

Do You Want to Be Made Well?

By Iris L. Stovall

Theme: Christ Can Bring Physical, Mental, and Spiritual Healing

Call to Worship: #832, Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal, *Out of the Depths*

Opening Song: #522, Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal, *My Hope is Built on Nothing Less*

Closing Song: #517, Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal, *My Faith Looks Up to Thee*

Scripture: John 5:2-9, NKJV.

Do You Want to Be Made Well?

Prayer: Heavenly Father – May your Holy Spirit guide our thoughts as we study your Word. Lord, we are all sick... and in need of the Master. Help us today, I pray - In Jesus name. Amen.

Turn with me to John 5:2-9.

²Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep *Gate* a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. ³In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. ⁴For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. ⁵Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. ⁶When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been *in that condition* a long time, He said to him, “Do you want to be made well?”

⁷The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me.”

⁸Jesus said to him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk.”⁹And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked.

What an amazing miracle was performed there at the Pool of Bethesda that day! Not in the pool, but at the pool. A miracle, performed by Jesus himself.

A great multitude of sick people watched, waited, and hoped for healing—some, for many years. They sought healing from whatever their particular diseases were. This pool had reputed healing properties when its waters stirred. People clamored to be first in the pool. Some even died trying, trampled by those stronger, or faster than they were.

This man, healed by Jesus that day, had suffered for 38 years. Day after day he had lain by the pool, waiting for his chance to make it into the pool and be healed. There was a kind person or two who had helped get him to the edge of the pool. And there he would lie on his mat, dreaming of healing, watching and waiting for the waters to stir. But, even at the water’s edge, in his own strength he wasn’t able to move quickly enough to be first in the pool. His infirmities hampered movement. *Ministry of Healing* tells us

that his infirmities were to a great degree the result of his own evil habits. (MH, p 81). He was probably full of despair and disappointment. Discouraged and depressed, too. He was sick and tired of being an invalid. His only hope, as he saw it, was for someone to put him in the pool. But most people were interested in their own healing and didn't have time for him.

Then, along came Jesus. Bending over the man, He asks, "Do you want to be made well?" (KJV says, "Wilt thou be made whole?")

Now you must agree that this was an interesting question. The man has been infirmed for 38 years. And here he was sitting by the Pool at Bethesda hoping to make it into the waters. **Why else** was he here?

This, however, was an important question that Jesus asked: Do you WANT to be made whole (well)?? He was actually saying do you care enough about your problem – your sickness - to do something about it – even if it requires some action, effort, sacrifice, or even suffering? It was a reasonable question.

Let's put ourselves in this man's place for a moment. Some of us are sick— seemingly unable to get healing. Some of us are stuck in feeling sorry for ourselves and won't do anything about it. Some of us enjoy being the martyr.

So here was Jesus. Picture His eyes of compassion, His tender caring. Did this man truly want to be healed?

The invalid sees Jesus and thinks to himself, "Will He really help me into the pool?"

He raises his eyebrows and for a split second, there is hope. Then imagine that reality sets in. The man looks at Jesus and gives his usual reply. , "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me."

Jesus knew the suffering and pain and abuse the man has endured all these years. He knew this man's heart. So, Jesus immediately challenged him. HE put him to the test. At this point, can you see the man's hope slowly fading?

Jesus challenged the man "Rise, take up your bed and walk." The voice was different from any other. He looked up. Jesus' countenance was also different.. His very presence gentle, yet strong and powerful, like no other. The sickly man, reaching out in faith, set his will to obey Jesus – without question.

His whole body responded. Withered muscles and nerves came to life. Limbs, once crippled, got strength. He sprung to his feet. His steps were firm. Praising God... he walked! He was healed!

You know, my friends “To every stricken one, Jesus comes with the ministry of healing. The life of bereavement, pain, and suffering may be brightened by precious revealings of His presence. *Mount of Blessings*, p. 12.” Praise the Lord!

Jesus offered THE solution to his pain and suffering, and he accepted the challenge.

Verse 9 simply states: “And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. He was “made whole.”

He desired change.
He was ready for change.
He believed he could do it.
He made the effort to obey.
He received power.
He walked!

Williams Jennings Bryant was once quoted as saying “Destiny is not a chance, it is a choice! It is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved!” It was this man’s time to stop waiting; it was his time to achieve.

If he had doubted and continued in His usual thoughts of self pity, wishing some day things would be different, he could have lost His one chance for healing. But he knew his need and he reached out for help. He obeyed.

And so it can be for you, and me, my friends. We will receive strength when we obey the Savior’s bidding. We shouldn’t hesitate, considering this and that—allowing Satan to put thoughts in our heads. We may miss our opportunity!

Ministry of Healing, page 455, says “In order to receive help from Christ, we must realize our need. We must have a true knowledge of ourselves. It is only he who KNOWS himself to be a sinner that Christ can save. Only as we see our utter helplessness and renounce all self-trust, shall we lay hold on divine power.”

Picture this man, now healed—walking around. Praising God. Wouldn’t you do the same after 38 years? And when asked why he was ‘carrying his bed’ on the Sabbath he could only say that “He who made me well told me to take up my bed and walk.”

Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, “See, you have been made well! Do not sin any more, so that nothing worse happens to you.” The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

Church, you and I are much like this man. Depressed. In despair. Discouraged. Feeling sorry for ourselves. Helplessly trying to make it to the “pool” that will miraculously heal us. Longing to receive healing, not just physically but spiritually. Do we recognize that we are sinners. Do we understand that sin is killing us, slowly but surely? Do we know that we are utterly helpless against it and need to allow the Lord to

make us well—to heal us! Do we realize that once we are healed by a loving Christ we should not allow those infirmities to come upon us again by returning to our sins?

There is healing friends, for you, for me. Healing in Jesus, when we obey and then act in faith. Folks, we need faith like that! If we stop to explain and reason everything out, we will die in our sins because we will never be satisfied. We simply have to will to obey!

There are four questions to ask yourself when faced with a situation where you must choose:

1. Do I want to be where I am?
2. What do I have to do to be where I want to be?
3. Am I committed enough to keep trying?
4. Do I want it badly enough to reach out in faith and grab it?

God already knows our answer to the question “Do you want to be made well.” (“Wilt thou be made whole?”) Will we doubt? Will we continue on in pain, cringing and crying, whining and wallowing, suffering and struggling needlessly, hoping to be made well, one day?

Aren't you sick and tired of being in pain? Along comes Jesus to challenge, to offer healing. He sees and knows what we are going through. He wants to rid us of the sickness of sin, to dispel the gloominess. Look up, friends, and see the rays from the Son of God beaming through. He loves you. He loves me. And “He is willing to bear all our infirmities and strengthen and heal all our diseases IF it will be for our good and for His glory.” *PC, (The Paulson Collection of E. G. White Letters), 1985. Hallelujah! We CAN be made well today!*

Aren't you weary of our family members, church members and community friends being infirmed, losing their grip on life, immobilized by the enemy? Don't they need the Master to relieve their suffering as well? Don't they yearn to look into the tender, compassionate face of a loving, caring Savior and to receive His power in their lives?

Matthew 4:23, 24, 25 tells us: Jesus went about...teaching... preaching... healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

[Optional: Give some brief examples of other Bible people healed by Jesus.]

“The love which Christ diffuses through the whole being is a vitalizing power. Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing. By it the highest energies of the being are roused to activity. It frees the soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care, that crush the life forces. With it comes serenity and composure. It implants in the soul, joy that nothing earthly can destroy,—joy in the Holy Spirit—health-giving, life-giving joy.” *Ministry of Healing, p. 115.*

Don't you want that joy today, my sister, my brother? Look up! Look into His eyes! You've been hoping for healing. He's come to heal. And, to give life! Abundant life!

Open with me to Psalms 103:1-3: ^d Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, *bless* His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases."

He is challenging you. "Do you want to be made well?" What is your response?

Today is the day to act. Today is the day to step out in faith. Feel His power take hold in your life! Rise, take up your bed, and walk. Be made well today.

Biographical Information on Sermon Writer:

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