

Gospel of John (Study 11 of 24, Chap 5 Start)

by G.W. North

Jesus teaches that true power comes from God and that we must understand the nature of law and our own nature in order to be transformed by God's power.

Duration: 51:25

Scripture: John 3:16

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on John chapter 5, which is often overlooked compared to other chapters in the Bible. The main content of this chapter is the story of a man who had been paralyzed for 38 years and was dependent on others for his needs. The speaker highlights the background of the story, which takes place during a feast in Jerusalem near a pool called Bethesda. The pool was believed to have healing powers, as an angel would trouble the water and the first person to enter would be healed. The speaker then discusses the concept of power, emphasizing that true power comes from being a Son of God, rather than relying on external sources or superstitions. The sermon concludes with Jesus commanding the paralyzed man to rise, take up his bed, and walk.

Transcript

Are we ready? Let us pray, shall we? Father, once again we come unto Thee, unto Thee, O Lord, the original God. Remember the Lord Jesus said to his disciples, I will not pray for you, I say unto you, I will not pray for you, for the Father himself loveth you. How blessed that is, how wonderful.

We bow before the wonder and the majesty of this great salvation. We bend unto Thee, Lord, as the wind bendeth a tree. We know Thee, Father, in Thy love, in Thy grace.

Not all that Jesus knew of you, Father, but some, perhaps much. We cannot measure, Father. We are in the measureless realms.

We are people with the new creation. Father, Father, thank you for not just sparing your son, but giving him. Hallelujah.

We praise Thee and exalt Thee in our exaltation. In Thy exaltation, O God, we do not forget that we are creatures of dust. We bless Thee, Father, less carried away as in some sort of swing party.

We forget. Amen. Well, I needn't say where we're to go this morning.

In John chapter 5, one of the most important chapters in the whole of the Bible. Yet, unless you've been cheating and looking ahead, if I asked you what was the main content of John chapter 5, what would you say? Pardon? That's not the main content. That's incidental to the truth.

What would you say is the main content? I can't hear you, my dear. You're on track. So we're going to have a look at it.

And see the marvellous truth. And yet, you know, people are often caught scratching their head, if that's the term to use in this company. I said, what's it about? John 3, oh, John 3, 16, must be born again.

John 4, oh, well, of course. John 6, oh, feeding the 5,000. John 7, Jesus in the temple, said, if any man thirsts, come and let him drink.

And so we go through, but oddly enough, John 5 is often missed over. So, it's like all the most important things, they are missed over. But it's so vital, teaching about Jesus in chapter 5. If you know the background of it all, there was a feast.

I said, before I believed it, John is grouped around feasts. This one is the feast of, would you know what it was? Well, perhaps it'll come out as we go along. Chapter 5, then.

There was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now, there is a 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, blind, half-withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

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. Before we go any further, do you accept that as a superstition, or do you accept it as fact? It makes you think, doesn't it? It's good not to venture opinions at times.

For an opinion is an opinion, and no one knows the truth. At least see this. John didn't say it was a superstition.

Just remember that. He didn't say it was a superstition. They believed it, of course, so many things, but it wasn't true, of course.

So they were waiting for nothing. That's the conclusion to draw. But let's go on to it.

It's strange that the Lord should choose this incident and the things that were held in people's minds, hearts, about it. Let's go on now. He goes up to Jerusalem.

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, I have no man when the water is troubled to put me into the pool, but while I am coming, Jesus another steppeth down before me. Jesus said 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. Now that is the incident that the writer John, under the power of the Spirit, takes as the beginning of a great revelation of truth.

There are two impotent men potentially in this chapter. Notice this word impotent. It is a big thing for us to get into our hearts.

A multitude of impotent people were there. Verse three. A multitude of impotent people.

Two reasons for impotence we shall look at in a moment. A multitude of impotent people. Physical impotence.

Powerlessness. That's the back. And the secret of power is revealed in this chapter.

You don't think, I hope, that power is solely in Acts chapter two, or a revelation of it. You shall receive power. Chapters one and two actually, where Jesus speaks about it.

But here is the tremendous thing to get into your heart. And in my heart, for I too, would join in the impotent folk, unless the condition for potency in the spirit is real in my life, then I am completely impotent. A man of words, a man of ideas, a man who talks scripture or something like that.

But you and I must see how deliberately the whole thing is placed by God. Now whatever their sicknesses were, I don't know. Major on the word impotence, will you? It does say that the disease is in it too.

Verse four. Whatsoever disease, whatsoever disease, the disease being not the cause of the impotence, but the impotence being the cause of the disease. I will discuss that with you.

Jesus, you must remember, is God's normal man. That's right. He brought him into this world to be that.

You can say full of love, full of grace, full of mercy, full of forgiveness. Say full of power. For you do know, don't you? Despite the fact you had hurled at you from pulpit and pamphlet perhaps, how powerless you are.

You are actually a bundle of power where you are sitting. I hope your brain has some power in it. And so on.

You must understand we are all power creations by God. When he made a man, he breathed in the Holy Ghost and lo and behold, the powerless clay became a man, full of power. Perhaps you've been trained to think that you have no power.

And you are waiting for an endowment of power. Lots of people are being taught about endowment of power with the emphasis on the baptism of the Spirit. And so they should.

This is a tremendous thing for us to see. That God has made creatures of power. It's the prostitution of the power that's gone wrong.

It's the misuse of the power that has gone wrong. Let us be gathered together now in the blessed spirit of the Lord and learn what it's all about. This man we're talking about here, he had been 38 years in this condition.

Utterly dependent for what he wanted. On other people. He had to hope, any more than a snowflake has hope of existing when the temperature would be a lovely 90 degrees.

That's my normal temperature, I like that. You people think it's hot. It's just about getting tolerable.

As far as I'm concerned. But until we have been taught of God, and we're taught in this chapter, it's the teaching of Christ that's so important here, not the miracle. If he had wanted to perform miracles, why didn't he heal every person there? If it was a display of power, in the sense that we think of power, I hope if you have got a balloon on your shoulders that's thinking in those terms, I hope to prick it well and truly this morning, that we should see what this thing is all about, beloved.

All about. I said that we have faced the condition, impotent folk. Verse 7, The word of the man, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool, while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

There was a man named Saul of Tarsus. He heard a voice, he saw a light, saw no man. That's the wonder of it.

This is the background. I hear David crying out in one of his psalms, No man cared for my soul. I hope we've got beyond the childish acceptance of the baptism in the spirit that imparts some kind of power or potency for us.

It's true, it's in the acts of the apostles, but what I want to see this morning is not something extraneous, that is something I acquire to. It is not in me and not of me. And I'm talking about power on a different level, as you will have gathered, not just for the performance of miracles, but for power to be a son of God.

That's the most wonderful power you will ever receive in until eternity, upon eternity, or whatever it will be. I've run their course. In this fifth chapter then, Jesus said, rise, take up thy bed and walk.

Now, that's the first introduction. Our first introduction in scripture to man is a garden, and a man made of dust, and God breathing into him. Here, it's rather different.

Here it is. The man was made whole, immediately. That's how God made Adam.

He wasn't made sinless yet, but he was made whole, physically. It was the Sabbath day. Ten, the Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, note that, whenever God heals you, he cures you.

It doesn't deal with a temporary situation. You'll measure God's ways. Let me tell you, I'll give you an instance.

When I was in Bradford many years ago now, I did one of those foolish things that men and women do, slip the disc. It happened to be the disc that squeezed my sciatic nerve, and I was in tremendous pain with it. I went to bed, we prayed about it, obviously.

I had to lie on a board, and I don't know what. And all the big miracle workers all around, they heard poor old Wally North, and they came to visit him, and they stood round his bed, and they prayed. These were the top men in our district.

Nothing to do with my own particular church, may I say. If you know who were in Bradford at that time, then you might know. They prayed for me, and things seemed to get worse.

One night I was groaning in pain, there really was, my wife always said I was a baby, but all women know that men are babies. So I was groaning, and she was sleeping in our room, of course I was in a little ante room to let her get some sleep. And I read a psalm.

Do you know I can't remember the psalm now? Me, of such a memory as I had in those days, I can't even remember the psalm. It was a little older than I am, it was ninety-something. But I called her.

God spoke to me, clearly. So I called her and she came in, and I said, dear, go downstairs, get a bottle of oil, and anoint me, will you? And all she said, and she named, she said, all these brethren have been here praying for you, the men. Well she went down, she said, all I've got is some salad oil, I said, that'll do.

So she went down and got some salad oil, she poured more on me than she should have done, but everything was right in ten minutes. I never, I was cured, that's what I'm trying to talk about, never had any back trouble since. Never, not a spot.

Hallelujah. And you say, well that was a woman. Yeah, it was a woman's ministry.

That opened the door into women's ministry for me. Not as a woman, of course. I just want you to see, beloved, the difference between being healed and being cured.

So, get this right. He that was cured, they said to him, it's the Sabbath day, not lawful for you to carry a bed. He answered them, and I like this, he that made me whole, the same said unto me, take up thy bed and walk.

The inference being that if you'd made me whole, I'd do what you told me to do too. They gave him Sabbath day jargon, they gave him traditional teachings, they gave him religious lectures, I guess, but nobody cured him. That's the point.

Let us see it, beloved. Virtually, I don't know what was wrong with him. He was a dead man, really, wasn't he? A nuisance to everybody and to himself.

No, if he'd had a wife, she wouldn't have called him a nuisance. Bless her. But here's the thing to see.

They asked him, what man is that? Which told thee to take up thy bed and walk? And he that was healed wished not who it was, he hadn't got a clue. For Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place. After Jesus goes and finds him, findeth him in the temple, and says unto him, Behold, thou art made whole.

Sin no more. Not even once more. I'd like you to notice that, beloved, because people say they cannot live without sin.

But Jesus commanded him to. Was he suggesting to him a lie? Just, when you hear the debates, arguments, and read books about this subject, go back to the Bible. If Jesus suggested to the man that he could live without sinning, then he was a liar, unless the man could live without sinning.

I hope you accept that. And not the arguments and your experience, or your trying, or things like that. You'd better read it and underline it in your Bible, if you believe in underlining Bible.

Go and sin no more. Not even once. You say, oh well, the blood keeps cleansing me, if I, if I, if I, if I. You listen to Jesus.

Now you would expect the Lord Jesus to talk like this. You can say, may I put it this way, the debatable verses in John chapter 8, so they say, this is a man's quote, in other words, they leave out the really sort of greatest scholars, if they be, the whole of John chapter 8, that's the woman taking adultery, the whole of

that first part, leave it out, say, buh buh buh buh buh buh. It's an incident, or they did do in the days when I used to read these things, find out.

Unfortunately, it was a man that ought to have known better that did it. But, this is, if that is so, that that section in John 8 shouldn't be there, you're left with this one statement in the New Testament. Go and sin no more.

It's a wonderful thing, isn't it? He sought Him. He said in verse 14, Thou art made whole. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

I wonder if the Lord had made him whole in spirit and soul as well as body. I don't know. That I'll ask.

I've got a lot of questions to ask when I get to heaven. The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole. He didn't say, Now, I'm Jesus talking to you.

Don't you sin any more. Of course, you wouldn't have expected him to say anything less than that, would you? He didn't say, Now, go and try not to sin. He didn't say try not to sin.

He said, Go and do it. And though he hadn't announced his name to the man, the man knew immediately. There's only one man on the earth that talked about not sinning on him any more.

He knew who that would be. Now, you see then the importance of this section. Chapter 5. Jesus had done these things on the Sabbath day.

Jesus told the man not to sin. And to the Pharisees and everybody else, the man did sin. Immediately.

For he carried his bed on the Sabbath day which broke the law. Which shows you there's a vast difference to the laws that men build, religious people who build laws up on things that say is from Moses that was never in Moses. Never did Moses say anything about carrying your bed on the Sabbath day.

It's an inference from the things that they were told not to do on the Sabbath. It's a big thing, beloved, to understand. I'm so glad that really Jesus tore everything but the heart out of everything Moses said.

Read chapter 5, 6 and 7 of Matthew. He left the heart of it the truth, the central truth but oh how he applied it differently. You shall not commit adultery.

See what the Lord says about that. He left the heart of it, the central thing when he said now I say unto you if you do it with your eyes and your mind your thoughts, you've done it. Moses never said anything about that.

But then Moses was only a mere man. Wonderful man. In fact in this chapter the Lord said before I hope we're going to get through it today.

The Lord said do you know who's accusing you to the Father? Moses in whom you trust. What? Do you think he is literally doing that?

And do you wonder I'm going to stray now into Luke Do you wonder oh synoptic Gospels that in the that's gone the word in the things that happened on the mount Moses came to talk with Jesus along with Elijah transfiguration was my word this shows you how old I'm getting to talk with Elijah about Jesus' exodus there was no exodus from sin in the Mosaic teaching it was from a land with wonderful terrible mockeries

of God on exhibition that's all so he never talked about his exodus that he led I'm going to talk with you about your exodus Lord I'm putting words into his mouth that you're going to accomplish at Jerusalem Moses knew how far far short of that it all was because you will know that in the exodus the initial phases of the exodus came the redemption the blood on the houses and so on

well now would you be surprised then to find that the Lord Jesus is taking them back in this chapter or way back if you like or if you like to think of the other way on into wonderful truth now let's investigate it and how it happened ah verse 16 the Jews therefore persecuted Jesus and sought to slay him because he had done these things on the Sabbath day because he'd removed their superstitious superfluous things and they hated him you take away a man's deep believing and especially if it's superstitious believing and it's been in the race and in your family and you've been bred in it you take that away from a person and you become his enemy straight away because people's believing people's lives are built up upon false beliefs take that away and they haven't a life anymore at least not

a religious one here then is the whole truth and Jesus took it away deliberately smashed it with that wonderful miracle and ah he explains as we go on what it's all about here it is he said to them my father work his a tool and I work to him it was simple that if you like was the law he was brought up on it was in him though it was never explained to him as the law his nature was his law put that down your nature is your law your nature is your law you think that law is something you acquiesce to and do have been taught to do it or should I force to do it if you go over 90 on the motorway for instance you should pay a fine so on do you believe that your nature is your law I can reduce it the nature of a lion is to do the things of a lion and mate with a lioness and it runs through all

their family that's their laws it's no good you lecturing them it's no good you doing this that or the other they behave according to their nature and so do you son, daughter you do whether you say you have a new nature or not all human life exchanges between was built upon human law you can make some laws and say well they make it in the parliament or some dictator makes a law and so on and so on and so on and if you don't like that you rebel against it in your mind but can do nothing about it but spend your life in change in a prison that they build if you rebel now that runs right through scripture old Karl Marx wasn't so far out I'm not a communist when he said that man is a religious animal wasn't so far out I don't say you accept his godless dictums and so on that's right when I go

to Romans 2 boy oh boy I shan't get anywhere today I go to Romans that's the kind of mind I got God inspires me on the spot you go into Romans 2 and you find in Romans 2 you find that Paul says the heathen do the things by nature that are in the law the thing to bear in mind is this and that is what you do you do the things by nature by law to have been born makes you a subject under the law not man made law Paul deals with that later on in the epistle in other words you are I find you to be if I know you well enough what you are and you say what you say by nature you act as you do by nature and nothing can stop it now that's a tremendous thing we say we are a heterogeneous lot maybe people try to find differences and there are differences as we become more trained and more this and more

that but basically you will be what you are that's why God says I am that I am as he would say I shall forever continue to be what and who I am I'm not talking over your heads are you perhaps you think you're getting a real lecture this morning without notes but this is the thing to get into your heart can a leopard change its spots or the Ethiopian his skin now please get biblical truth down into the roots of your thinking unless you can never be other than a cheat you can never be other than a liar you listen to Paul God said I am that I am Paul says I am what I am he's only changed the T to a W God says I am that I am Paul says I

am what I am bless him he goes on to say by the grace of God now already this morning you've had enough to do some real thinking about life as it is and I

hope I haven't gone too far for you in these realms which will give you seed thought but we're going on from there it is the Jews sought the more to kill him verse 18 because he not only had broken the Sabbath according to them but said also that God was his father there you are he was doing it by nature he'd got the nature of God that man that's what he was claiming to have and he knew the more you dig into the Greek of the verse you will find it to be true using the exact words that made them say what they said how wonderful it is then he said that God was his father Amen making himself equal with God then answered Jesus and said unto him verily verily I say unto you the son can do nothing of himself alright let's stop there have you ever come to the place where you say you're a son of

God and can do nothing of yourself then you've got to listen to what he said to that man sin no more how wonderful I can only do he says I'm putting my words to it what I see the father himself doing that's all I can do now you think of the multitude of miracles he did of the multitude of words that he spoke he was shown what to do I'd like you to take into your hearts beloved and God wants you to that once you're born again you're filled with power and can do nothing with all that power here you cannot do anything of yourself I would like to think you're all here as students this morning perhaps I'll exclude one two three four more elderly people but the real students let's put it that way you can't do anything of yourself not if you're going to be a child of God you won't retain your

sonship or daughterhood how do you think if you will do things of yourself you can't retain it he says I love this I'm such a powerless man the potential is a wonderful thing the potential that you and I have once we're born of God been really regenerated from his heart from the blood of the human Christ it wasn't merely human of course we've been brought into a new realm I hope you feel as I hope it's not just a theory you hold as taught by GWM or whatever what you preach has got to come from yourself mind us I will say from God it came from the new nature I realised I'd got from God nobody should be preaching unless they've got God's nature in them what treacherous sins are they building on trying to do in somebody else's life you and I have to understand beloved these things and I know

not one of you, even the oldest one of you are as old as I am so I've lived a long time learned that some of the thoughts I thought say when I was 20 aren't right because if I say God is God that's right you may say that when you're only 5 but it's learning what it's all about this is the chapter that's teaching it's not a theological discourse it is a statement by Jesus Christ of eternal truth of which he was a manifestation on this earth born as he was of Mary only on the human side how wonderful it is beloved he says this the father loveth the son showeth him all things that himself doeth and listen to his confidence he will show him greater works than these that you may all marvel later on in John we shan't get there anywhere near it this morning he said I have done one work and you

all marvel it shows you the importance of this this is the work he's talking about why should a man possess of such power God on the earth go to a place that fool up the people that are upside down inside out nearly everything impotent all got diseases and healed one and what you may call without any compassion on anybody else no pity on anyone else with all that power he healed that one man and left the rest walked away from them Lord I need you to put me in the pool I need this I need that learn your Christ will you learn the kind of man he is was I mean still is I suppose the nature of humanity somewhere up there I'm not going to dissertate upon that tell you what I think because it doesn't much matter you might say to me if you meet me up there well it wasn't like you said well that's

alright I won't stop on truth of making a book there is no end God wants us to see this thing so he did what he did and only had power to do what he did because he kept his eyes on his father that's the sign of a born again man he didn't keep his eyes on the sick and the impotent and the millions of people he could have helped on the earth he kept his eyes on his father perhaps you ought to put after that statement a parenthesis in which you put the words do I with a question mark do I this is the secret he is showing us the secret of life his own wonderful life but people wanted and haven't a clue usually how they can say yes you get born again become a member of the church get baptised in water baptised in the spirit all these things you wouldn't need to read a lot of doctrine if you

read the bible I mustn't let any of the other lecturers know that I say that there it is that's right I say it from every pulpit I stood in I've written a lot of books myself it sounds so contradictory doesn't it but there it is here it is beloved isn't this great do you know who healed that one there it was the father what I saw the father do I only do the things I see my father do and that's why John wrote this gospel to let you know about father this is the gospel the only one that talks about being born again they say keep your eye on Jesus Jesus said keep your eye on my father keep your eye on my father see he's upset in all accepted evangelical teaching which is true but you're only keeping your eye on Jesus because he kept his eye on the father and he said you can have my life if

you really want it I'm amazed at the ignorance there is in the world you can all tell me you don't know much well that's fine I don't I'm only a little man God wants us to go through these things he said let's read the rest no I'd better let you have a break for five minutes we'll be right back

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