

SERMON

DATE: Saturday - Sunday, February 22-23, 2020

“We exist to help people know and accept Jesus Christ and through Him experience life-changing relationships.”

John 5:1-18 ESV

[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, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades.

[3] In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed.

[5] One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years.

[6] When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be healed?”

[7] The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.”

[8] Jesus said to him, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.”

[9] And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath.

[10] So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed.”

[11] But he answered them, “The man who healed me, that man said to me, ‘Take up your bed, and walk.’”

[12] They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take up your bed and walk’?”

[13] Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place.

[14] Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, “See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.”

[15] The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him.

[16] And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath.

[17] But Jesus answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I am working.”

[18] This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God

“We exist to help people know and accept Jesus Christ and through Him experience life-changing relationships.”

1. We exist to help - this includes me.
2. Know and accept Jesus Christ - to be in relationship.
3. Experience Life Changing Relationships - Jesus changes everything.
4. The Pool of Bethesda for some was a place for the helpless and for others a place to be avoided.
5. Jesus asks the question “do you want to be healed?”
6. At the root of superstition are two things:
 - There is much about the world we don’t understand, so we try to give meaning to what we don’t understand.
 - superstitions create the appearance of giving people control over circumstances, events, and the world around them. It’s about control.
7. The Sabbath wasn’t just a rule for people to keep, but a gift to humanity.
8. When we experience the freedom God can give, the world will tell you to lay back down in your sickness.

Mark 2:27-28 And he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.”
9. As believers, set free in Christ, we follow the Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus Christ. We find our rest in Him, and seven days a week are filled with worship of Him.

I have four questions to ask of church members.

Remember, we are members of the body of Christ. That is an amazing blessing and a heavy responsibility. This is what one pastor said about his expectation of members of the body of Christ.

"I have high expectations of my church. Church members should worship together often, give generously, serve sacrificially, and make disciples of all nations. There are no exceptions to those high expectations. The mission of God requires an all-in effort from every believer in every church" (Sam Rainer).

So taking his statement, what should we expect of ourselves? Let's ask ourselves these questions.

First, do I worship often and regularly with other members of the body of Christ? Years ago, I read that a person who only worships with believers once every six weeks considers himself "regular in worship." Can God be pleased with that?

Second, do I give generously? Or, am I depending on others (who often have much less than I do) to provide for the work of ministry in the church, community, and around the world? I have learned that giving generously has little to do with the amount of money I make and everything to do with the condition of my heart.

Third, do I serve sacrificially? Am I willing to do the little, unnoticed acts that make churches great and the kingdom grow?

Fourth, am I actively praying and seeking to make disciples of all nations? When Jesus ascended into heaven, He gave us a Great Commission to go into all the world and make disciples (Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 1:8). Are we making that happen?

Are you - and I - doing these things?