

The Gospel of John (5:1-15)

A House Church Outline



1. Praise *(Purpose: To worship God)*

- What are you thankful for this week? *(let the group's secretary write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Song Service
 - Sing a few songs of praise to God

2. Pray *(Purpose: To carry each others' burdens and to seek the Lord)*

- What challenges did you have this week? *(write these down in an A4 hardcover or some notebook)*
- Go into a season of prayer

3. Review *(Purpose: To learn accountability)*

- Tell us how it went with what you promised to do in last week's meeting? *(e.g. Who did your share your faith with this past week? Who did you minister to? How did actioning your I WILL STATEMENT go?)*
- *Where people have failed to fulfil what they said they would, do not be harsh with them but gently encourage them to try again in the coming week. Give them more support by phoning or joining them in the week.*

4. Give *(Purpose: To be good stewards of our monies)*

- This is the time to return tithes and offerings. If done electronically, kindly ensure that you get the bank account details of your local church from your treasurer. Don't forget to complete an envelope and to send the breakdown to him/her.

5. Discover *(Purpose: To learn to listen to God, and be obedient to His Word)*

- **Notes for the facilitator**

- Read *Desire of Ages (DA)*, p. 201-204
- Vs 3 - Although the rippling of the water was real, there is no evidence that an angel stirred the water; that was the popular legend at the time. It would be strange for God to set up a 'healing system' in which those who needed help the most, were least likely to get to the water. God's gifts are for all alike who qualify to receive them (*cf. SDA Bible Commentary*)
- "At certain seasons the waters of this pool were agitated, and it **was commonly believed that this was the result of supernatural power**, and that whoever first after the troubling of the pool stepped into the waters, would be healed of whatever disease he had. Hundreds of sufferers visited the place; but so great was the crowd when the water was troubled that they rushed forward, trampling underfoot men, women, and children, weaker than themselves. Many could not get near the pool. **Many who had succeeded in reaching it died upon its brink**. Shelters had been erected about the place, that the sick might be protected from the heat by day and the chilliness of the night. **There were some who spent the night in these porches, creeping to the edge of the pool day after day, in the vain hope of relief**" (DA 201).
- "Jesus saw the wretched sufferers watching for that which they supposed to be their only chance of cure. **He longed to exercise His healing power, and make every sufferer whole**. But it was the Sabbath day. Multitudes were going to the temple for worship, and **He knew that such an act of healing would so excite the prejudice of the Jews as to cut short His work**" (DA 201).
- "**But the Saviour saw one case of supreme wretchedness**. It was that of a man who had been a helpless cripple for thirty-eight years. **His disease was in a great degree the result of his own sin, and was looked upon as a judgment from God. Alone and**

friendless, feeling that he was shut out from God's mercy, the sufferer had passed long years of misery. At the time when it was expected that the waters would be troubled, those who pitied his helplessness would bear him to the porches. But at the favored moment he had no one to help him in. He had seen the rippling of the water, but had never been able to get farther than the edge of the pool. Others stronger than he would plunge in before him. He could not contend successfully with the selfish, scrambling crowd. **His persistent efforts toward the one object, and his anxiety and continual disappointment, were fast wearing away the remnant of his strength”** (DA 202).

- “The sick man was lying on his mat, and occasionally lifting his head to gaze at the pool, when a **tender, compassionate face bent over him, and the words, ‘Wilt thou be made whole?’ arrested his attention. Hope came to his heart.** He felt that in some way he was to have help. **But the glow of encouragement soon faded. He remembered how often he had tried to reach the pool,** and now he had little prospect of living till it should again be troubled. He turned away wearily, saying, ‘Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me’” (DA 202).
- “Jesus does not ask this sufferer to exercise faith in Him. He simply says, ‘Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.’ But **the man's faith takes hold upon that word.** Every nerve and muscle thrills with new life, and healthful action comes to his crippled limbs. **Without question he sets his will to obey the command of Christ, and all his muscles respond to his will. Springing to his feet, he finds himself an active man”** (DA 202).
- “**Jesus had given him no assurance of divine help. The man might have stopped to doubt, and lost his one chance of healing. But he believed Christ's word, and in acting upon it he received strength”** (DA 203).
- “**Through the same faith we may receive spiritual healing.** By sin we have been severed from the life of God. Our souls are palsied. **Of ourselves we are no more capable of living a holy life than was the impotent man capable of walking.** There are many who realize their helplessness, and who long for that spiritual life which will bring them into harmony with God; they are vainly striving to obtain it.... Let these desponding, struggling ones look up. The Saviour is bending over the purchase of His blood, saying with inexpressible tenderness and pity, “Wilt thou be made whole?” He bids you arise in health and peace. **Do not wait to feel that you are made whole. Believe His word, and it will be fulfilled. Put your will on the side of Christ. Will to serve Him, and in acting upon His word you will receive strength.** Whatever may be the evil practice, the master passion which through long indulgence binds both soul and body, Christ is able and longs to deliver. He will impart life to the soul that is ‘dead in trespasses.’ Ephesians 2:1. He will set free the captive that is held by weakness and misfortune and the chains of sin” (DA 203).
- “**The Jews had so perverted the law that they made it a yoke of bondage.... Especially was the Sabbath hedged in by all manner of senseless restrictions.** It was not to them a delight, the holy of the Lord, and honorable. The scribes and Pharisees had made its observance an intolerable burden. A Jew was not allowed to kindle a fire nor even to light a candle on the Sabbath. As a consequence the people were dependent upon the Gentiles for many services which their rules forbade them to do for themselves. They did not reflect that if these acts were sinful, those who employed others to perform them were as guilty as if they had done the work themselves. They thought that salvation was restricted to the Jews, and that the condition of all others, being already hopeless, could be made no worse. But God has given no commandments which cannot be obeyed by all” (DA 204).
- Vs 14: Stop sinning – The word ‘sinning’ is extremely continuous in the Greek implying that he was sinning up to his encounter with Jesus. The only way he could have sinned

as a paralytic was in thought, attitude and imagination (*Bible Study Guide, 1st quarter, 2004*)

- *Read John 5:1-15. Preferably let one person read it. Let everyone then put down their Bibles and get the group to reconstruct the passage in their own words. This teaches the group to be careful in quotation Scripture correctly and to use it as the basis of their discussions.*
- **Discussion Questions** (*use only a few*). *The notes in italics after some of the questions below are for the facilitator, and not to be read out to the group.*
 - Do you think that the stirring of the water was from God (vs 7)? Why or why not?
 - On what in life, other than God, do we sometimes depend? Why are these not permanent solutions? (*ask one question at a time*)
 - Jesus intentionally healed this man on the **Sabbath**. How do you think Jesus was trying to connect the Sabbath and what it stands for, with this man's healing?
 - What do you think was Jesus' purpose in asking the obvious question of vs 6?
 - Jesus' mere **words** brought life to weak and dead muscles. Give examples of how Christ's Word (the Bible) can bring life to wretched and impossible situations?
 - What are the similarities between this man's condition of 38 years, and that of sin? How is his healing similar to the spiritual healing Christ offers? (*ask one question at a time*)
 - Why do you think Jesus slipped away after healing the man?
 - How can man-made rules get in the way of true religion?
 - What causes some people **not** to want to receive help, either divine or human, with their problems?
 - Why did Jesus tell the man to stop sinning (vs 14)? How could he have been sinning the past 38 years? (*ask one question at a time*)
 - How do you think this miracle changed the paralytic's life subsequently? How does spiritual healing change one's life as well? (*ask one question at a time*)
 - The world can be compared to Bethsaida, filled with the suffering and diseased? In what ways can we, like Jesus, bring both physical and spiritual healing to those around us?
 - What is an invitation, promise, command, or warning you have found in this passage?
- **Application Questions** (*select a few depending on your time. One has to be the I WILL STATEMENT*)
 - When have you felt that life has dealt you a bad hand?
 - What are you like when you are sick? What are your attitudes and behaviours to God and others? What should they be? (*ask one question at a time*)
 - Are there areas in your life that you think are hopeless and impossible to fix? Elaborate. Is a part you can play? If so what is it? (*ask one question at a time*)
 - If Jesus initiated healing in your life today, what do you think He would choose for you?
 - How can you use Christ's word (the Bible) to speak healing into some situation this week?
 - I WILL STATEMENT: Formulate an I will statement in response to what you have discovered in the Word. Let the group's secretary also record these in an A4 notebook. Ensure that everyone gets a chance to give their I WILL STATEMENT. You have to be specific. E.g. "I want to visit and support a friend this week who has lost all hope because of the loss of his spouse recently."

6. Share (*Purpose: To be witnesses of our faith*)

- Do you have anyone you could share today's lesson with this week? *Be specific.*

7. Closing prayer

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