

# COMMENTARY ON JOHN

## LESSON 59

John 5:10 *“The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. <sup>11</sup> He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. <sup>12</sup> Then asked they him, What Man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? <sup>13</sup> And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed Himself away, a multitude being in that place. <sup>14</sup> 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.”*

### WHO SAID UNTO THEE?

#### INTRODUCTION

When the Lord works, even though *“His works are done in truth”* (Psa 33:4), *“His work is perfect”* (Deut 32:4), and *“His tender mercies are over all His works”* (Psa 145:9), there are some who cannot receive them. That is because, as foolish as it may seem, **what the Lord does sometimes contradicts standards of right and wrong that men have imagined.** In our text, a man that was known to have been unable to walk for thirty-eight years, was seen carrying the pallet on which he once laid, and walking he was about. The text will tell us of a healed man who was not hesitant to say why he was walking about carrying his bed. This whole incident confirms to us that the works of God are intended to attract some kind of attention, provoke inquiry, and also reveal the thoughts of many hearts. Because His works are intended to do this, they are never perceived as ordinary. They never blend in with the course of this present evil world. Honest and good hearts will praise God for the works of God, and hold high regard for those in whom the works are seen. Therefore we read of the early church that they were *“Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved”* (Acts 2:47). This also accounts for the rapid spreading of the truth, and vast numbers of souls being added to the church (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14). However, the works of God also awakened unreasonable opposition to the church (Acts 4:17-18; 5:40 8:1). Because it is done in truth, and testifies to the nature and will of God, whatever is actually done by the Lord cannot be opposed, criticized, or rejected with impunity. That work becomes an appointed means of discerning the Lord Himself more fully. It testifies of the Divine nature, and the response of men to that work reveals something of their nature. Also, **the works of God, strictly speaking, are not to be assessed, but believed.** Jesus said, *“believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.”* (John 10:38). Now. There is something to think about!

#### THE JEWS SAID UNTO HIM

John 5:10 *“The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. <sup>11</sup> He answered them, He that made me whole, the*

*same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk."*

Jesus has healed a helpless man at the pool of Bethesda – a man who never asked Jesus for mercy. We will find out that he did not even know who Jesus was. The man is doing what Jesus told him to do: *"Rise, take up thy bed, and walk"* (John 5:8). As with all of Jesus' works, this one is seen by men, offering them the opportunity to see the working of the Lord.

**THE JEWS SAID.** We must never forget that Jesus was born in, and ministered to a Jewish society. Once Jesus went to *"the borders of Tyre and Sidon."* That was in the northern part of the promised land, in the areas allotted to Asher. Jesus preferred that His presence there would not be known, *"but He could not be hid"* (Mk 7:24). It was there that He confronted the Syrophenician woman who plead with Him to heal her vexed daughter (Mk7:25-30; Matt 15:22-28). There is no clear evidence that Jesus ever ministered outside the borders of the promised land.

The point to be seen here is that although Jesus is *"the Savior of the world"* (John 4:42), His first appearance was to the Jews – a nation created by God and for God. All of the promises, including those of a Messiah, were given to Israel alone (Rom 9:4). John writes, *"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not"* (John 1:11). When it comes to the Gospel of Christ, it is *"unto the Jew first"* (Rom 1:16). Even the punishment of evil is to *"the Jew first"* (Rom 2:9). That is also true of the bestowment of *"glory, honor, and peace"* (Rom 2:10). When Paul and Barnabas were preaching in the synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia, they faced some resistance from the Jews. They said to them, *"It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles"* (Acts 13:46). Earlier Paul told them, *"Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent"* (Acts 13:26). Shortly after the day of Pentecost, Peter had said the same thing to Jews in Jerusalem: *"Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities"* (Acts 3:26).

**THE RELEVANCE OF THIS.** This confirms that the real Jesus is the One that was foretold by the Prophets to Israel. One cannot invent their own kind of Christ – *"another Jesus"* (2 Cor 11:4) – something that is being done in our day. This is the Savior that the apostles and inspired preachers declared in Scriptural records.

**IT IS THE SABBATH DAY.** The Jews said, *"It is the Sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed."* Actually, what the Law said about the Sabbath day was, *"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"* (Ex 20:10). Exodus 23:12 says, *"six days shalt thou do thy work."* There were activities that were excluded from this prohibition. The laborious work of the [priests on the Sabbath day were excluded (Matt 12:5). Efforts involved to get an ox that had to be pulled out of a pit were also excluded (Lk 14:5). Performing circumcision on the Sabbath was right (John 7:22-23). Unlawful work was productive work that had to do with sustaining life – like the Jews attempting to gather manna on the Sabbath day (Ex 16:26). Further, God would orchestrate their lives so there would be no need to do such work on the Sabbath day. This was also seen in the gathering of manna (Ex 16:29).

**IT IS NOT LAWFUL.** The Jews, particularly their teachers, had tied their own interpretation to the Law, enforcing it as though their view was the Divine perspective. The

Pharisees also taught that it was unlawful to pluck ears of standing wheat on the Sabbath, and eat them (Matt 12:2). They even watched the Lord, *"whether He would heal him on the Sabbath day; that they might accuse Him"* (Mark 3:2; Lk 6:7). Once a ruler of a local synagogue was angered when Jesus healed a bowed-over woman on the Sabbath day (Lk 13:14). Another time, they objected to Jesus healing of man of dropsy [retention of excessive water] on the Sabbath day (Lk 14:2-3). The point to see here is that religious tradition has a mesmerizing effect upon men. It is dangerous beyond description, and is one of the most prominent things with which we have to deal.

**HE ANSWERED THEM.** So far as the healed man was concerned, this justified him carrying his bed: *"He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk."* To him, no further authorization was required. The fact that Jesus said it, made it not only right, but incumbent. In other words, he saw himself as having no other legitimate choice.

Now, this is the acid test of a disciple of Christ: Will he do what the Master says? If the sea obeys Jesus, what reason can men adduce for not doing so? (Matt 8:27). If *"unclean spirits"* obey the Christ, what shall we say of men who do not (Mk 1:27)? The Holy Spirit, we are told, is given by God *"to them that obey Him"* (Acts 5:32). It is written that Jesus is *"the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him"* (Heb 5:9). This man saw no alternative to obeying the One who healed him.

### **WHAT MAN SAID ...**

*"<sup>12</sup> Then asked they him, What Man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? <sup>13</sup> And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed Himself away, a multitude being in that place."*

**WHAT MAN IS IT?** Other versions read, *"Who is this fellow,"* <sup>NIV</sup> and *"Who said such a thing as that?"* <sup>LIVING</sup> How cold hearted these men were. Here is a man who had been confined to his bed. He had been around for thirty-eight years, and doubtless was recognizable. Yet, no one asked him who healed him. Of course, that is one of the marks of sectarianism – **a loss of interest in Divine causes.** When Christianity is institutionalized, the institution upstages everything else. This was seen in the scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, and chief priests.

**HE DID NOT KNOW WHO IT WAS.** Other versions read, *"had no idea who He was,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"had no knowledge who it was,"* <sup>BEBE</sup> *"didn't know who Jesus was,"* <sup>GWN</sup> and *"did not know His identity."* <sup>MIT</sup>

This same kind of response was expressed by a certain blind man Jesus healed. That man was cast out of the Temple when He defended the One who had healed him. Later, Jesus found him and asked him, *"Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"* The man responded, *"Who is He Lord, that I mighty believe on Him?"* Jesus responded, *"Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee."* The healed blind man said, *"Lord, I believe. And he worshiped Him"* (John 9:35-38).

While there are varying degrees of this kind of ignorance, every maturing believer will acknowledge that their view of Christ has been greatly enlarged as they have spent time with Him. There is a sense in which His glory hides Him because of its brightness. However, every time the view of a believer is broadened, and their understanding is enhanced and matured, they behold and comprehend more of who Jesus is and what He does. None of this additional insight contradicts what they have seen of Him previously. It all blends gloriously, even though it is marvelous, and, in a sense, incomprehensible. It is

something like a great oceans of the world – magnificent for their size. The largest ocean in the world is the Pacific Ocean. It covers 59 million square miles, and is larger than the total land-mass of the world. Topographically, it comprises one third of the earth's surface – and all of that is just the top of the Pacific Ocean. Yet, at its deepest point it is seven miles in depth.

That is but a small picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. On the surface, and through doctrinal presentation, Jesus covers an unimaginable scope. There is no created area, person, or group of persons, over which he does not preside. And yet, when it comes to the depth that is experienced in Him, it is so staggering that no bottom has ever been in any degree detected. There is a sense in which we mortals often ask, *"Who is He, that we might believe on Him?"*

**JESUS HAD CONVEYED HIMSELF AWAY.** Other versions read, *"had withdrawn,"* NKJV *"slipped away,"* NASB *"had disappeared,"* NRSV *"having gone away,"* BBE *"went aside from the multitude,"* DOUAY *"gotten Himself away,"* TNT and *"did move away,"* YLT *"for Jesus had quietly gone away [had passed on unnoticed]."* AMPLIFIED

Jesus had left the area in which He had worked – as He often did (Matt 16:4; 21:17; Mk 8:13; John 4:3). No person could take the presence of Jesus for granted. It is precisely for this reason that those who detect Him must stay as close to Him as possible. More often than not, the casual disciple will look up, only to find that Jesus has left.

**A MULTITUDE BEING IN THAT PLACE.** The reason for Jesus leaving is given: *"a multitude being in that place."* Other versions read, *"because of the number of people who were in that place,"* BBE *"there being a crowd in the place,"* DARBY *"because a crowd was at that location,"* MIT and *"as the place was crowded."* NJB

Those who are attracted to crowds do well to take note of this. At least two times, when Jesus saw the multitudes, He went up into a mountain (Matt 4:25; 5:1). Another time, *"Jesus saw great multitudes about him, He gave commandment to depart unto the other side"* (Matt 8:18). Another time *"He sent the multitudes away"* (Matt 14:22-23). Another time when the multitudes gathered to Him, *"He withdrew Himself into the wilderness, and prayed"* (Luke 5:16). Another time when *"great multitudes"* were found with Him, *"He turned, and said unto them,"* declaring what was required of those desiring to be His disciples (Luke 14:25-33).

The point here is that Jesus is not like the great men of this world. He did not come to earth to gather multitudes around Himself. Also, He would not compromise with the multitudes in order to keep them. Twice He would be merciful to them when they were hungry because they were following Him (Mk 6:36-42; 8:3-8). In both instances, after the multitude was fed, He *"sent them away"* (Mk 6:45; 8:9).

**All of Jesus' substantive teaching was to His disciples, not the multitudes.** The explanations and expositions were delivered to those He chose. Therefore, it is written, *"But without a parable spake He not unto them: and when they were alone, He expounded all things to His disciples"* (Mark 4:34). It seems to me that Jesus still operates in this way.

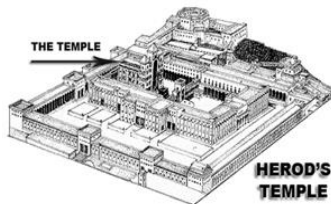
### **JESUS FOUND HIM IN THE TEMPLE**

*"<sup>14</sup> 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."*

**AFTERWARD.** Other versions read, *"Later,"* NIV *"After a time,"* BBE *"After this,"* CSB and *"after that."* TNT This is the language of Divine purpose and appointment. It is not

intended to reflect mere sequence, but what God had appointed. It also reflects a kind of logical order that characterizes the work of God. Here it is elaborating on the work that has been done. This is done because the work itself is not the point. Rather, it is what the work makes known that is to be duly noted. When working with men, the Lord does not merely resolve difficulties and meet human needs. There is more involved than that.

**JESUS FOUND HIM IN THE TEMPLE.** Other versions read, *"came across him in the Temple,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"found him in the temple complex,"* <sup>CSB</sup> *"in the temple area,"* <sup>NAB</sup> and *"in the temple courtyard."* <sup>LIVING</sup>



This was not the Temple proper, where the priests ministered – the place where the Holy Place was found, with the Table of Showbread, the Golden Altar of Incense, and the Golden Candlestick, and the Most Holy Place were found, with the Ark of the Covenant with the Mercy Seat. Only the priest could enter this area of the Temple. This particular Temple was built by Herod, the building of which required forty-six years (John 2:20). In this massive structure, with all manner of courts and open spaces, Jesus found this formerly bed-fast man. He had certainly come to the right place – the building Jesus had called *"My Father's house"* (John 2:16). Remember, this man did not know who healed him. Further, John does not say Jesus told him who He was, like He would do for a blind man later (John 9:36-37). I do not doubt that by some means, this man eventually knew who had healed him.

**BEHOLD THOU ART MADE WHOLE.** Other versions read, *"See,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"Lo,"* <sup>YLT</sup> *"Look,"* <sup>NAB</sup> *"Now you are well again."* <sup>NJB</sup> The man was to behold his condition, and think upon it. See if it was thorough, and consider how long he had laid helpless. There is a lot to be gained by considering what the Lord has done in us. Remember how the Lord said to the former Gadarene demoniac, *"Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee"* (Mark 5:19). Those who have been blessed by the Lord do well to tell it. They should not conclude that everyone will know what has happened to them.

**SIN NO MORE.** The words of Jesus to this man are arresting. Other versions read, *"do not sin anymore,"* <sup>NASB</sup> *"Stop sinning,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"do no more sin,"* <sup>BBE</sup> and *"Now stop sinning."* <sup>CJB</sup> If it was not Jesus who said this, some would imagine this could not possibly be done, and so should not be said. The text suggests that his infirmity might very well have been the result of some specific sin. These are the same words Jesus will say to the woman caught in the act of adultery. After forgiving her He said, *"go, and sin no more"* (John 8:11). If a person is sensitive enough, those who are baptized will hear these words when they rise to walk in the newness of life (Rom 6:4). When we confess our sins and they are forgiven as the Spirit promises (1 John 1:9), these words can be detected by the sensitive of heart: *"Stop sinning!"* Does that seem too challenging? At least twice those in Christ are told *"Sin not!"* (1 Cor 15:34; Eph 4:26). John said he wrote his first epistle *"that ye sin not"* (1 John 2:1). We are also admonished, *"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof"* (Rom 6:12). All of the Divine resources that are required to fulfill that admonition are available to us (Eph 1:3; 2 Pet 1:3).

**LEST A WORSE THING COME UPON THEE.** Other versions read, *"so that nothing worse may befall you,"*<sup>NASB</sup> and *"something worse may happen to you."*<sup>NIV</sup> Under the Law God said, *"And if ye will not be reformed by Me by these things, but will walk contrary unto Me; Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins"* (Lev 26:23-24). The church at Corinth were judged for their behavior at the Lord's Table (1 Cor 11:30). Jesus spoke of a person who was cleansed ending up in a worse state than he was in before (Matt 12:43-45). Peter wrote of the same condition – worse than before the person had been cleansed (2 Pet 2:20).

The number of professing Christians who return to their old ways confirm that this is not an easy lesson for some to learn. The church should be faithful to remind people of the dangers of falling again into sin. In our day, the professing church is not structured to deliver such warnings and admonitions. It simply fits into the modern agenda. Some are even of the opinion that the Lord would never allow such a condition to happen. If it appears that it has, they simply say the person was never converted in the first place. However that is simply thoughtless jabber. The man that Jesus addressed had really been healed. The woman He admonished had really been caught in the act of adultery. Jesus meant it when He said *"Sin no more!"*