

Sunday Morning Message

June 5, 2022

The Healing at the Pool of Bethesda (Part Two)

The Gospel According to John

Text – John 5:16 - 29

Congregational Reading – John 5:16 - 18

Introduction (vs. 16 – 18)

In the last message from John's Gospel, we examined an important story about a man who was healed by Jesus of an infirmity he had for thirty-seven years. The Bible does not specifically state what his infirmity was, but we it had something to do with the fact that man could not walk because when he was healed Jesus told him to take up his bed and walk. This healing took place in Jerusalem at a pool called the Pool of Bethesda, which was near the sheep gate on the Temple mount. The fact that this man was healed was certainly a wonderful event, but as we learned last time, the religious leaders were upset about it because it took place on the Sabbath day.

The discussion that follows in the aftermath of this healing will serve two purposes. First, Jesus will rebuke these religious leaders for their indifference for this man and his physical condition, along with their insistence upon upholding their interpretation of the Sabbath day laws. Jesus did not actually break any commandment from the Old Testament Law by healing this man; he just violated the tradition of first century Judaism in their application of those laws. These Jewish religious leaders were known to strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. They were more concerned about their little rules than the suffering of one of their people.

The second purpose contained within this passage is what Jesus teaches about Himself while rebuking these religious leaders. Here, Jesus clearly reveals His deity and equality with the Father. Jesus will make certain claims to these folks about who He is, and it will be because of these claims that the Jews begin to plot to have Him killed. He will also give us here in this passage some wonderful truths regarding the resurrection.

I. Rules Regarding the Sabbath Day

God gave man the principle of sabbath rest, which He exemplified when he created the universe in six literal days and then rested from His labor on the seventh:

"[8] Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. [9] Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: [10] But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: [11] For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." (Exodus 20:8-11)

This is still a good principle to put into practice in our lives. The principle of resting one day out of seven is a practice that will help us have the strength that we need to fulfill God's will for our lives. America was a better place when she rested on Sunday. However, we are not under any law to do so. Taking one day off per week for physical rest and spiritual renewal will allow you to accomplish more than you could if you were to work seven days straight with no day off. Jesus said:

*"[27] And he said unto them, **The sabbath was made for man**, and not man for the sabbath: [28] Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."* (Mark 2:27-28)

The principle of Sabbath rest was given to us as a gift to help us; it was never intended to be a burden. Jesus said: *"... it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days"* (Matthew 12:12).

Our family has always tried to set apart Sunday as a special day. It was a day when we broke from our normal routine. We determined that we would try to be in church with God's people for all the services Sunday, including Sunday School class. It is not a day of rest for me, so I must get my rest another day in the week. But, for most of you, Sunday can be a day when you step away from the daily routine and take time to rest your body and also revive your soul.

II. The Relationship of the Father and the Son (vs. 19 – 23)

The Father and the Son are equal. They are co-eternal. Jesus is just as much God as the Father.

"[5] Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: [6] Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: [7] But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: [8] And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. [9] Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: [10] That at the name of Jesus every knee should

bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; [11] And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

(Philippians 2:5-11)

"[1] God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, [2] Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; [3] Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; [4] Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. [5] For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? [6] And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. [7] And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. [8] But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. [9] Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. [10] And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: [11] They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; [12] And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

(Hebrews 1:1-12)

This oneness between the Father and Son is a continuing theme in John's Gospel:

"[25] Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. [26] But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. [27] My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: [28] And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. [29] My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. [30] I and my Father are one."

(John 10:25-30)

"[7] If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. [8] Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it

sufficeth us. [9] Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? [10] Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. [11] Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake." (John 14:7-11)

III. The Resurrections Promised by the Son (vs. 24 – 29)

The Bible speaks of two resurrections, and both are alluded to here: the resurrection of believers and the resurrection of unbelievers.

The Old Testament prophet Daniel also prophesied of these two resurrections:

"[2] And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Daniel 12:2)

Before we look at the two types of resurrection, let us first be clear about what Jesus meant in v. 29. He is not teaching a works salvation. The doing good referred to here is believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Good works should always be rooted in faith. Works are the fruit of faith. Look at John 6:28 – 29:

"[28] Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? [29] Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." (John 6:28-29)

A. Resurrection of Believers

When a believer dies his body goes into the grave, but his soul and spirit go immediately into the presence of the Lord in Heaven. Paul said:

"[6] Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: [7] (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) [8] We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." (2 Corinthians 5:6-8)

Someday, however, the believer's body will be resurrected out of the ground and will be regenerated or changed into a glorified new body:

"[51] Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, [52] In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall

sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. [53] For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (1 Corinthians 15:51-53)

This resurrection of believers will happen at an event we refer to as "the Rapture of the Church":

"[13] But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. [14] For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. [15] For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. [16] For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: [17] Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. [18] Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

The resurrection of believers is also referred to by both the Lord and the Apostle Paul as "the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14; Acts 24:15). The Book of Hebrews calls it "a better resurrection" (Hebrews 11:35).

The Rapture of the Church is the resurrection of all believers in Christ during the church age, from the time of Christ until now. The bodies of the Old Testament saints and those who will be saved during the Tribulation Period will be raptured at the end of the seven years of Tribulation when Jesus sets up His Millennial Kingdom.

"[4] And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. [5] But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. [6] Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Revelation 20:4-6)

People who get saved during the Millennium will be resurrected at the end of the Millennium when God creates His new Heaven and new earth.

B. Resurrection of Unbelievers

There will also be a resurrection for unbelievers (or “unjust” - Acts 24:15). When an unbeliever dies, his soul goes to a temporary holding place that we commonly refer to as Hell. However, someday, at the Great White Throne Judgment, which also will take place at the end of the Millennium the unbeliever’s body will be resurrected and reunited with his soul, and then after a final judgment both his soul and body will be cast into the Lake of Fire for all of eternity:

[11] And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. [12] And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. [13] And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. [14] And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. [15] And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 11 - 15)

Conclusion

Jesus took the opportunity after helping and healing this paralytic man at the Pool of Bethesda to teach many wonderful truths about Himself as well as truths about the Christian life and the resurrection of believers.

Practical Note – Use the events of life to teach Biblical principles to the people around you. Jesus used this event and the fallout from it to preach salvation to these unbelieving Jewish religious leaders, but He also taught His disciples some wonderful truths about Himself, and especially about His relationship to His Father.

We should always be looking for opportunities to teach Truth. This is what Moses meant when he said:

”[6] And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: [7] And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in

thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." (Deuteronomy 6:6-7)

However, in order for you to teach Truth, you need to learn the Truth:

1. Read the Word of God.
2. Study the Word of God.
3. Hear the Word of God Preached and Taught.

Jesus was always instilling Truth in the people who followed Him.

Today, we learned Biblical Truth about the Sabbath Day and we were given some thoughts regarding how we can apply the Sabbath Rest principle to our busy lives today.

We also became more acquainted with Jesus' relationship to His Father.

Finally, we got a glimpse of our future resurrection. Jesus rose from the dead, which proves that resurrection from the dead is possible. He taught us in today's passage that there will be a future resurrection both for believers as well as unbelievers. I am glad that I will be going up with the believing crowd.

What about you? Will you be part of that great group of believers that will be caught up together with Him in a bodily resurrection at the Rapture; or will you be part of that also sizeable group that will be resurrected from Hell only to be ultimately cast into the Lake of Fire forever?

It all depends on what you believe:

"[24] Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24)

"[16] For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. ... [36] He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John 3:16, 36)