

would make a public profession, that is one way of taking up your bed and walking.

When you stand in the strength of Christ, you never need to think about any possibility of failing.

Jesus told him to walk. That is to begin some kind of activity. And that's the redeeming thing of the church.

There be activity, some of the critics are on the outside of the church, they do not worry, me, because they stay away.

But those people that we worry about are those whose names we have on the roll, very much like this man by the pool. They complain that nobody will help them. They complain that the preacher never comes to see them. Or they say, I go to church but nobody shakes my hand. Or the church is after my money. I don't like the music down there. Or they have too many hypocrites, etc. But I have noticed that when the complaining fellow begins to walk on his own, and he begins to support the church with his prayers, his presence, his gifts, his service, he finds great joy and strength and he is made whole. He is made whole only when he begins to do worthwhile things for Christ. The sickest people are usually those who have the least to do. And those who do the least for Jesus. Now Jesus found this man in the temple, he was giving thanks to God after his experience.

## "THE SIGNIFICANT TESTIMONY"

John 5

### INTRODUCTION:

No one can doubt the importance of a good testimony. And the (statement) of a person many times means the victory to some great battle, or some great trial in court, or the convincing of some individual, a nation of some important move.

When Martin Luther in 1521 was called before the diet, the imperial council at Worms in Germany, he was questioned at length in the presence of Emperor Charles V. He was questioned thoroughly concerning his interpretation of the Bible and his activities which were initiating the mighty reformation. All manner of threats were used to intimidate the threat of excommunication, even the threat of death. At last Martin Luther said, "do what you will, here I stand, God helping me I can do no other." Now here truly was a great testimony.

It is my purpose tonight to give you at least seven great testimonies found in the 5th chapter of John. First, the testimony of the one made whole. Verse 1-15. Second,

the testimony of his authority. Verse 16-32. Third, the testimony of John the Baptist. Verse 34. Fourth, the testimony of his works. Verse 36. Fifth, the testimony of the Father. Verse 37 and 38. Sixth, the testimony of the Old Testament or the scriptures. Verse 39. And seventh, the testimony of Moses. Verse 45.

### I. The Testimony of the One Made Whole.

V.5 This indeed is the most interesting story. It is about a man who was sick for 38 years. We ought to have great sympathy for people who are sick because that is a long time. When you first get sick, people show up, the friends show up to bring flowers and to cheer him up. Now if this man had died they would have grieved for him and attended his funeral. But perhaps he was forgotten by all his friends, there were no flowers, no food, no attention and Jesus came by.

V.6 He said to this man, do you want to get well. The other sick friends around the pool had somebody to help them when waters were troubled and they could get help. But here was a man who was sick and his sickness certainly was not of his mind but he was all crippled up. Jesus asked him "do you want to get well?" "Will you be made whole?"

He implied there was a possibility of cure. To have

asked the man if he wanted to get well when there was no hope for him would have been very cruel. It would have been like inviting somebody to a good dinner and not having anything to eat on the table. But even Christ could not heal this man against his will and there is no limit as to what God can do and will do for us if we really and when we really want him to do it. But first of all, we must want him to do it. We perhaps many times wasting our lives, when right here we have the conditions of wonderful things. And Jesus gave this man a command. Arise! That was a strange command. He was paralyzed, the one thing he could not do was rise. And Christ asked him to do the impossibility. And it is the most amazing thing that here this man was asked to do this. And even tonight we can ask and invite you to come to the Christ and be made whole. Not by our own power, but Christ and his presence. And as St. Paul said, I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me.

Take up your bed - that is do everything possible to eliminate your temptations now. When a person makes a new decision or new resolution, one of the most strengthening things is that he can tell somebody, give a testimony of it. If you will make this decision even tonight when we give the invitation, if you would come forward in this service, if you

V. 8 Jesus said rise, take up your bed. Here was a command. (Stir) himself up. He was conversing here with a sinner but if he had not attempted to help himself, he had not been cured. He had no one else to blame. And Christ did not even bid him to go into the waters. But he said, take up your bed. And this certainly was not a recovery by degrees but his body was strengthened, he had a great load now on his back. He was able to carry this load and he was to give a testimony of this that was done in the public, on the Sabbath Day. Christ was thus, giving a testimony against tradition of the elders because of the Sabbath and here was the truth as Joshua had his hosts to march around the Jericho on the Sabbath Day. God commanded this man through Jesus to take up his bed. Hereby to test the obedience by carrying the bed publicly, he exposed himself to all those who could see. And of course, had he not been willing to obey Jesus he would not have done this.

V. 9 In Verse 9 he (felt) the power of Christ healing him and immediately he was made whole. Nothing is too hard for Christ. What became of this poor man after he was cured. We are here told.

V. 10 That he passes along and he goes to the temple. In Verse 10, he carries his bed and the Jews say on the

There are two or three words that we might tie the testimony of this man together with. At the pool, on the street, and in the temple. V. 11 We see at the pool in Verse 1, there were times of feast and because it was an opportunity of doing good. This place here at the pool was so situated at Jerusalem by the sheep market. In Verse 2 through Verse 4. It was called a pool or pond, interpreted the house of mercy. There in it appeared at this place of mercy the sick people with disease and misery.

It had five porches around it and a roof and walk in which the sick lay.

V. 13 In Verse 3 we are told how it was frequented by these sick cripples, impotent folks, how many are the afflictions in the world today, a multitude of people. It may do us good to visit sometime in the hospitals and we may take occasion to see the calamities of others, thank God for the comforts.

There were three sorts of people there, the blind, the halt, the withered. And these are mentioned because of being least able to help themselves into the water, they lay longest waiting on the porches. And he took pains and patience with this cure. Oh, that men were wise today about

their needs.

V.4 In Verse 4 what virtue was had to cure people. It said an angel usually went down into the water and stirred it, and it was like we think in terms of preparation for some medicine. And the troubled waters was the signal and there was healing. The angel descended, stirred the water, and the operation was whosoever should step first into it would be made whole. Now the miraculous limitation of the virtue as to the person cured, he had first to step in and he had benefit. That he or they that stepped in immediately was cured. This teaches us to observe and to use our opportunities and to look that no seasons slip by. The angel stirred the water but it was left up to the individual to get in. Does not God put his scriptures and his power and salvation here for healing but it is our own fault if we do not take it.

Where are all the wonders that our fathers told us of. We may hence take occasion to acknowledge with thankfulness God's goodness. It was certainly a fountain opened up here.

V.5 In Verse 5 we discover the man who was healed. It was a weakness, the loss of the use of his limbs, he was unable to walk. He was a burden to everyone in this duration and it had been for 38 years. And our Lord was walking by here

on this Lord's day, on a Sabbath Day. And he was interested in these sick folks. And he says will you be made whole.

V.6 In Verse 6 the circumstances are briefly related. Jesus saw him there, and Christ came up into this place, and there was a great multitude, but he fixed his eyes upon this one. Perhaps he was the senior one of the house, perhaps he had been there longer, and he wanted to help this helpless man. Here was a man who had been disappointed from all the cures and how long his condition had been.

A strange question, will you be made whole? It expressed concern. What shall I do for you he was saying. To teach him the value of mercy, to get him to think about his spiritual need.

V.7 In Verse 7, the man renewed his complaint. I have no one to put me in. It is not for want of good will he said but I am waiting for a good friend to come by. He does not think of any other way of being cured, other than the waters. And he depends upon a friend to do this. And he complains that he does not have a man or a friend to show him this kindness. What a tragedy, the man who said, no man cares for my soul. Another step before him was then offered.

And I wonder if it was everyone for himself, and this man had been disappointed time and time again.

chapter. Why should it be a gospel of good news to us who live 1800 years since this man. This man has been dead and it was thousands of miles away. Why we might hear about that pool but we here in South Norfolk (Chesapeake) we have sick people but we could never get to that pool. We might be diseased but if we were told that we could be made alive by this way, we would say well the people of Jerusalem would get there first. But this would be news that everyone, every where might know that it is for them. It is just this news that comes to you tonight. It does not tell us that Jesus Christ had a special regard for just one man who was sick for 38 years and he cured him. But it gives us the glorious truth that he is able to heal the bodies and spirits of individuals as the good servant. He is able to lift men from their couches today. It is a lesson today that the gift of God can come. And we might be glad of the healing of this kind of a physician.

But I wonder if you would like to meet this one. For the testimony of this man tells us that this man knew everything about it. And I wonder if we would wish somebody to tell us that. The strange things that go on in our hearts ever since we have been born, oh, we would want to hide the dark desires we've had, the bad words we've spoken, the acts we have committed. Do we not even let our dearest friends

Sabbath Day. Now they who had power to punish him, they informed against him.

Verse 11 the man justified himself in what he did by a warrant that would bear him out. Now he did not have contempt for the Sabbath Day.

Verse 12 we find the Jews inquired about this. What man is that. And they were overlooked, that which might be a ground of their faith in Christ. They inquired not for curiosity, who is this man that is made whole, but they were looking for something against him that they might betray him as they resolved to look upon the Christ as a mere man and as a bad man. And here was this poor man giving an account of what had happened unto him.

Verse 13 Christ was unknown to him when he healed him. Probably he had never heard the name of Jesus before, Christ does many good turns for people who have never known him. But he comes to enlighten it and to strengthen and to quicken and comfort people though you have never met him before. Jesus has been here all the time. For the present, he kept himself unknown. And we discover that here was things that passed between him and our Lord Jesus Christ in the next interview.

Verse 14 where Christ found him in the temple, the place of public worship. In our attendance of public worship, we

may expect to be with Christ and to improve our own acquaintance with him. Christ went to the temple. We remember that Christ went to the temple there, and bore his testimony of this divine power. The man was cured and he went to the temple and Jesus found him there. He was there, we trust to return and give thanks to God for his recovery. When God has at any time restored us to health and strength, we need to attend to his solemn praises. But how many people today when they are sick and suffering, they talk about praising God. Yes, when I get well, you'll see me every Lord's Day -- I'll not miss. And that does not last long and it is not long before they are missing from the place of worship. Oh yes, they have good intentions but here was this man restored and the sooner the better, man comes and gives his testimony. He had carried his bed, he must go to the temple. He was made whole and he was found whole.

And Jesus gives him caution now that he has been made whole, sin no more. This implies that the disease that was in his body was there because of sin. Now we cannot tell exactly what kind of sin he had committed, Christ did not make mention of the sin, of this man. But he did tell him that he was in danger if he returned to his sin, then he would be worse than ever before. He had had 38 years of this awful, awful life. The misery, we were made whole from

warning us to sin no more. Having left sin, then he enlarges upon this. This man began his new life very hopeful in the temple. For this common man had this promise of God and he could not forget to praise God. And he gives him this warning danger, that in case he goes back to his former sinful course, then worse things will come unto him. Christ who knows all men's hearts knew that he was one of those men who had sinned. And for 38 years, it had been a bad thing in his life but he says a worse thing is going to come if you go back to your sin.

V. 15 Now this man in Verse 15, gave a simple testimony to the Jews concerning Christ. He told them he was Jesus and that he had made him whole. And this brought about enmity upon Christ Jesus.

And on the street of course these men met him, and they could not hardly recognize that he was whole. But in the temple, he had gone there to share his blessing and praise God. And of course, when Jesus said, sin no more -- he was talking about that (second death) that was going to come to him. To be no more a sinner, not to sin, is what Jesus was saying to this man. Now the people of Jerusalem believed that there was help in that pool and they believed it. There was good news which came to them. But you say, what is that to us today. Why in the world did John put this story in this

Beloved Son. This says that he communicates with him. He shows all things to him and that it is appointed unto him that even greater things will be done. The power of curing this man. The raising of the dead. And later on, he himself would rise. That these things were great and even the raising of sinners to life. He would institute new ordinances and these things would be marvels to them. And in particular he proves this equality.

V. 21 In Verse 21, he enlarges upon it and talks about this power. His authority to do it, as the Father raises up the dead. And he has a prerogative to do this and to give life. To God who gave the first breath to man is the one who can cause a man to become a living soul. And God has done this through his prophets and through the resurrection of the dead. And he quickens, whom he will, and he gives life. And he enlightens those and dispenses his power to their hands. He has ability to do this as explained in Verse 26, to give life and have life within himself, and it is certain that he can give life.

V. 29 In Verse 29, he tells by acting upon this authority and having life in himself that he can quicken those by a resurrection from death and sin, to a life of righteousness. The hour is coming and now is, it is the resurrection begun

know about these things. This would be the natural feelings of us all. But here was the righteous Christ who hated sin and evil. And he had opened up this man's life. But let us remember that he who is to heal, must be acquainted with those who are sick. Be assured too, there is such a one and you know there is, your conscience speaks of him. With what other people have said to you, or done to you, but with all that has ever been in you -- right or wrong, fair or foul, good or evil. I know it is a thought that (frightens us) when we first think about it and we want to shrink back in our hearts.

But who is he, it is the Lord Jesus Christ who said to this man, you have been sick 38 years. We know what he would do to us, each of us. He is certainly the healer. And those around that pool could testify to that. And all that we are most ashamed of in our lives now when we believe that he is such a one, that we understand that, then we will change. We want healing and we need it.

It was on a Sabbath Day, the testimony of the Sabbath.

## II. The Testimony of His Authority

We come now in Verse 17 as he concludes concerning the Sabbath Day. Our Lord healed this man on that day. The

rulers were angry. That God means it to be a day of healing and blessing to all, it is certainly a sure thing.

We come here on Sunday because it is so. We come here to church not to say a few prayers, or hear a few words from the pulpit but to learn who the great healer is, and how we are to be healed. We come that we may get strength to walk during the week and go through the business that we have before us, as God's children that we may be able to walk and to carry our burden as he would have us do. In Verse 17 he lays down the doctrine of what he did on the Sabbath Day and he answers this that he and his father worked together at all times in answer to like charges, even of David eating the show bread. The people watering their cattle on the Sabbath. The Lord is the Lord of that day. He pleads that he was the son of God and that he was following the calling of his Father. That he was a worker together with God. Now God rested only from such work as he had done in the six days and we are appointed to rest on the Sabbath Day. Yet we are not restrained from doing that which is for the glory of God. And he does all for the glory of God.

In Verse 18, the offense that was taken at his doctrine, they sought to kill him. Those that would not be enlightened by the word of Christ because they said he had broken the law

on the Sabbath. And that he was wrong and malice was now sitting on the bench of reason. But he had said also that God was his Father. Now they pretended to be jealous for God's honor. So he was as no one else. He worked with the Father by the same authority and the same power equal with God. Yet it was unjustly imputed to him as an offense. That he would say that he was equal to the Father. And Christ continues throughout the chapter to the end, to give this testimony, confirm his commission.

In Verse 19 he says in general that he is here as the mediator and verily, verily, I say unto you, I am he and he commands the most serious attention, that they are matters purely divine revelation. Things which Christ has told us and which we could not have otherwise known without him. The Son conforms to the Father in his obedience to the Father's will. Christ was so entirely devoted to the Father's will, that it was impossible for him to do anything contrary to the Father.

He obeyed the Father's counsel, he was doing the work of God. He was acquainted with the purposes of the Father and it is plain that he never broke or altered, and he was faithful in this way.

In Verse 20, the Father loveth the Son. This is my