SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 5

The Son Who Gives Life — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus made a hopeless man well with a word, and when He was charged for it He claimed everything the Father does — giving life, judging, receiving honor. The evidence is overwhelming; the only question is whether I am willing to come to Him.

00 The Text

JOHN 5 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 After these things 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,
which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five
porticoes.

3 In these lay a multitude of those who were sick, blind,
lame, and withered, [waiting for the moving of the
waters;

4 for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons
into the pool and stirred up the water; whoever then first,
after the stirring up of the water, stepped in was made
well from whatever disease with which he was afflicted.]

5 A man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight
years.

6 When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had
already been a long time in that condition, He said to
him, "Do you wish to get well?"

7 The 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."

8 Jesus said to him, "Get up, pick up your pallet and
walk."

9 Immediately the man became well, and picked up his
pallet and began to walk. Now it was the Sabbath on
that day.

10 So the Jews were saying to the man who was cured, "It
is the Sabbath, and it is not permissible for you to
carry your pallet."

11 But he answered them, "He who made me well was the
one who said to me, 'Pick up your pallet and walk.'"

12 They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you,
'Pick up your pallet and walk'?"

13 But the man who was healed did not know who it was,
for Jesus had slipped away while there was a crowd in
that place.

14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to
him, "Behold, you have become well; do not sin
anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you."

15 The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus
who had made him well.

16 For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus,
because He was doing these things on the Sabbath.

17 But He answered them, "△ My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working."

18 For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the ⟲ Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, △ making Himself equal with God.

19 Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

20 "For △ the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel.

21 "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so △ the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.

22 "For not even the Father judges anyone, but △ He has given all judgment to the Son,

23 so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. ⚠ He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, ☆ has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but ☆ has passed out of death into life.

25 "Truly, truly, I say to you, ◷ an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

26 "For just as the Father has △ life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have △ life in Himself;

27 and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.

28 "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which ◷ all who are in the tombs will hear His voice,

29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to ☆ a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to ⚠ a resurrection of judgment.

30 "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because △ I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

31 "If I alone testify about Myself, My ⟲ testimony is not true.

32 "There is another who ⟲ testifies of Me, and I know that the ⟲ testimony which He gives about Me is true.

33 "You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth.

34 "But the ⟲ testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved.

35 "He was ◷ the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

36 "But the ⟲ testimony which I have is greater than the ⟲ testimony of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.

37 "And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form.

38 "You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.

39 "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; △ it is these that testify about Me;

40 and ⚠ you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.

41 "I do not receive glory from men;

42 but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.

43 "I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.

44 "How can you believe, when ⚠ you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?

45 "Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope.

46 "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for △ he wrote about Me.

47 "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

Marked in the text

- **v5** “ill for thirty-eight years” — Time / place / contrast
- **v6** “Do you wish to get well?” — Command / instruction
- **v8** “Get up, pick up your pallet and walk” — Command / instruction
- **v9** “Immediately the man became well” — God — His character & actions
- **v9** “Now it was the Sabbath on that day” — Time / place / contrast
- **v10** “it is not permissible for you to carry your pallet” — Sin / warning
- **v14** “do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you” — Sin / warning
- **v17** “My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working” — God — His character & actions
- **v18** “making Himself equal with God” — God — His character & actions
- **v20** “the Father loves the Son” — God — His character & actions
- **v21** “the Son also gives life to whom He wishes” — God — His character & actions
- **v22** “He has given all judgment to the Son” — God — His character & actions
- **v23** “He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him” — Sin / warning
- **v24** “has eternal life” — Promise / blessing
- **v24** “has passed out of death into life” — Promise / blessing
- **v25** “an hour is coming and now is” — Time / place / contrast
- **v28** “all who are in the tombs will hear His voice” — Time / place / contrast
- **v29** “a resurrection of life” — Promise / blessing
- **v29** “a resurrection of judgment” — Sin / warning
- **v30** “I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me” — God — His character & actions
- **v35** “the lamp that was burning and was shining” — Time / place / contrast
- **v39** “it is these that testify about Me” — God — His character & actions
- **v40** “you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life” — Sin / warning
- **v44** “you receive glory from one another” — Sin / warning
- **v46** “he wrote about Me” — God — His character & actions
- **v26** “life in Himself” — God — His character & actions (every occurrence)
- **v26** “life in himself” — God — His character & actions (every occurrence)
- **v9** “Sabbath” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v9** “sabbath” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v31** “testimony” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v32** “testifies” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

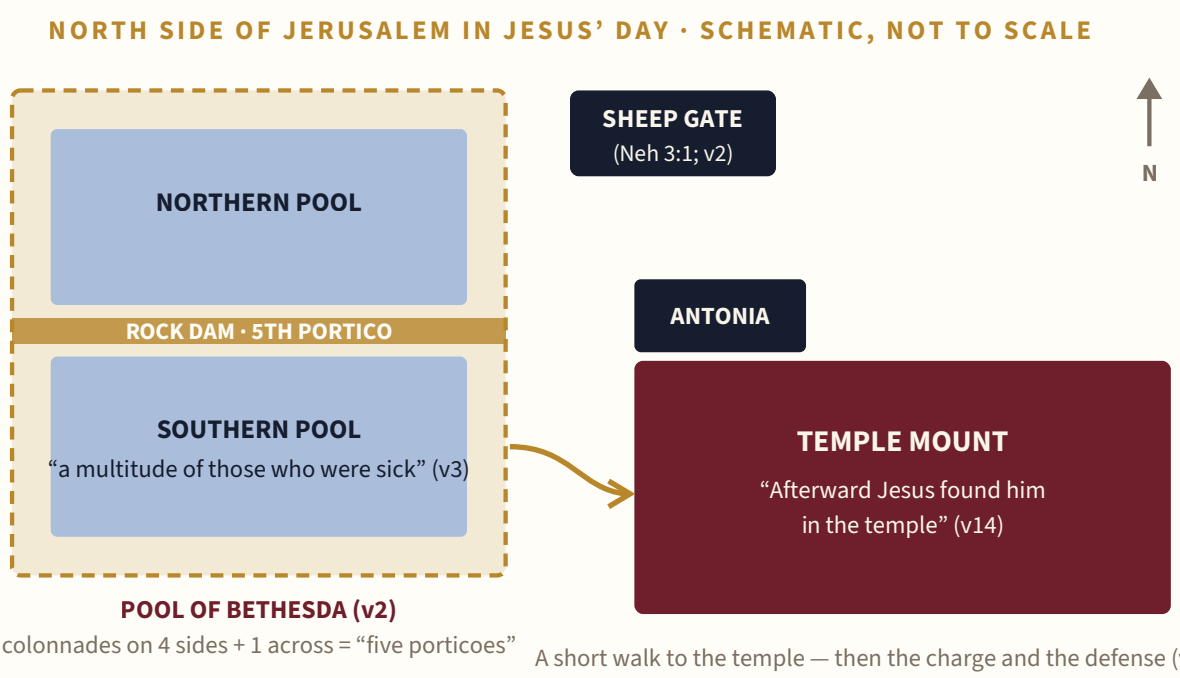
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 5:6

"When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had already been a long time in that condition, He said to him, 'Do you wish to get well?'"

FIGURE · BETHESDA, THE SHEEP GATE AND THE TEMPLE



The twin pools with their five porticoes lay just north of the temple courts — close enough that Jesus could find the healed man there the same day.

Setting. Jerusalem, at an unnamed "feast of the Jews" (v1), between Jesus' ministry in Galilee (4:43–54) and the feeding of the five thousand (6:1). The pool of Bethesda by the Sheep Gate, with five porticoes full of the sick (vv2–3); then the temple (v14). It is the Sabbath (v9) — the day the conflict turns deadly (v18).

Structure:

- vv1–9 — **the healing:** a man ill thirty-eight years; "Do you wish to get well?"; "I have no man to put me into the pool"; "Get up, pick up your pallet and walk"; immediately well. (vv3b–4, the angel, are bracketed in NASB — not in the oldest manuscripts.)
- vv10–18 — **the charge:** "not permissible … to carry your pallet"; the man doesn't know who healed him; Jesus finds him in the temple — "do not sin anymore"; the man tells the Jews; persecution; "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working"; now they seek to kill Him, for "making Himself equal with God."

- vv19–30 — **the defense:** the Son does what the Father does (v19), is loved and shown all (v20), gives life (v21), has all judgment (vv22, 27), receives equal honor (v23). The believer has eternal life and has passed out of death into life (v24). The dead hear now (v25); all in the tombs will hear (vv28–29). "I can do nothing on My own initiative" (v30).
- vv31–47 — **the witnesses:** John (vv33–35), the works (v36), the Father (vv37–38), the Scriptures (v39), Moses (vv45–47). The verdict on the hearers: unwilling to come (v40), no love of God (v42), seeking glory from one another (v44).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "Father" ×16 — vv17, 18, 19 (×2), 20 (×2), 21, 22, 23 (×2), 26, 36 (×2), 37, 43 ("My Father's"), 45.
- "testify / testifies / testified / testimony" ×11 — vv31 (×2), 32 (×2), 33, 34, 36 (×3), 37, 39.
- "Son" ×10 — vv19 (×2), 20, 21, 22, 23 (×2), 25 ("Son of God"), 26, 27 ("Son of Man").
- "life" ×9 — vv21 (×2), 24 (×2), 26 (×2), 29, 39, 40.
- "judge / judges / judgment" ×7 — vv22 (×2), 24, 27, 29, 30 (×2).
- "sent" ×7 — of the Father sending the Son ×6 (vv23, 24, 30, 36, 37, 38), and v33 ("You have sent to John").
- "believe(s)" ×7 — vv24, 38, 44, 46 (×2), 47 (×2).
- "well" ×6 — vv4, 6, 9, 11, 14, 15 (Greek *hygiēs*).
- "hear(s) / heard" ×6 — vv24, 25 (×2), 28, 30, 37; "voice" ×3 — vv25, 28, 37.
- "pallet" ×5 — vv8, 9, 10, 11, 12.
- "work(s) / working" ×5 — vv17 (×2), 20, 36 (×2).
- "Sabbath" ×4 — vv9, 10, 16, 18; "honor" ×4 — all in v23.
- "Truly, truly" ×3 — vv19, 24, 25; "glory" ×3 — vv41, 44 (×2); "marvel" ×2 — vv20, 28; "Moses" ×2 — vv45, 46.

Contrasts: waiting at the pool (v7) ⟷ "Get up … and walk" (v8). The mat (v10) ⟷ the man made well (v11). Breaking the Sabbath ⟷ the Father working until now (vv16–17). Death ⟷ life (v24). The hour "now is" (v25) ⟷ the hour "coming" (v28). A resurrection of life ⟷ a resurrection of judgment (v29). Testimony from man ⟷ testimony from the Father (vv34, 37). Glory from one another ⟷ glory from the one and only God (v44). Coming in My Father's name ⟷ coming in his own name (v43).

Shape of the chapter: a sign (1–9), a charge (10–18), a defense (19–30), a summons of witnesses (31–47). It begins with one man who could not walk to the water and ends with a nation unwilling to come to the Son.

Chapter theme (my words): The Son does what only God does — He heals with a word, gives life to whom He wishes, and will judge all. Every witness points to Him; the only thing standing between a man and life is his unwillingness to come.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 5:18

"For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was ⚠ breaking the Sabbath, but also was △ calling God His own Father, △ making Himself equal with God."

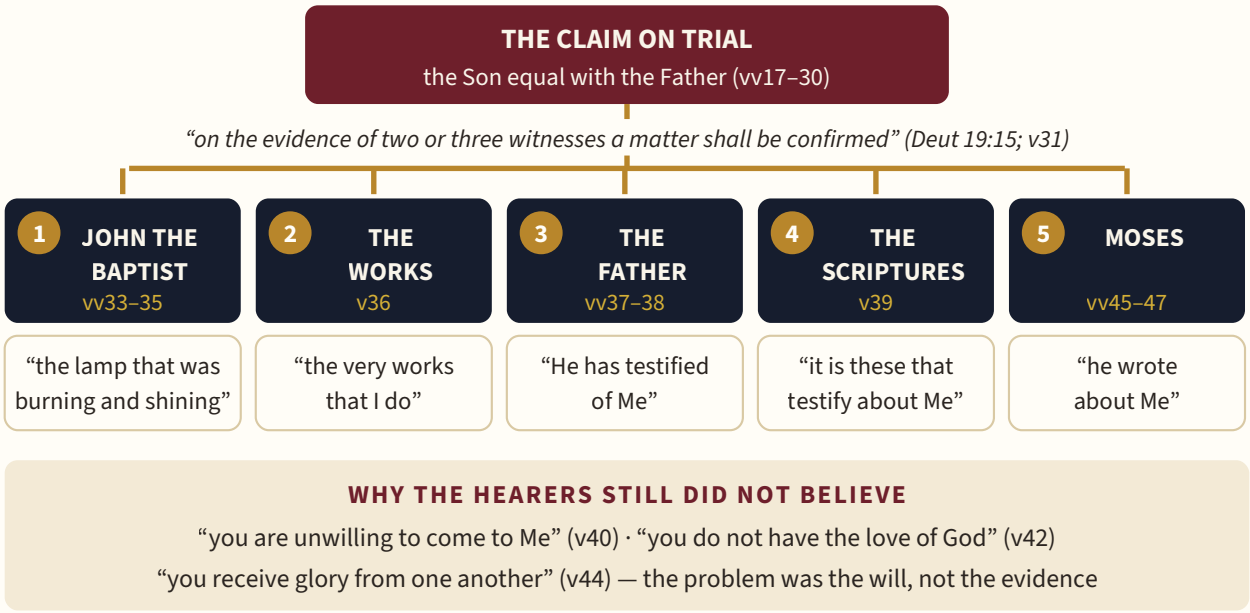
FIGURE · WHAT THE FATHER DOES, THE SON DOES

JOHN 5:17–27	THE FATHER	THE SON
WORKS	"My Father is working until now" v17	"and I Myself am working" v17
LOVES · SHOWS	loves the Son, shows Him all v20	does whatever He sees the Father do v19
GIVES LIFE	raises the dead and gives them life v21	gives life to whom He wishes vv21, 25
LIFE IN HIMSELF	has life in Himself v26	given to have life in Himself v26
JUDGMENT	judges no one — has given it all v22	authority to judge, as Son of Man vv22, 27
HONOR	honored as God v23	honored "even as" the Father v23

"whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner" (v19)

Read across each row: every work Jesus claims for the Father in vv17–27 He also claims for Himself — the very equality His accusers heard in verse 18.

FIGURE · FIVE WITNESSES FOR THE DEFENSE



The Law asked for two or three witnesses; Jesus calls five, and then names the real reason His hearers will not believe.

Verses 3b–4 — was there an angel? The NASB brackets the angel stirring the water because the oldest manuscripts lack it. Guzik and Sproul both think it a very early addition (Sproul: likely reflecting local superstition; the pools were fed by artesian wells). Henry, working from the KJV, takes it as genuine: "Expositors generally agree that the virtue this pool had was supernatural." Either way verse 7 shows what the sick believed — and Jesus bypassed the pool entirely. Spurgeon: "'Wait at the pool,' is man's gospel, and has destroyed its thousands."

"Do you wish to get well?" — a real question. Guzik: "This was a sincere question." After thirty-eight years a man can make peace with his condition. Sproul: healing would bring new responsibilities, and some men prefer the security of confinement. Henry hears the man's answer as the cry of the friendless: "It is not for want of a good will, but of a good friend, that I am unhealed."

What law did the man break? Not God's. Guzik: "It was not a breaking of God's law of the Sabbath, but the human interpretation of God's law." Jeremiah 17:21 forbade carrying loads of trade through the gates; the rabbis widened it to a healed man's mat. Sproul: "Where in the Word of God does it say…?" Spurgeon calls the complaint "a mere pretense, an idle excuse for their enmity."

Is sickness caused by sin (v14)? Jesus says, "do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you." Sproul links it to Luke 13 — calamity can follow sin — while warning against assuming every disaster is a direct punishment (compare John 9:3). The "worse thing" is more than a relapse: Guzik, "Living a life of sin is worse, and will bring a worse result, than being crippled for thirty-eight years."

"Equal with God" (v18). Jesus' accusers understood the claim of verse 17 perfectly, and He did not retreat (Guzik: "Jesus did not try and explain that He had not truly worked on the Sabbath"). Sproul answers how the Son can be equal yet say "the Son can do nothing of Himself": in being, Father and Son are equal; in the work of redemption, the Father sends and the Son obeys. "From all eternity, the Father sends the Son." Guzik: "not one of master and slave."

Life now, resurrection later (vv24–29). Verse 24 is present and perfect tense: the believer *has* eternal life and *has passed* out of death into life (Spurgeon's "Verily, Verily"). Verse 25 ("and now is") is the spiritually dead hearing the gospel; verses 28–29 are the bodily dead hearing His voice (Henry sees both). Jesus echoes Daniel 12:2. In my futurist reading, Revelation 20:4–6 shows that the "resurrection of life" and the "resurrection of judgment" are separated by the thousand years — one "hour" as Daniel's "many … will awake," unfolded in stages.

"Those who did the good deeds" (v29) — saved by works? No. Verse 24 has already said life comes by hearing and believing; and 6:29 will call believing "the work of God." The deeds show which resurrection a man belongs to; they do not buy it. Spurgeon: "good works without faith are childish vanities."

"You search" or "Search" (v39)? The Greek form can be either. NASB reads it as a statement (they did search — and still would not come); KJV as a command, which Henry follows: "not only read them, and hear them, but search them." Both are true; the point is that the Scriptures "testify about Me." Spurgeon: for them "the Scriptures themselves became a sepulcher."

Why didn't they believe? Not for lack of evidence. Guzik: "The religious leaders were not willing, even though they had all the testimony one could have wanted." Sproul calls it moral resistance, not intellectual doubt. Spurgeon (1855) goes further: by nature no man will come to Christ — and yet "It is sin that has brought you into this condition that you will not come." Our teachers are Reformed or near it here; others read verse 40 as proof that the will is free to refuse. All agree the blame lies with the hearers, not with God.

Word study (Greek):

- **well — *hygiēs* (G5199):** sound, whole; seven of twelve NT uses in John 5 (plus 7:23).
- **pallet — *krabattos* (G2895):** the poor man's mat (Mark 2:4–12; John 5:8–11).
- **is working — *ergazomai* (G2038):** present tense; the Father never stopped (v17).
- **equal — *isos* (G2470):** equal in rank or measure (5:18; Phil 2:6).
- **gives life — *zōopoieō* (G2227):** to make alive; God's prerogative claimed by the Son (5:21; 6:63).
- **judgment — *krisis* (G2920):** v24 (no judgment for the believer) and v29 (resurrection of judgment).
- **has passed — *metabainō* (G3327):** to change place; perfect tense (5:24; 1 John 3:14).
- **testimony / testify — *martyria* / *martyreō* (G3141, G3140):** eleven times in vv31–39.
- **search — *eraunaō* (G2045):** examine, track down; statement or command in v39.
- **glory — *doxa* (G1391):** the approval they sought from men (vv41, 44).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Grace chose one man out of a multitude** — who did not ask and did not know His name (vv3, 13).
2. **"Well" is the word of the first half** — *hygiēs* in vv6, 9, 11, 14, 15.
3. **The command came with the power to obey it** (Guzik; Henry: "not … into the waters, but rise and walk").
4. **They saw the mat and missed the man** — no law of God forbade it (Sproul).
5. **A healed body is not a saved soul** — "how not to receive the blessings of Christ" (Sproul).
6. **His accusers understood Him exactly** — equal with God, and He did not correct them (v18).
7. **Eternal life is a present possession** — has, has passed (v24).
8. **Two hours, one voice** — souls now (v25), bodies then (vv28–29).
9. **You can study the Bible and miss its subject** (v39; Spurgeon's "sepulcher").

10. **Unbelief is a matter of the will** — unwilling, loveless, glory-seeking (vv40–44).

Cross-references: Exod 20:8–11; Num 21:8–9; Deut 18:15–19; 19:15; Neh 3:1; Ps 33:6; Isa 35:6; Jer 17:21–22; Dan 7:13–14; 12:2; Matt 12:1–14; Mark 2:1–12; Luke 13:1–5; 24:27, 44; John 1:4; 3:14–18; 7:21–24; 9:3; 10:30; 11:25; Acts 17:30–31; Rom 4:17; Phil 2:6; Heb 1:3; 1 John 3:14; 5:9–12; Rev 20:4–6, 11–15.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 5:14

"Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, 'Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you.'"

Question to answer — "Do you wish to get well?" I've sat at that pool. Thirty-eight years is a long time, and some of the men I walk with have been lying by the water longer than that — addiction, anger, a prison sentence that ended years ago but still runs their lives. The honest answer isn't always yes. Getting well means picking up the mat and walking: a job, a family to face, no more excuses. Jesus asks anyway, and He doesn't ask me to crawl to the water first. This week I want to answer Him out loud: Yes, Lord. Make me well, and I'll carry the mat.

Example to follow — be the man who puts him in the water. "I have no man to put me into the pool" (v7). Henry: "It is not for want of a good will, but of a good friend." Jesus became that man's Friend. I can't heal anybody, but I can be the brother who shows up, sits by the pool, and points him to the One who can.

Sin to confess — caring more about the mat than the man. The leaders looked at a healed man and saw a rules violation (v10). I confess the times I've judged a brother by his slip instead of rejoicing in what God has done in him — and the times I've hidden behind religious form while my heart was cold.

Command to obey — "do not sin anymore." Jesus went looking for this man in the temple to warn him (v14). Mercy received is not a license; it's a reason. Whatever Jesus has lifted me out of, I don't go back to it.

Promise to trust — "has passed out of death into life." If I hear His word and believe the Father who sent Him, I have eternal life now, I will not come into judgment, and I have already moved out of death's house (v24). On the days I feel like a dead man, the verb is still perfect tense.

Warning to heed — Bible without Jesus. I can read my Bible, know my verses, and still not come to Him (vv39–40). And I can live for the approval of the men around me — "glory from one another" (v44) — instead of the approval of God. The test is not how much I know but whether I keep coming to Him.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Jesus asked a man who had been sick thirty-eight years, "Do you wish to get well?" What in my life have I grown used to, and do I really want Him to change it? (5:5–7) *Sproul: healing brings new responsibilities; some prefer the security of their chains.*
2. The man said, "I have no man to put me into the pool." Who in my life is lying by the pool with no one to help — and what would it look like to be that man for him? (5:7; Gal 6:2) *Henry: not a good will he lacked, but a good friend.*
3. The leaders cared more about the mat than the man. Where do I care more about rules and appearances than about people being made whole? (5:10–16) *Guzik: human interpretation of God's law, not God's law.*
4. Jesus found the man in the temple and warned him, "do not sin anymore." What sin is He warning me about after He has already shown me mercy? (5:14; Rom 6:1–2) *A worse thing than thirty-eight years of paralysis is a life of sin.*

5. Verse 24 says the one who believes "has passed out of death into life." Do I live like a man who has already moved out of the house of death? (5:24; 1 John 3:14) *Perfect tense: the move is made and the result stands.*
6. I can know the Bible and still not come to Jesus. Whose approval am I living for — men's or God's? (5:39–44) *"How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another…?"*

Worship. The Son who stood by a pool in Jerusalem has life in Himself. He gives life to whom He wishes. All judgment is His. One day every grave will hear His voice. The Father has testified, the works have testified, John and Moses and all the Scriptures have testified — and they all point to Him. He deserves the same honor as the Father.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, You found me lying by the pool with no one to help me in. Thank You for asking if I wanted to be well, and for making me well with a word. Keep me from going back to the sin You lifted me out of. Make me the friend who carries a brother to You. Let me search the Scriptures to find You, not to impress anyone, and let me seek the glory that comes from God alone. Amen.

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