

- Church Web Site

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A just weight
and balance

are the
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- There are billions of people around the world seeking salvation through religions that cannot save anyone.
 - Buddhists in Asia:
 - offering sacrifices,
 - spinning prayer wheels,
 - flying prayer flags
- and going through other religious rituals in the hopes of attaining Nirvana.

- Hindu holy men at the temple in Kathmandu who think that by meditating every day, they will gain salvation.
- Muslims at sundown on prayer rugs praying toward Mecca
 - And that fasting during the daylight hours will help get them into heaven.

- Roman Catholics kneeling before statues of Jesus and Mary, praying with rosary beads in their attempt to be right with God.

- Mormons and JW's canvass neighborhoods every weekend, thinking that their efforts will earn them salvation.

- **And finally good people**
going to church every
Sunday who mistakenly
think that their
church membership
and good deeds
will get them into heaven
when they die.

- **While religion is important**
let it be clear that by keeping rules, rituals, and requirements, a person cannot gain eternal life.
- **Jesus consistently confronted**
the Jewish religious leaders of His day,
 - Even though they claimed to be following the **God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**

- They thought that by adhering to the Law of Moses, they could save themselves.
- Over the centuries, they had added to that Law many of their own traditions.
- But Jesus deliberately confronted these religious leaders.

- At the root of their hostility was that Jesus confronted their man-made religious traditions,
- Especially their Sabbath laws.

- Jesus never broke the Sabbath as God intended for the Jews to keep it.

- **But He deliberately violated the human traditions** that had grown up around the Sabbath,
 - Many of the Jews **mistakenly thought** that by keeping these traditions they could be right with God.

- **But no one**
can gain eternal life
by keeping God's law,
because no one
can keep it perfectly.

- And so Jesus **deliberately did things** on the Sabbath to confront the Jewish leaders.
- After all, He could have **waited 24 hours** to heal this lame man.
- He had been paralyzed **for 38 years**;
- So what difference would **one more day make?**

- And, Jesus could have told him to leave his mat there by the pool
- And come back and get it the next day,
- So as not to provoke the religious leaders.

- Jesus could have told this man not to do anything that would violate these Jewish traditions, but He did not.
 - He told him to pick up his mat and carry it.

- With one command,
Jesus brought instant
and
complete healing to him.

- **The lesson is:**

- Religion alone
will not save.

- I do not see any evidence that this man whom Jesus healed was saved spiritually.
 - John never hints that the man believed in Christ.
- At first, he didn't even know who Jesus was.
- He never thanked Jesus for healing him.

- And when he found out who Jesus was, he went to the Jewish authorities to **report** Him,
- Even though he surely knew that they were **hostile** towards Him.

- **Superstition** is the religion of feeble minds.
- And superstitions **need to be questioned.**
- Questions are also **a tremendous teaching tool.**
- And Jesus was **a great teacher.**

- The question for today is found in

John 5:6:

”Do you want to be made whole?”

- **What** kind of question is that?
 - **Why** would Jesus ask that question?

- The answer:
Some people
don't want
to be made whole.
- They enjoy life
as it is.

- When Jesus arrived in **Jerusalem**
we find him at a famous pool.
- Its name was **Bethesda**,
which means
House of Mercy.
- And he is there on
a mission of mercy.

- In fact that is why he is on earth in the first place.

- 1 Peter 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

- **Ancient peoples** were impressed with rivers and springs.
 - So much so that they often **worshipped them.**

- Hesiod,
the Greek poet,
said that when a man
was about to cross a river,
he should pray
and
wash his hands,
- For he who wades
through a stream with
unwashed hands
incurs
the wrath of the gods.

- The Baganda tribe in Central Africa would not try to rescue a man carried away by a river because they thought that the spirits had taken him.

- The people who waited for the pool in Jerusalem to be disturbed were children of their age believing the things of their age.

- John's goal in this chapter is to provide proof that Jesus is equal to God.

- Jesus began by asking the man if he wanted to be cured.
- It was not so foolish a question as it may sound.

- The man had waited for thirty-eight years and in his heart of hearts the man might be well content to remain as an invalid.

- For, if he was cured, he would have to shoulder all the burden of making a living.
- There are invalids for whom invalidism is not unpleasant,
- Because someone else does all the working
and
all the worrying.

- But this man's response **was immediate.**
- He **wanted** to be healed,
 - Though he did not see how he ever could be since he had **no one to help him.**
 - So the question Jesus ask **is essential.**

- If we are well content to stay as we are, there can be no change for us.
- Are you listening?

- The power of God only works when we recognize our own helplessness.

- Romans 3:10

*As it is written,
There is none righteous,
no, not one:*

- Let us recognize that John relates these simple stories for a purpose.
- Just below the surface eternal truths are revealed.

- **John 20:30**

And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

- **20:31** ***But these are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life through his name.***

- The first essential is **"Do you really want to be changed?"**

- If we are **content to stay as we are,** there can be no change for us.

- A man had been healed and we might expect this to be an occasion of joy and thanksgiving;
 - But some met this joyful occasion with disdain.
 - And why?

- He was walking through the streets carrying his bed;
- The orthodox Jews stopped him and reminded him that he was breaking the law by carrying a burden on the Sabbath day.

- The Orthodox Jews had made God's laws into thousands of little rules and regulations.
- The Jews set out thirty-nine different classifications of work,
- One of which was carrying a burden on the Sabbath.

- The Rabbis of Jesus' day argued that a man was sinning:
- If he carried a needle in his robe on the Sabbath.
 - They even argued as to whether a man could wear his wooden leg.
 - They were quite clear that any kind of broach could not be worn on the Sabbath.

- To the Rabbis of Jesus' day all these petty details were a matter of life and death.

- And certainly this man was breaking the rabbinic law by carrying his bed on the Sabbath day.

- Now this man had certainly broken the law in their sight
- But for the Pharisees there was a more urgent need at hand.

- **John 5:18**

***For this cause therefore
the Jews sought the more
to kill him,***

- ***because he not only
broke the sabbath,***
- ***but also called God
his own Father,***

making himself equal with God.

John 5:17

But Jesus said,

***"My Father
has never
stopped working,
and that is why
I keep on working."***

(CEV)

- His defense was shattering.
- God did not stop working on the Sabbath day and neither did he.
- And the Jews were horrified at His inference.

- Philo, the Jew,
had said:

***"God never ceases doing,
but as it is the property
of fire to burn
and snow to chill,
so it is the
property of God to do."***

- God rested on the seventh day.
 - That is He ceased His work of creation.
 - For that work was completed.
 - His higher works of judgment, mercy, love still continued.

- Jesus told the man
in the Temple
to sin no more
in case something worse
happened to him.

(**John 5:14**)

- To the Jew
sin and suffering
were connected.
- If a man suffered,
he had sinned.

- He could never be cured until his sin was forgiven.
- It is implied then that Jesus had forgiven him.
- Thus making Himself equal to God.

- **This very miracle**
was a sign that
Jesus was the Messiah.
- It was Isaiah's picture that
***"then shall the lame man
leap like a deer"***
(Isaiah 35:6).

- **How can you know for sure**
that Jesus is the Christ,
the Son of God?
- A favorite hymn puts it,
“**You ask me how**
I know He lives?
He lives within my heart.”

- **A Buddhist might say**
that Buddha lives
within his heart.
 - How can you
verify such a thing?
 - A critic might say
that Jesus is just
a **legend** or **myth**.

- In our text,
Jesus continues
His defense to the Jews,
who were accusing Him
of breaking the Sabbath
and of making Himself
equal with God
(**John 5:18**).

- Instead of backing off Jesus sets forth His case in even stronger terms by showing that He is one with the Father in all of His actions.

- In John 5:22-23

Jesus affirms
that the Father
“*has given all judgment
to the Son
so that all
will honor the Son
even as they
honor the Father.”*”

- Jesus then refers to Himself as:
 - **“Son of Man”**
(John 5:27)
 - We tend to think that Jesus’ calling Himself **the Son of Man** as an expression of humility, when, in fact, **it was a claim to divine authority.**

- **Daniel 7:13**

***I saw what
looked like a
son of man
coming with the
clouds of heaven,
and he was presented to
the Eternal God.***

- **Daniel 7:14**

He was crowned king and given power and glory, so that all people of every nation and race would serve him.

- ***He will rule forever, and his kingdom is eternal, never to be destroyed.***

- **Christ's threefold
equality with the Father**

(John 5:17-23).

(1) Equal in
works

(John 5:17-21).

(2) Equal in
judgment

(John 5:22).

(3) Equal in
honor

(John 5:23).

- But, how do we know that these claims are true?

- What evidence backs them up?

- Would they hold up in court?

- In answer to these questions and in deference to Jewish law, which required at least two or three witnesses to establish any legal matter,
 - Jesus gives a number of witnesses to verify His claims.

- We don't need to take **a blind leap of faith.**
 - God has provided **adequate testimony** that Jesus is the truth.
 - Actually, there is **one main witness,**
the Father,
who uses these various witnesses to testify to the truth of who Jesus is.

- As John presents his case:
“If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater;

for the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His Son.”

(1 John 5:9)

- Every day we accept the testimony of men.
- You go to the bank and hand over an endorsed paycheck to a teller whom you don't know and trust that she really put it into your account.
- So, John argues, why do we not accept the testimony that God has given concerning His Son?⁶⁵

- The evidence presented:
 - God Himself (**John 5:32**)
- John the Baptist (**John 5:33-35**).
 - Jesus' miracles (**John 5:36**).
- The Scriptures (**John 5:37-47**).
- Since all of these witnesses line up,
the case for Jesus is solid:
 - He is the Christ,
the Son of God,
Savior of the world
(**John 20:31**).

- John repeatedly emphasizes “truth” in this gospel.
- Truth is characteristic of God, and it is only as we know God that we know truth.
- John uses the Greek noun for “truth” (**25 times**) in his Gospel,
- Plus **20 more** times in his epistles
 - He uses the word “true” far more than other New Testament author.

- Jesus says of the Jews

**“You are unwilling
to come to Me
so that you
may have life.”**

(John 5:40)

- **Don't miss Jesus' point**
in this discourse:

- ***“I say these things so that you may be saved.”***

(John 5:34)

- Are **you** saved?

- Do **you** have eternal life?

- **Think on these things**
- **Philippians 4:8**

**The doors of the church
are open.**

**The Spirit and the Bride
Say
“Come”.**

Revelation 22:17



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