

Signs of the Messiah: The Sinner Made Well

(John 5:1-18)

The Setting (v. 1-3)

- Some indeterminate amount of time has passed since Jesus' healing of the official's son
- He has returned to Jerusalem for an unnamed festival
- While there, he visits a pool in the northeast corner of the city
 - Near a place called the Sheep Gate (see Neh. 3:1, 32; 12:39)
- The pool is called Bethesda: "house of outpouring"
 - Extrabiblical texts describe it as dual-fed pools with water from Solomon's reservoirs & spring that may have turned the water red from iron deposits
 - Some late manuscripts contain v. 3b-4, which seem to indicate a superstition concerning the pools' healing properties

The Sign (v. 5-9a)

- Jesus asks a man who has been crippled for 38 years if he wants to get well
 - He may be asking this question to point out the ineffectiveness of this pool, not the man's unwillingness to be healed
- The man's response is that no one will help him be healed
- Jesus tells the man to take the straw mat that he was laying on and walk
 - Indicating that Jesus has instantly, fully healed him without the need for the pool
 - All with a word of command

The Controversy (v. 9b-14)

- This all happened on a Sabbath, the day of rest
 - Rabbinic teaching broke down work into 39 classes, which included carrying anything from one domain to another
 - So, when the Jewish leadership saw the man carrying his mat, they accused him of breaking the Sabbath
- The man tells them that the one who healed him told him to, though he doesn't know who it was
 - The Jews only care about the breach of their man-made code, not the man's healing
- Jesus later reminds the man of his healing & tells him to stop sinning
 - His paralysis is equated with some sin (contra. 9:3)
 - Something worse = final judgment
- Jesus may have picked the man to show that He can *reverse* the effects of sin

The Aftermath (v. 15-18)

- The man tells the Jewish leaders that Jesus healed him, leading them to begin to harass Jesus
- Jesus' defense is the heart of this sign
 - He does what His Father does (v. 17)
 - The same rabbinic teaching about Sabbath also stated that God does not break Sabbath because the whole world is His domain and therefore, He carries nothing outside it. Thus, He does not 'work' on the Sabbath.

- Jesus is applying this same principle to Himself, thus equating Himself with God
- The Jewish leaders understand the implication and start plotting to kill Him for this claim

So What?

- Jesus is the reverser of sin
 - Have we trusted Him with ours?
- Jesus is one with the Father
 - By coming to Him, we have full access to God
 - Have we come to Him?

Meditation Verse: *John 5:17*