

Jesus Heals On the Wrong Day

John 5.1-15

John 1-12 records select things Jesus did (miracles) and said (discourses), all which confirm that He was the Christ, the Son of God (Jn. 20.30-31). The third miracle John records is the healing of a paralytic at the pool of Bethesda. Why did Jesus heal *this* man? Why on the Sabbath?

- Jesus heals a man at the pool of Bethesda (1-9a)
Why only this man? Why not all the sick and lame there?

Why doesn't Jesus heal everyone – or at least all Christians?
- Jesus chose to heal on the Sabbath (9b-15)
Why did Jesus purposely heal on the Sabbath?

Jesus confronts legalistic piety, and shows His deity
- Jesus warns the healed man to 'not sin anymore...' (14b)
Q: Is getting sick always a direct result of committing sin? A: No.

Principle: All sickness/suffering is a result of sin (the fall).

Sin has terrible results, which Jesus alone can heal.



1. The key to good inductive Bible study is *observation*. It keeps us from 'cutting corners' or making assumptions that aren't in the text. On a blank sheet of paper, write down as many observations as you can from John 5.1-15. Where did this happen? Why was Jesus there? What are we told of the location where Jesus did this miracle? What do we know about the man Jesus healed? Remember: Jesus didn't do anything 'by accident' or for no reason, and John recorded this event for a reason.
2. Some translations omit the end of v3 and all of v4, because earliest Greek manuscripts don't include them. If they are original (I think they are), they tell us people believed there was miraculous healing power when the water stirred (a spring that occasionally bubbled?). This kind of superstition has no biblical basis, but it does reflect the irrational beliefs people still have today. (Can you think of some?) Imagine the hopelessness of this man who had been ill for 38 years!
3. The first miracle of Jesus John records showed His glory (deity; see John 2.11). The second miracle focused on the importance of faith (John 4.48, 50, 53). But this miracle is different: The man healed has no expression of faith, and doesn't even know who Jesus is! He is one of many decrepit souls barely existing at the pool of Bethesda! This is akin to Jesus going into a packed ER and healing one person at random! What does this suggest about Jesus' purpose?
4. In v10, the Jews (in John, this usually refers to religious authorities hostile to Jesus) confront the healed man for carrying his bed on the Sabbath. The Law called for rest on the Sabbath, but this obviously didn't mean what the religious leaders thought it did, because Jesus told the man to pick up his bed and walk! What did Jewish leaders get wrong? Do some legalistic Christians still do this today?
5. In v14, Jesus tells the healed man not to sin anymore, so that nothing worse will happen to him. Is sickness always a sign that a person has committed a specific sin? Is there a general connection between sin and suffering? Why do you think Jesus told the man this?