he said. "How can I? Whenever the waters are stirred, I'm stuck right here with no one to help me into the pool. Someone beats me to it every time."

8 Jesus said to him "You've waited long enough. Time to rouse yourself. Stand Up! Clear your spot and make room for someone else. It's not too late to get on with the rest of your life."

9 The man didn't hesitate for a moment. He popped right up, gathered his belongings and paced around, testing his new legs. Now, it should be noted here that this happened on Saturday, the official 'day of rest' for all Jews.

10 The self-proclaimed religious police noticed at once that the man was carrying a significant load as he left the pool. That was a **big** no-no. In fact, lifting anything of that size - especially a bed - was even illegal on Saturday. They told him so.

11 The accusations were meant to intimidate the man but in his joy he shot right back an answer. "What's the problem?" he asked. "The Rabbi that healed me told me to get moving."

12 The religious types were indignant and focused only on the perceived offense. "Who would have told you such a thing? Move a bed on Saturday? He ought to know better!"

13 The healed man hadn't caught a name, and lost sight of Jesus in the growing crowd. He had left by that time anyway.

14 Jesus was in the Temple later and ran across the man He had healed. "I see you're in good health!" Jesus told him. In a lower voice He said "They think you earned your illness because of sin and don't deserve to be whole. Go prove them wrong by living an honest and good life or you'll be worse off than you started."

15 Now that the man knew who the healer was, he went to the religious police, since they had demanded the information. “Jesus is the one who healed me” he said, matter-of-factly.

16 Now the arrogant religious 'experts' were completely incensed. From that time forward they had it in for Jesus. They judged Him a heretic and a menace simply because he was too active on the day of rest. In fact, they wanted Him dead.

17 In the face of the accusations, Jesus simply said “The Father doesn't stop doing good just because it's the day of rest, and neither do I.”

18 This answer threw these religious fascists into a frenzy. The way they read it, not only was Jesus flaunting the special Sabbath laws, He was now claiming that God was His Father. From any angle they looked at it, Jesus was making Himself out to be God's equal.

19 When this accusation made it back to Jesus He stunned them with His answer. “That's a fair enough statement. But I don't boss the Father around. I follow His example. What He wants done is what I do. I do His work, His way.

20 “The Father loves his Son enough to let Him in on the secrets of His plan. And the more He shows Me, the more I'll show **you**. It's going to blow your minds.

21 “Even as the Father brings back to life that which seems forever dead, so the Son willingly does the same thing, bringing real life to whoever wants it.

22 “The Father has restrained Himself from judging you. He's placed the gavel in the Son's hand for the time being. The Son gets to sort things out.

23 “So don't think you can appeal to the Father's authority if you won't tolerate the word of the Son. Dishonor the Son and you dishonor the Father. He's the One who set it up this way.

24 “Truly it comes down to this: If you accept what I'm saying and trust it comes straight from God, you've already passed out of judgment into real life! And the goodness never ends. You won't fear the death to come for it can't and won't hold you down.

25 “Get this and don't forget it: The time has come when even the dead will hear the voice of God's Son, and those who follow it will live.

26 “Just as the Father is full of life, so the Son is full to overflowing with life power.

27 “And as the Son of God-become-man, He has the authority to settle scores.

28 “Don't act stupid when it happens! I'm telling you: Even those in their graves will hear the Son's voice.

29 “And even from the grave, if they will follow it, they'll walk right out of their tombs. Following the Voice is not only the right thing to do, it will lead straight to life everlasting. Those who defend wickedness are doubly dead. They'll wake up to a living nightmare, forever separated from God.

30 “You think I do what I do on My own initiative and in My own strength? Hardly. I'm simply the channel. What I hear the Father speak I pass on to you. If I judge something, it's simply because the Father has already judged it. Therefore, I'm perfectly in the Right. I don't have My own agenda. I'm just following. The Father is doing the leading.

31 “Call Me a liar if I can't back up what I say.

32 “Another has already spoken for Me, before you even knew who I was. And nothing he said contradicted what I'm telling you now.

33 “You went to where John was preaching and heard him out. There's no denying that he told the truth.

34 “I don't need a parade of people standing up for Me, however. Salvation doesn't come from consensus. If I'm trustworthy, simply follow what I say and you'll find real life.

35 “As for John, for a time he was the brightest thing out there – a warm candle glow. You were happy enough to bask in his light while you had it.

36 “And now, you've got Light shining like the sun! What John talked about I'm now **doing**. I'm simply acting on Father's orders. God's intent and My actions line up. And it keeps getting better doesn't it? The more I do, the more the Father gets the credit for sending Me.

37 “And it's the Father Himself who really makes the case for My authority. You may think you've never heard His voice or seen His face directly.

38 “But that just goes to prove His Word hasn't yet pierced your hearts. If you don't receive His Son, you don't really believe at all.

39 “You keep desperately searching the scriptures, thinking if you figure them out you'll have eternal life. But you keep missing the simple truth that they all point to Me.

40 “And so you refuse to come when I call and miss out completely as a result.

41 “Seems like I get no respect.

42 “But it's deeper than that. God's kind of love is conspicuously missing from your lives. That is painfully clear.

43 “So, I come to you with the Father's seal of approval stamped on My forehead, and you can't bother yourselves enough to investigate. If someone else comes, all puffed up with a reputation earned by grabbing power, him you'll follow without hesitation.

44 “You lust after power and admire those who seize it. How can you perceive, then, God's true glory when it arrives? Is it possible for you to honor anyone who's not just like **you**?

45 “Does this offend you? Well, I'm not the One accusing you before God. Moses did that. Still does. Yes, the same one you claim to rely on.

46 “Had you **really** believed Moses in the first place, you would gladly have accepted what I have to say, for his own words speak of Me.

47 “If you don't believe what he wrote long ago, you're certainly not going to listen to the new thing God is saying through **Me**.”

Explain the Context:

From your reading provide a short answer to the following:

What is the theme of this chapter?	What is the BIG Idea?
What is something that surprised you?	What is this chapter <i>not</i> saying?

Take a moment to consider these questions:

- 1) Why would Jesus ask the man at the Pool of Bethesda if he wants to be healed?
- 2) Bethesda means “The House of Loving Kindness” in Aramaic. What thoughts are prompted by this meaning? How significant is it that it is next to the Sheep Gate?
- 3) The temple leaders were upset with this man for what reason? Why do you think they “missed the healing” and saw only the transgression?
- 4) What 2 reasons were given for the Jews wanting to kill Jesus?
- 5) Jesus said they “poured over the scriptures” yet still missed Him. How is it possible to study the scriptures and still miss who Jesus really is?
- 6) What is Jesus talking about when He says, “Soon the dead will hear My voice and live”?

Apply the Scripture

Write the verse that stood out to you while reading [in this translation or your favorite].

How does this verse challenge you? Does it reveal an attribute of God's character?

For further study:

- Exodus 20:8-11
- Mark 2:27-28
- Matthew 11:27