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Encounters With Jesus
Do you want to be Well?
John 5:1-15
May 15, 2016, Adrian Moskal

Good morning. We are continuing on in our Encounters with Jesus series. Today we are looking at the passage John 5:1-15. You can turn their now if you like. I will be working in the NLT version. One thing I have seen is that anytime someone has an encounter with Jesus, their life has the POTENTIAL to radically change. As we dive in this morning, pay careful attention to how Jesus interacts with the paralytic (the man who couldn't walk), how that man responds, and how others respond to their encounter.

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John 5:1-15 NLT

Afterward Jesus returned to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish holy days. ² Inside the city, near the Sheep Gate, was the pool of Bethesda,* with five covered porches. ³ Crowds of sick people—blind, lame, or paralyzed—lay on the porches. ⁵ One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, “Would you like to get well?”

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⁷ “I can’t, sir,” the sick man said, “for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me.”

⁸ Jesus told him, “Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!”

⁹ Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking! But this miracle happened on the Sabbath, ¹⁰ so the Jewish leaders objected. They said to the man who was cured, “You can’t work on the Sabbath! The law doesn’t allow you to carry that sleeping mat!”

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¹¹ But he replied, “The man who healed me told me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’ ”

¹² “Who said such a thing as that?” they demanded.

¹³ The man didn’t know, for Jesus had disappeared into the crowd. ¹⁴ But afterward Jesus found him in the Temple and told him, “Now you are well; so stop sinning, or something even worse may happen to you.” ¹⁵ Then the man went and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had healed him.

The first 6 1/2 verses sets the stage.

John 5:1-15 NLT

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saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, he asked him, “Would you like to get well?”

Hot sun, large marble columns. some are sitting, some are standing, waiting under porches for shade.

When we are sick, we will do almost anything to feel better. I don't know how you are but I can be pretty stubborn until I am sick. I don't much like to take pills when I am healthy but, when I am sick, I will take whatever pills my wife gives me. Just so I might feel better.

These people are not different. These people are the sick, the lame, the paralyzed. The bubbling water was said to have healing properties and they are desperately wanting to be healed. So these people come day after day in hope they will be healed. Are you at all surprised to see Jesus here amongst the sick and lame? That is what Jesus does.

The man in our passage had been sick for 38 years. Verse 6 says Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time. It was like Jesus was searching for him.

He asks him a question “Do you want to get well?”. Simple question that Jesus already knows the answer.

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Luke 12:6-7 NLT

⁶“What is the price of five sparrows—two copper coins*? Yet God does not forget a single one of them. ⁷And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows.

If God looks after the sparrows, how much more does he know you and value you?

God knows us to the point he has numbered all of our hairs. You are valued and KNOWN by Him.

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1. Each encounter with Jesus gives you the opportunity to know Jesus better. An Encounter with Jesus involves Jesus already knowing everything about you!! And yet he asks questions. He wants to have a relationship with us. Jesus asks questions that he already knows the answer. God does this all the way through the old and new testament. He wants to have conversation/relationship with us. That involves both speaking and both listening.

God already knows you inside and out. When we spend time with Jesus, it is an opportunity for us to know him.

Let's continue on in verse 6.

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John 5:6b-7

“Would you like to get well?”

7 “I can't, sir,” the sick man said, “for I have no one to put me into the pool when the water bubbles up. Someone else always gets there ahead of me.”

2. We don't have the whole picture but God does.

The man said I can't get into the pool. He is thinking the pool might finally make him well (after 38 years) and Jesus has a totally different idea. God's plans are always much bigger, much better for us and often more of a struggle which we will see this at the end. We get a snapshot and God has a panoramic view

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Eph 3:20 NIV

20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

The man wants someone to help pick him up and place him in this pool to be healed and Jesus wants to do much more. Is it any different with our lives? We have such small plans and Jesus wants to do so much more through us than even we can ask or imagine.

And we continue on.

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John 5:8-9a NLT

8 Jesus told him, “Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!”

9 Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking! But this miracle happened on the Sabbath,

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3. All authority in heaven and earth is given to Jesus. Jesus has the power to heal, save, and reconcile. Stand up, pick up your mat and walk.

We do not have the ability to do anything like that. We can be led to be a part of the process but that is all God. This is what Jesus wants to do in your life and in the lives of those around you He wants to do the miraculous. He wants to heal the hurting. Mend the broken.

Do we believe our Lord and Saviour is this powerful? Do we believe he can do the miraculous?

Some of the people sitting here will remember Pastor Siple. He used to be the lead pastor at CRBC a while ago. I remember a sermon he preached about 15 years ago. He was sharing the power and majesty of God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). He took us back to Genesis 1:1. In the beginning God. In the beginning God. He made us repeat those powerful 4 words over and over. Before there was anything, there was God and out of God, flows everything.

Do we believe that when we spend time with Jesus? Do we believe that when we talk to others about Jesus. We need to describe him with wonder and amazement. We need to expect Jesus to do amazing things.

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John 5: 9b-11 NLT

But this miracle happened on the Sabbath, ¹⁰ so the Jewish leaders objected. They said to the man who was cured, “You can’t work on the Sabbath! The law doesn’t allow you to carry that sleeping mat!”

¹¹ But he replied, “The man who healed me told me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’ ”

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4. We try and put God in a box.

We try and boil down what God can and cannot do into a list of “things”. Yet, he is God. We have a finite understanding of an infinite God.

⁹ Instantly, the man was healed! He rolled up his sleeping mat and began walking! But this miracle happened on the Sabbath, ¹⁰ so the Jewish leaders objected. They said to the man who was cured, “You can’t work on the Sabbath! The law doesn’t allow you to carry that sleeping mat!”

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Matthew 5:17 NLT ¹⁷ “Don’t misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. Jesus looks at the heart of the person, story, or event.

What should have been their response? Praise the Lord and Celebrate!! Yes! He had been sick for 38 years. He might have laid there everyday for 38 years hoping to be healed. And the Pharisees’ response after his healing is, “You can’t work on the Sabbath! "The law doesn’t allow you to carry that sleeping mat". It should have been “Thank you Jesus!” Praise the Lord. Anything in celebration.

We have our Annual General Meeting coming up on May 29. I have an observation and job for each one of us. Yes, I am handing out jobs. First the observation: Annual General Meeting. Does that not sound like the dullest name possible to go to? I am on staff and I think it is the dullest name. If the local church’s job is to make disciples of Christ and if the local church is the hope of the world, then its meeting should have a

way better name. It should have an epic name that celebrates what God has done and what he is going to do yet. Just my opinion.

Your job: At the meeting, if you are excited about something Christ is doing through His church at CRBC, CELEBRATE IT. PRAISE Jesus for it. Our AGM is when we elect new board members and do a little business, but primarily it is a look back at what Christ has done this past year and a look ahead to what we feel he is going to do and where he is leading us. Let's celebrate how he has healed, repaired the broken, comforted the afflicted. How he has brought salvation to the lost. Hope to the hopeless. Let's look forward to what he can do this next year.

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Luke 19:10 ¹⁰ **For the Son of Man* came to seek and save those who are lost."**

Let's not settle for anything less. Let's not ask boring questions like "Why did we paint the bathroom grey when I like the colour pink?".

Let's ask great questions like, "How can we reach more people for Christ". "What can we do together to bless our city in Christ's name?" Let's not stop asking questions, but let's have them be of eternal significance.

The final part of our passage:

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John 5:6b,12-15

"Would you like to get well?"

¹² **"Who said such a thing as that?" they demanded.**

¹³ **The man didn't know, for Jesus had disappeared into the crowd.** ¹⁴ **But afterward Jesus found him in the Temple and told him, "Now you are well; so stop sinning, or something even worse may happen to you."** ¹⁵ **Then the man went and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had healed him.**

Back in verse 6, Jesus asks the man if he wants to get well. The man misunderstands and says he can't get into the healing pool. Verse 12/13 the Pharisees are asking the man who told him to pick up his mat. Verse 14 carries on from that question. **"Now you are well; so stop sinning, or something even worse may happen to you. The man had a finite understanding of healing but Jesus has an eternal understanding.** Jesus is saying stop the way you are living. Repent. Turn from your ways and follow me. This is way more important than earthly physical health. This is for eternity.

Jesus answers the the question: Do you want to be well? He says to stop sinning. To paraphrase: Turn from your sinful ways and turn to me.

But notice something. Jesus didn't lead with the man's sin. He didn't hit him over the the head with scripture. Jesus blessed him. He connected with him and it gave him an opportunity to speak truth into his life. He did it gently and respectfully.

Let's look at how John describes Jesus back in chapter 1:

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John 1:14 ESV

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

5. We need to live lives of filled with Grace and Truth.

Do you want to be well? Live well? Live a life filled with grace and truth.

When you have an encounter with Christ, he brings grace and truth. We want to give grace abundantly as Christ does on all who are broken (just like us). We also want to share the truth of Christ (with gentleness and respect). The best way to share the truth of Christ, is the life that has been shaped and transformed by Christ.

This is something I am learning to do. Let me stress learning. The good news is that we can learn how.

I remember early on in my faith, I would TELL people what I believed. I would speak at them. I would want it to be a discussion, but it wouldn't be. I would bring a smile and a bunch of truth. The grace, love, and empathy was lacking. The consequences are hurt people. We want to bring life and yet we just judge. Family, friends, whoever.

A couple of things happened:

1. I adopted 1 Peter 3:15 as one of my life verses.

Always be prepared to give the reason for the hope that you have and do this with gentleness and respect.

Two important points in that verse.

- a. For someone to ask you for the reason for your hope, they have to see some kind of change.
- b. with gentleness and respect

2. I went to a conference in Victoria and part of it was a study on the Holy Spirit and what the bible says his role (jobs) are.

This is a fascinating study to do and it showed me I was trying to be the Holy Spirit for me and for others. I needed to allow the Holy Spirit to do his job and I just need to follow as he leads. It is a lot easier to bring grace and truth when you are listening to the Spirit.

This is what we want to attempt to do in our ministries.

Growth Groups - This is where the rubber meets the road. How do we live out the word that we hear on Sunday morning in our everyday lives. True change, lasting heart change can happen when you have an environment where people can be themselves and share real struggles and receive encouragement, prayer and love as they give it over to Christ. Allow the truth of the word to hit a heart that is soft and prepared for Christ to work in.

You want to get in the game and have encounters with Christ and watch others as well, join a growth group, join freedom session, join an outreach group like Riverkids. We also need to practice this in our daily lives. We need to encourage one another in grace and truth.

After Jesus healed the paralytic, He said "So stop sinning". The only way that is possible is you have to walk with Jesus. Only he can change our heart. Only he has the power to transform. We have to partner with him.

The paralytic - does he follow Christ? Or doesn't he? We don't know for sure. We know Jesus physically healed him but it doesn't share if he gave his life to Christ. What this does show us is that it's not a one time event. It's a process, a journey, a walk with him.



Encounters with Jesus
Do you want to be well?
Week of May 15th

Objective of this study: To follow Jesus example of living lives filled with grace and truth.

[Remember, the main goal of each Growth Group is to allow God's Word to change your heart so that others would see Jesus in you and be likewise changed to be like him. He wants to change the world through us]

Worship (5 – 10 minutes)

1. Sing a song or two of praise and thanksgiving to God.
2. Spend five minutes in silence asking God to prepare your heart for how he wants to speak to you.
3. After the five minutes have someone interrupt the silence and read Psalm 145:1-9 meditatively to the group. Pause after each phrase letting God speak to you.

Welcome (5 minutes)

Describe a time when someone treated you with a lot of grace?

Word (20-30 minutes)

1. What stood out from the sermon?
2. Read John 5:1-15. Who hung out at the pool at Bethesda? Why is it not surprising that Jesus was there?
3. When Jesus asks the Paralytic: "Would you like to get well?", what is his response? Why?
4. Read John 5:8-9, John 1:1. What does Jesus have authority over?
5. Read John 5:6-8, 14. John 1:14. Describe Jesus approach of the paralytic? Describe Jesus approach to the Pharisees (legalists/religious)?

Work (30-40 minutes)

Answer these questions personally. Don't answer "We as Christians". Remember we want God's word to change us.

Sermon quote: **"We try and put God in a box. We try and boil down what God can and cannot do into a list of "things". Yet, he is God. We have a finite understanding of an infinite God."**

1. Share how you personally put God in a box. Do you seek rules over relationship at times? What can you do to correct this? What scriptures are helpful?

Sermon quote: **I remember early on in my faith, I would TELL people what I believed. I would speak at them. I would want it to be a discussion, but it wouldn't be. I would bring a smile and a bunch of truth. The grace, love, and empathy was lacking. The consequences are hurt people. We want to bring life and yet we just judge.**

2. Do you lean toward grace or truth in your relationships? What are some things that you can do, to bring balance here. Pray for one another according to your answers.