

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 5TH, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

## THE ROYAL OFFICIAL (JOHN 4:43-54) A CERTAIN ROYAL OFFICIAL

This official was likely of the Roman Empire. He most likely would have been a part of the court of Herod the Tetrarch of Galilee and probably be the same Herod eventually involved in Jesus' Trial.

- The official would've traveled from Capernaum to Cana, which would have been around a 25-mile journey.

### THE DESPERATE CRY

The official's son was dying, and he made a plan to find Jesus. The language used here implies that it was a persistent request, pleading with Jesus to come and heal his son.

- **He put everything on the line to ask Jesus to come with him. He knew that the answer was in what Jesus could do. His faith was in the miracle.**

### "...YOU PEOPLE"

Culturally, it was common to have the miracle worker present to make a miracle happen. The miracle is what the people wanted; they wanted to see what Jesus would do next. The official was looking for a miracle, not the Lord Jesus.

- **Faith is shallow when it is built only on the miracle, not the miracle worker.**

### THE COMMAND AND THE WORDS

The plan didn't work; Jesus didn't come with the official. Jesus simply said, "Go, your son will live" (vs. 50). The official left with a command and a promise.

- **It didn't go the way he planned, but he left with the words of Jesus, and he believed. Are Jesus' words enough for us to act on?**

### THE WALK BACK HOME

The royal official had 25 miles to think. He had to trust Jesus' words over his circumstance. He doesn't see it, and he maybe didn't feel it, but Jesus said it, and he obeyed the command to "go."

- **Faith in Jesus says that Jesus' words define our circumstances. Our circumstances don't define His words.**

### OBEDIENCE BUILDS FAITH

It's not until the next day, during his walk back, that the official receives news that his son is alive. To his knowledge, the situation had not changed at home. His obedience helped build his faith.

- **The promise fulfilled gave the official faith not just in what Jesus could do, but in who Jesus is.**

## BETHESDA (JOHN 5:1-16) AT THE SHEEP GATE

This was the entrance where the temple sacrifices would enter. It was also near a large area where a pool was. The pool was covered by shade and supported by five columns (colonnades).

- It was not a pretty sight: livestock coming and going, and a mass of humanity with many disabilities and physical limitations.

### THE POOL

The disabled would gather in this area for strategic purposes. It was said that the pool would be stirred up by a supernatural host, and whoever would enter the water first during this stirring of the water would be healed.

- **The people gathered to receive a miracle. This was a desperate scene. Many hoped for what would never come.**

### "DO YOU WANT TO GET WELL?"

If Jesus only asks about His physical condition, it doesn't make sense. It would make more sense that Jesus is asking a deeper question—a complete restoration.

- **Jesus frees this man of his physical paralysis. However, this would also set the stage to free the Jews of their religious paralysis.**

### THE SABBATH

The Sabbath was the day of rest for the Jewish people. It really is a beautiful unfolding of the grace of God. But the Jews, over time, took this to an extreme. They created more rules to help keep the important rules.

- **God created the universe in six days. On the seventh, He rested. He commanded that we do the same. We rest.**

### THE TESTIMONY

The Jews questioned why he was not obeying the law. The man who was healed simply responded that he **obeyed** the words of the one who made him well.

- **The law was given by God. It was meant to teach the need for God and not become a means for pretentious religion.**

### AN ISSUE OF AUTHORITY

Instead of praising God for this man's healing, the Jews questioned whose authority this man was honoring. It was no longer about the man's disobedience. It became about who the man was honoring.

- **We must remember Jesus' authority. If not, we trap ourselves in religious facades—we never truly made well.**

### JESUS FINDS THE MAN AGAIN

The man is in the temple. In his paralysis, he would not have been able to enter. Now he gets to be a part of society again, no longer an outcast after 38 years.

- **This is our God. He healed this man, finds him once more, and helps him walk with his new legs. Once a beggar without hope, now a walking miracle.**

### WARNING FROM JESUS

Jesus' words in verse 14 are the Savior encouraging the man in such a way that the man would give up a life of sinning because he has been given something new and better.

- **Jesus does the same with us. Whatever state Jesus found us in, we don't stay there. He gives us a new way to move forward: following Him.**

### TATTLETALE

The man tattles on Jesus. Jesus freed this man of his paralysis. Now Jesus is going to offer freedom for the people listening from their religious paralysis.

- The man is the physical evidence of what Jesus wants to do spiritually in all that can hear His words. He wants to free them from sitting by the "pool."

## JESUS IS GOD (JOHN 5:17-23)

### THE WORK OF JESUS

Jesus' statements start a dialogue that will ultimately lead to Jesus' death. The outrage of the Jewish people (religious leaders) was that Jesus was working on the day of rest. That this miracle was a violation of the law.

- **Jesus raises the bar saying that not only was He doing the work of God, but that He is exactly God.**

### THE QUALIFICATIONS

- Whatever the Father does, the Son does Jesus' actions are of the Father (vs. 19).
- The Father and the Son have a **perfect relationship** with one another (vs. 20).
- The Son has the **power** of the Father: He gives life just as the Father does (vs. 21).
- The Son has the **authority** of the Father (vs. 22).

### HONOR THE SON AS THE FATHER.

Jesus is clear that the Father and the Son work in perfect harmony. Jesus says these things in order to provide the words that would free those who can hear that He is God.

- **The Sabbath is a day of rest in the One who is in authority. Not a religious motion that provides a day of laziness.**

### FAITH

- Faith is shallow when it is built on the miracle, not the miracle worker. **It is all about the results of what we desire of God. Our faith in God is not the measure of how big God will be.**
- **Faith comes by hearing the words of life.**
- When the world says we need to see it to believe, Jesus says believing is seeing. Are the words of Jesus enough for you?

### THE "POOL" WILL NEVER BRING HOPE

- The Bethesda pool was ultimately never going to bring the hope that the people needed.
- Our culture is littered with "pools" everywhere. You might be sitting in one today: religion, relevance, politics... or any number of things.
- **Do you want to be well? We were or currently are in need of being made well. Life-altering hope is not in a stagnant pool—it is in Jesus.**

### JESUS IS WHO WE REST IN

- In Christ, we are freed from the work of earning salvation. We can rest in the finished work of Jesus (Romans 5).
- **Many people want a savior, but not Lord. Jesus is both our Savior and our Lord. We must honor Him as such.**
- We honor God best when we obey what He has said (John 14:15).