

Sonoraville Baptist Church
Sunday, August 15, 2010 – 11:00 AM
Rev. Steve Skates, Pastor

Series: Portraits of Jesus
Jesus: The Healer - John 5:1-9

Introduction: We have been looking at these portraits of Jesus in John's Gospel. We've seen Jesus as the **Word of God, the Son of Man, the Teacher**, and the Life Changer. Today, John presents Jesus as **The Healer**.

Here's a modern day parable:

The kingdom of heaven is like a physician who became wealthy, having discovered a cure for a fatal disease. When it was obvious he would not live much longer, he decided to give his wealth to some people in real need.

One day he found a sick man lying on a sidewalk, hungry, and hopeless. The doctor felt sorry for him and offered him a bank card. He said, "*Take this card. It gives you access to a bank account with a million dollars. You must make withdrawals every day for all your needs and to help others as much as you can.*"

The man looked at the card. He thought to himself, "*This has got to be a trick.*" So, angrily, he grabbed the card threw it away, cursed the doctor, and returned to his sidewalk bed.

But the doctor continued his search. He found a woman in an equally sad situation. He made the same offer to her, and she accepted it but didn't go to the bank immediately. Eventually, she was consumed by her problems and forgot she even had the card.

Not long after that, the doctor found another man in desperate need and offered him the same deal. The man took the card thankfully and kept it with him at all times. Wherever he went, he proudly showed his bank card and talked about how rich he was. But he was still dressed in rags, still sick, dirty, hungry, and still dependent on handouts. Whenever he said he was rich, nobody would believe him because he lived just as he did before.

The Doctor found another woman who was in the greatest need of all: She was deathly sick. He made the same offer to her: She took the card, thanked the doctor and went immediately to the bank. She couldn't comprehend the vast riches at her disposal, so she sheepishly dared to ask for \$100. The teller was a friend of the doctor and was aware of his offers. She could see the woman's pain and kindly responded, "*Is that all you need? You'll earn more in interest in the time it takes me to count it out than what you asked for!*" The woman, in total disbelief, then asked for what she thought was a staggering sum--\$5,000.

She rented an apartment, took a bath, bought food and new clothes. The woman began to live as much like a rich person as she knew how and sought to imitate the only wealthy person with whom she was acquainted--the good doctor. Following the instructions given her, the woman went to the bank every day to make withdrawals and shared her wealth with others in need.

1 Afterward Jesus returned to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish holy days.

2 Inside the city, near the Sheep Gate, was the pool of Bethesda, with five covered porches.

3 Crowds of sick people—blind, lame, or paralyzed—lay on the porches (*waiting for a certain movement of the water,

4 for an angel of the Lord came down from time to time and stirred up the water. And the first person to step down into it afterward was healed.) (*some manuscripts added)

5 One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years.

6 When Jesus saw him and knew how long he had been ill, he asked him, "Would you like to get well?"

7 "I can't, sir," the sick man said, "for I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred up. While I am trying to get there, someone else always gets in ahead of me."

8 Jesus told him, "Stand up, pick up your sleeping mat, and walk!"

9 Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up the mat and began walking! But this miracle happened on the Sabbath day. **John 5:1-9 (NLT)**

This parable illustrates what Jesus has for every one of us. He wants to take you from where you are and bring you to where we need to be. This morning, we're going to see not just a good doctor in action, but the Great Physician in action. And remember, that whatever we see Him doing 2,000 years ago; He can still do if you will let Him. First, let's notice:

1. The Condition of the Sick Man (1-5)

There are three things I want us to notice about this man's condition. First:

A. He Was Disabled - This man had lived with a sickness for 38 years. It was so bad; it prevented him from getting about as others. This is a picture of the sinner who is lost and separated from God by his sins. Rom. 3:23 says *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* And the sad part about it is the fact that regardless of what he tries, what he does, how many leaves he turns over, how many bad habits he quits, or how hard he tries to straighten up his own life, the sinner is still lost and unable to walk in the ways of the Lord. You may be able to put on a good show and look like a Christian, but the fact remains that God knows your heart, and He knows that you're still disabled until you come to Him on His terms. But also notice that he was:

B. He Was Desperate - The very fact that this man is here at this pool in his condition is proof that this man was desperate for healing. Imagine him dragging himself to that pool every day.

I wonder how many lost people are really desperate about their spiritual condition. They go through life as though they don't have a care in the world. When you try to talk with them about their condition, they tell you, *"I've got plenty of time."* Or *"I don't have time for church."* They live as if they will live forever. But the truth is, life is short. One day, it will end and it will be too late to do anything about your lost condition. Please don't be guilty of banking on tomorrow. **James 4:14 (NLT)** says, *"How do you know what will happen tomorrow? For your life is like the morning fog - it's here a little while, then it's gone."* **Proverbs 27:1 (NLT)** says, *"Don't brag about tomorrow, since you don't know what the day will bring."*

A few years ago, a man associated with a former church of mine came down with a simple case of strep throat. He didn't think much of it and put off going to the doctor. Well, in just a few of days, he got real sick and had to be rushed by ambulance to the ER. He was put in ICU where within a couple of days, he died. And the saddest part was, as far as we knew, he was not a Christian.

Now, I didn't tell this true story to scare you, but to get you to think about your spiritual condition in life. Time may be running out. Are you desperate about your condition? There's only one way to be sure about your eternity: call on Jesus. **Acts 4:12 (NLT)** says, *"There is salvation in no one else! There is no other name in all of heaven for people to call on to save them."* Then notice also:

C. He Was Disappointed (Vs. 7). This man tells Jesus that every time he's about to get into the water, someone else beats him and gets healed instead. He's frustrated and disappointed because time after time, his hopes and dreams are shattered.

This man is an example of many people who are going to be frustrated and disappointed some day with the all things they've tried to fill that emptiness inside. Religion, Friends, Possessions, Power - none of these things will ever be able to save their souls. Only Jesus can do that. Only Jesus can make you whole.

This disabled and desperate man was disappointed because he'd tried everything but Jesus, but he was about to meet someone who would not disappoint.

2. The Compassion of the Sympathetic Messiah (Read Vs. 6)

Jesus is pictured here as the compassionate Savior. He does three things that prove His compassion. First:

A. He Chooses the Sinner - According to verse 3, there were *"crowds of sick people"* there that day. Jesus could have gone to any person in that place, yet for His own reasons, He went to this man. This is a picture of His grace!

I'm an example of God's Grace. I don't know why He gave me a Christian home to grow up in. I don't know why He had me grow up two houses down from the church. I don't know why He knocked on my heart's door when I was just 10 years old 46 years ago yesterday. I don't know why He reached out to me in love and called me unto Himself. But I do know that when I responded to Him in faith, Jesus came into my heart and saved me. I do know He gave me a peace I can't describe and a joy I can't even put in words. I do know that He freed me from the bondage of sin, and I've been free ever since. I have no fears about eternity, and I don't live with guilt.

It was a work of grace and grace alone! After all, there's nothing we can do to deserve His love or earn our salvation. Yet, He chooses to love us just because He is God! I praise the Lord for the day when He chose me! He could have passed me by and left me bound for Hell, but He didn't! Thank God He stopped where I was, noticed my helpless condition and He reached out to me! All I had to do was say *"Yes!"*

Now, I'm not saying that God has some people hand-picked to go to Heaven and others to go to Hell. All I'm saying is that the sinner is dead in his sins until Jesus comes along and touches our heart. Then and only then can the sinner be saved! All are called. Whosoever will may come. But few will answer! Notice also:

B. He Cares for the Sinner - Jesus knew everything there was to know about this man! He knew that he was crippled and unable to walk, stand or even carry his own bed. Jesus knew that this man was totally dependent upon others for everything he had in life. Yet, Jesus reached out to him anyway! What a picture of His grace! By the way, "*Bethesda*" means "*House of Grace*."

Jesus knows all about the condition of the sinner. As they say, He knows us "*warts and all*," yet He loves us still! Why? Because He has the ability to see what we can become. He looks beyond our faults and cares for us in spite of our sins. Isn't that awesome? He even knows that we'll stumble and fall over and over again as the years go by, yet He loves us. That's the kind of God we serve. His grace is Amazing! But let's also notice that:

C. He Comes to the Sinner - In what was the greatest move of all; Jesus came to where this man was lying and reached out to him in love. There are 3 ways in which Jesus comes to the sinner.

1. He Came as a Sacrifice - Jesus died on the cross, took your sins upon Himself, and paid the price for your redemption. He became your sin and suffered the wrath of God so that you wouldn't have to. But now:

2. He Comes as a Savior - Jesus comes offering eternal life to all who will receive Him. Jesus is here this morning, looking for someone who needs the gift of salvation. He knows all there is to know about you and your life, yet He still calls you to come unto Himself. If you will respond in faith, He will save you completely. But one day, if the sinner doesn't respond to the Gospel message and come to Jesus,

3. He Will Come as Sovereign - The same Jesus who has the power to save you today, also has the power to sentence you to the lake of fire. You might find yourself one day facing Jesus as judge, if you never receive Jesus as your Savior. Don't take His grace lightly. Take the opportunity He gives and run to Him.

Finally, I want to point out:

3. The Cure of the Splendid Miracle (6b-9)

Jesus asks the man if he would like to be healed. He responds by telling Jesus that he has no one to help him into the pool.

This man is doing what his predecessors, Nicodemus and the Woman at the Well did before. He's confusing the physical with the spiritual. Jesus came to offer him physical healing from a spiritual source, but this man was still trying to do for himself.

It's the same today. I've shared the gospel with people and they've said, "*I'm ok, or I'm not good enough, I've been too bad, or It won't work for me.*" But it's not about what you can do. It's all about what He's done! Don't look for a physical solution to a spiritual problem. Salvation requires the power of God, the conviction of the Spirit and the blood of Jesus to accomplish. We've just got to trust Him that He can do it.

Jesus tells the man to get up and walk - something that he hasn't been able to do in 38 years. It was a pretty tall order, but one that demanded faith and obedience.

It's the same when Jesus calls you to be saved. You must respond in faith and obedience in order for it to happen. Jesus passes by and says, "*Get up and follow me!*" But so often people refuse because it sounds too simple.

Well...it IS simple! Jesus isn't asking for perfection, just a little faith in Him! That's why children have no problem with it, I guess, but boy we adults try to make it so complicated.

When this man responded to Jesus' offer, the outcome was immediate healing. When Jesus calls and we obey, we're made right with God. We instantly become a child of God, and immediately healed from the inside out. All of this simply because the sinner turns to the Savior in faith.

Conclusion: Is Jesus your Healer? He comes offering you a cure for your disease of sin and guilt. He's offering you freedom from the bondage of sin that you're now under. He's offering you eternal life and a home in heaven. And the best part is, it's free. He's already paid for it. If you'll come and accept His sacrifice He made on the cross of Calvary, and trust Him to give you that wonderful, perfect gift of salvation, He'll save you forever.