

House Of Mercy

John 5:1-9

1 After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

3 In these lay a **great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered**, waiting for the moving of the water.

4 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.

5 And a certain man was there, which had an **infirmity thirty and eight years**.

6 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?**

7 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.

8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked:

I'm so glad for the love of God tonight. The love of God is not just a passive feeling, but it's a powerful force, the strongest force there is in this world. There is no force in this world that is stronger than the love of God - to take a man, to take a woman, to take a boy or girl, and to be able to transform that individual into the likeness of the Almighty God takes power.

It takes something beyond the human ability to psychoanalyze and use psychology to change your thinking. It takes the power of God to transform you. I'm so glad for the love of God, and the mercy of God, for without it we would not be here this evening.

I want to preach tonight on **THE HOUSE OF MERCY!**

As Jesus came into Jerusalem he saw this man that had been lying by the pool of Bethesda for 38 years. Jesus knew he had been there for 38 years, because he is God, and God knows everything. And as he saw him, and immediately he knew the man's story, and so it is with us here tonight God knows our story, he knows how long some of you have been struggling with your particular problem.

David said, "He knows my uprising. He knows my down sitting. He knows all there is to know about you and I. He knows your pain, your sorrow, your worries, and your reservations. I cannot think a thought in my mind that God does not know what I'm thinking. He knows the discouragement you may be feeling. He knows the help that you may need. He knows what may be facing you tomorrow.

And He said that He knew that this lame man had been there for 38 years. This man did not catch God unaware, or off guard, he wasn't worried of surprised about his condition.

The only thing God wanted to know, 'Wilt thou be made whole?'

The impotent man answered Him and said, 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.

And Jesus sayeth unto him, 'Rise, take up thy bed and walk.' And immediately the man was made whole and he took up his bed and walked.

Friend I think it would behoove each and every one of us to here the words of the Lord this evening, "Wilt thou be whole" do you want to be delivered or not?

Something happen to this man's spirit when the Lord spoke to him, "to rise and take up his bed"

Faith entered into his spirit as he heard the words of the Lord. And I hope by the time that I get though with this message faith will enter into your spirit.

After all the scripture says faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of the Lord.

The word "Bethesda" is a very interesting word because this word means "The House of Mercy." I want to tell you that's where He found me, in the House of Mercy. And I believe if the church ought to mean anything at all, it ought to always mean "House of Mercy"

Where would we be tonight if it had not been for the mercy of the Lord.

I believe if we stay long enough in the House Mercy, God will heal and set us free from every disease that comes to hinder the child of God.

I believe he still can take away the sickness, the lameness, the feebleness the addiction, the sorrow, the pain, the hurt, we all feel at times.

He can take away your weakness if you'll just stay long enough in the House of Mercy. He'll come to where you are and find you and pick you up, because just like this lame man God knew where he was.

That's why it's important to be in every service we don't know when he's coming by for you but this could be the night.

I believe that thing we been laying on and leaning on and using for as a crutch and carrying around is about to be delivered from us. Not for our glory, but for his. I believe you're going to have to raise your hand and say.

"It was the Lord in the "House of Mercy" that made me rise up and walk."

Notice the wording of the scripture; There is in Jerusalem, by the sheep market, a pool which is called in the Hebrew tongue "Bethesda", having five porches.

I want to give you just a little picture here of the circumstances surrounding this beautiful healing of this lame man.

The Bible specifically indicates that it was by a sheep market. History tells us that this place called Bethesda was not the place that the elite met to eat. The pool at Bethesda was not the place where people gathered for socializing.

You didn't take your children and go feed the ducks by the pool of Bethesda. You didn't take your picnic lunch and go by the pool of Bethesda, because it was the place where the sheep market was. And, of course, it was the watering trough of all the sheep that gathered together there to be sold.

It was on the outskirts of the city of Jerusalem. It was not a very pleasant place to be. There was no fountain springing up that you could sit and enjoy watching with the beauty all around.

There were sheep everywhere. That's where the sheep were dipped, in the water, to prepare them for selling. I don't know how many of you know very much about sheep, but you get a sheep wet, and you've got some smell on your hands.

You get a sheep wet, and you've got a stench in your nostrils. All those sheep together, day after day after day after day. This is where individuals came together to sell the sheep. This is where they purchased the sheep. You could hear the bleating of the sheep and the shepherds trying to herd their flocks and to make sure that they were separated from the other flocks, and the yelling and the hollering, and all the things that went on there at the sheep market.

I want you to get the picture here. This is not a pleasant place to be. It's an outcast area. It's an area where people did not go unless they absolutely had to, for business reasons.

It was not the place that you would imagine that Almighty God, in all of His glory and His splendor and majesty, would choose to go to, but he went anyways.

I don't know how many times David talked about the mercy of the Lord.

Psalm 136. It's called "The Mercy Chapter"

Ps 136

0 give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

2 O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.

3 O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.

4 To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.

5 To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever.

6 To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever.

7 To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever:

8 The sun to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever:

9 The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy endureth for ever.

10 To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for his mercy endureth for ever:

11 And brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy endureth for ever:

12 With a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm: for his mercy endureth for ever.

13 To him which divided the Red sea into parts: for his mercy endureth for ever:

14 And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy endureth for ever:

15 But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for his mercy endureth for ever.

16 To him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy endureth for ever.

17 To him which smote great kings: for his mercy endureth for ever:

18 And slew famous kings: for his mercy endureth for ever:

19 Sihon king of the Amorites: for his mercy endureth for ever:

20 And Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy endureth for ever:

21 And gave their land for an heritage: for his mercy endureth for ever:

22 Even an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy endureth for ever.

23 Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever:

24 And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy endureth for ever.

25 Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy endureth for ever.

26 O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

When David thought about his God, he did not think about a God of judgment and a God that was going to destroy, although God is a just God, and God does judge.

But he realized that when he came before the throne of God, and poured out his soul before God, that the mercy of God would be extended to him time after time forever.

Proverbs 28:13 declares "He that covereth his sin shall not prosper."

And if your covering some sins in your life, you're thinking nobody knows, I want to wipe out that thought from your mind right now, and let you know the almighty God knows your thoughts right now. He knows what you've been up to. He knows what your motives are. He knows what your spirit is. And He sees what you and I do in the secret places when no one else is around.

David said, "Where can I go to hide from Him? If I make my bed in hell, He is there. If I go to the highest mountain, He is there. If I flee across the ocean, He is there."

And that's the thing that saves me, is the realization that **wherever I am**, God is there. **Whatever I say**, God is there and hears every word.

He is the guest at **every meal**. He is the unseen guest at **every conversation**. He is the unseen guest in **every action** that you and I perform. And He knows exactly the way that we take.

"He that covereth his sin will not prosper". Friend I want you to know there's no reason to have to cover your sin, if you would just realize the God I'm preaching about tonight is a merciful God.

A God whose judgment can be laid aside when you repent of your sins, and go to a place called Calvary, and let His blood cover you.

It goes on to say he that covereth his sin shall not prosper, but whosoever will confess and forsake them shall have mercy.

I'm glad I fit in that place called "whosoever". Your name belongs in there.

I want you to know it is the Devil's job to get you to live in guilt; he will bring things to your mind that happened 20 years ago. He will tell you that you're not worthy to lift your hands and praise God. He'll tell you that you don't belong in this church. He'll tell you everybody's watching you and condemning you.

But my God is greater in his mercy than all the guilt the enemy can put upon my mind.

I'll say this "If I am guilty and I am wrong then I need to go to Calvary"

But if I've confessed my sins and forsaken my sins, then I can walk with my head tall. I can walk with my shoulders squared back, and I can say, "In the name of Jesus, His mercy has endured forever.

I am a recipient of the mercy of God. He found me by a pool called Bethesda. He found me broken, and forsaken, lonely and afraid, maimed. He found me helpless. He found me without hope. But He spoke to me, and He said,

"What would you have me to do unto you?" And I said, "God, I need your mercy."

When you recognize that you need the mercy of God to help you live a life that's overcoming, it does something to you on the inside.

Woe is unto the man, and woe is unto the woman, woe is unto the young person, which feels like the only recourse is to live for God under your own strength.

You'll find in this life you'll fail God a million times over. And with your failure comes condemnation. And with condemnation comes more guilt. And with guilt comes a feeling of giving up and forgetting.

You can mark it down, many folks that have turned their back on God and walked away from the house of mercy, it's not been because there wasn't sufficient **preachin**, it has not been because the **Word of God** has not been strong though, it hasn't been because they **haven't been loved**.

But it's when you try to live for God on your own strength and on your own power, it ends in failure.

If it would have been possible for you and I to live for God by our own strength, do you think God would of went to Calvary, and sacrifice His life's blood for you and I?

My God doesn't do things just by accident. **He does things on purpose**. The very fact that my God went to Calvary let's me know that I needed Calvary, That I needed his mercy.

Nobody can preach the mercy of God, and nobody can talk about the mercy of God like somebody who has needed the mercy of God.

There are folks every single day of our lives that are watching us; our lives ought to portray mercy. It ought to be a house of mercy. It ought to be your Bethesda. You may feel like you're in a sheep pool. You may feel like there's nothing around you except impotent folks. It seems like there's lameness, and weakness on every side.

But right in the middle of it, God said, "I'm going to build a house of mercy."

Can I say to you, I was the one that was lying there? I was the one that was crippled, I was the one that was weak, and nobody cared. Nobody understood, and nobody knew.

But all along there was a great God who had his eyes on a certain man. And whenever the bible declares a certain man, you can put your name in his place.

When it says a certain man, it shows us that we were on his mind. And we have value to him we mean something to him. Don't ever forget he created you and I, and his royal blood flows through our veins.

And God is not happy when His plan or His design is wasted.

But when an individual can cry out to God and say, "God have mercy on me, you'll be amazed to see the transformation power of the Almighty God.

God has always desired to be in fellowship with humanity. But the first time he had an opportunity to come to this world to show us what kind of mercy he had for us was in a little town called Bethlehem.

Almighty God looked down, and the Bible says He found himself a little virgin woman by the name of Mary.

Luke 1:28..And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

God's looking for a church in this world right now. He's looking for a people that He can call his Bride, who are not messing with the world, not fooling with the world, not trying to look like the world, and act like the world, and talk like the world.

But there understand that they have been chosen of the Lord. They found their lover in Jesus Christ. They found their lover in the Almighty God of heaven.

And He looked down at that little girl and said, "That's the utensil. That's the vessel, the conduit that I'm going to choose to bring my glory into this world." Through her I'm going to show my Mercy!

You talk about a monumental occasion, when the angel appeared before Mary and said, "Blessed art thou among women.

And I can say to you as an angel of the church for this hour, Blessed art thou among all the other churches. God has chosen us, to show his love through to this lost and dying world, to our families and our community.

God told Israel, "It's not because you are great, but God knows how to take a people that WERE OUT IN SIN AND SLAVERY TO THIS WORLD, WE WERE NOTHING AND HAD NO PLACE TO GO. BUT GOD TOOK US AND PUT US IN THE CHURCH AND IF ANYONE OUGHT TO KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT MERCY IT OUGHT TO BE US.

Not because were great and strong and mighty and wise. The Bible says in the book of Corinthians that God has not chosen the things, which are wise. He hasn't chosen the things of this world that are mighty. He hasn't chosen the things of this world that are strong. **But he's chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things that are strong.**

Listen a lot of times we say to the Lord "I'll go anywhere you want me to go, But if you want to follow Jesus Christ, you better roll up your pant legs a little bit and expect to go through some pools of Bethesda. You better get ready to go through some sheep pools. You better expect to get smelly. You better expect to get dirty. You better expect to roll up your sleeves and get down and dirty in somebody's life.

Some of us are afraid to get involved in people's lives because it does hurt. And love hurts. And the more you love, the more it hurts when you're rejected.

But who was more rejected than Jesus Christ.

The Bible says, "For the joy that was set before him, He endured the cross, despising the shame, and now is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

The House of Mercy is where He found me.

Can you imagine the anguish of a man laying there for thirty eight long years? I'm not talking about one man by a pool, I'm talking about possibly hundreds of folks laying around by that pool. Every one of them, when they saw the water starting to be troubled, every one of them pushing, fighting, struggling, cursing, I'm talking about a vile circumstance, trying to be the first into that water.

Dipping their feet in that water. Putting their hands in that water. Somehow, to be the first one to be able to be delivered.

Look at some of these rock concerts, or some of these shopping malls, or some of these streets on a Friday night. People are looking for something.

This lamb man lost all of his hope, many years ago. And now he was just laying in solitary confinement as it were, thinking, "There's no hope. I might as well forget it."

That's where he found me.

When I had given up hope, broken, alone, unsure, confused, and felt like there was no hope, that's where my God came on the scene for me.

That's where my God stepped his foot on the porch of the House of Mercy, where I had been laying for year after year. That's where He appeared. And He said unto me, "Wilt thou be made whole?"

Do you know God loves you too much to leave you in a broken condition?

Lam 3:22-23

It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.

