

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN SESSION 5

Review: Last time we went through chapter 4 up to verse 42 which dealt with the Lord's encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well. We discussed the long and bitter history between the Jews and Samaritans and got a little understanding on why Jesus sent the disciples away and met her alone. Through a short conversation and an open heart, the woman was told by Jesus that he was the Christ. She believed him and went back into the city to testify to that fact. The city came out to meet him and urged him to stay with them, so he spent two days there. Many more believed after hearing him for themselves. Jesus ended that encounter with a message for his disciples about the urgency of ministry, the importance of knowing and completing the will of God, and the reward for both sowing and reaping.

Proof that the scriptures are Holy Ghost inspired: The encounter with Nicodemus and the new birth message in chapter 3 comes right before the encounter with the Samaritan woman and the living water message in chapter 4. It's in this order on purpose because of **Romans 1:16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. The message was to the Jew first!

John 4:43-44 Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee. For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. *Jesus could not do great things in Nazareth because he grew up there, yet in Samaria the whole city was nearly converted. People struggle with the calling and anointing of someone they grew up with or are too familiar with.*

John 4:45-48 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast. So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. *A nobleman in the Bible is a high-ranking official, aristocrat, or royal official representing wealth, power, and authority under a king. They served as advisors, administrators, or military leaders. He said "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe". Ye is plural for "you people" so he was addressing the crowd that was present as well as the nobleman. The point being that the signs and*

wonders which he did were to move people to believe his word. He was rebuking “sign-seeking” followers.

John 4:49-54 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told *him*, saying, Thy son liveth. Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. This *is* again the second miracle *that* Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee. *The Lord tested the faith of the nobleman by sending him home with just a word. He did not go with him, didn't put his hands on him, didn't pray over him etc. The man had to have faith in the word that was spoken to turn around and go home alone. Because he did, his son was healed teaching us that true faith rests in the authority and word of Christ without the necessity of miracles.*

John 5:1-3 After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep *market* a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. *John's gospel differs from the others because it chronicles mostly what Jesus did at and around Jerusalem. The others highlight what was done in Galilee. The major feasts of Israel (Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles) require the males to appear before the Lord in the temple. That is why Jesus went up to Jerusalem to obey the law. The scene is a pool with five porches with all manner of disabled people surrounding it. Bethesda means “house of mercy”.*

Attention to detail: Bethesda had 5 porches. 5 is a significant number in the Bible. Many teachers and preachers teach that 5 is the number of God's grace in scripture. I don't hold that view. A number in the Bible must have a recurring theme throughout scripture to carry a meaning. For these examples I believe that the number 5 in the Bible is the number of death!

- The brazen altar that received animal sacrifices was 5 x 5 cubits (Exodus 38:1)
- Four men died in the book of 2 Samuel by being smitten under the fifth rib
- Five law books, the law is the ministration of death (2 Corinthians 3:7)
- Christ received 5 piercings on the cross (both hands, both feet and his side)
- Sardis was the fifth of seven churches and was called “the dead church” (Revelation 3:1)
- David pulled 5 stones from the brook before killing Goliath (1 Samuel 17:40)

- When the fifth seal is opened in Revelation 6:9, the souls of slain tribulation saints cry out from under the altar in heaven
- Mephibosheth was crippled by a fall when he was five years old (2 Samuel 5:5)

The people on the five porches at Bethesda are all crippled and disabled because that's how sinners look under the law. Unable to meet the righteous standard because of sin.

John 5:4-9 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time *in that case*, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, 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. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath. *This account has a deeper spiritual lesson for us. It shows us the superiority of grace over law. The law demands perfection that can never be reached because of our sin nature. That man laid there for a long time trying to be the first in the pool when the water was troubled even though he knew he never could be. He also had no help; the law demands righteousness but provides no help to get there. When that man couldn't get to the water for his need, Jesus brought what he needed to him without any effort on the impotent man's part. He simply had to believe what Jesus said and obey. That's grace!*

John 5:10-13 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in *that* place. *The Lord could've healed that man on any day of the week but he chose to do it on the sabbath to reveal their perverted view of it. The sabbath was given to be a blessing but they turned it into a burden. It also reveals the heart of the religious; they would rather observe rules than see people helped.*

John 5:14-16 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. *Another example of Jesus being full of grace and truth: He graciously healed this man, yet he warns him to go and sin no more. The Jews were furious to the point of being murderous all because a crippled man was healed on the wrong day.*

John 5:17-21 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them*; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. *The Jews thought Jesus was guilty of blasphemy because he claimed God for his Father. Jesus points out to them that they are overlooking obvious proof to his claim: How could I do these things that only God can do if He is not my Father? He took no personal credit or glory for the work done but contributed it to his dependency on his Father. He is foreshadowing the greatest work of God that he will also do....raising the dead to live again.*

John 5:22-24 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. 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. *Jesus defends himself against the charge of blasphemy by stating that all judgment had been committed to him (an honor which the Jews believed belonged to God alone). He explained that the Father has chosen not to act as the direct, individual judge of humanity but has entrusted that entire responsibility to the Son. By claiming the right to judge the world, he was asserting his own divinity and equality with the Father. The purpose of this was so that the Son would be honored like the Father. Obtaining everlasting life during the ministry of Jesus before the cross was through believing on him, his message and on the Father that sent him.*

Tonight's application: Do we believe the word? Going back to the nobleman, Jesus said "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe". Today we may not be signs and wonders seekers, but we are prone to follow our feelings or seek emotional experiences. Don't get me wrong, every Christian enjoys the manifest presence of God and all the emotions that come with that BUT our feelings should never override what the Bible says. The scriptures are full of God's promises that are true regardless of your feelings. Those promises have to be grasped by faith, despite feelings. Jesus said in Matthew 28:20 "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." That's true even on the days we feel alone or forsaken. He's with us at all times because he said so, and that's true without a goosebump or the hair standing up on the back of our necks.

