

“Why Wait?”
John 5:1-9

Introduction:

1. **IE:** A Former Teacher Of Mine Was On A Trip Recently - And - Just Last Week - Was About To Head Home! His Flight Was At 6:05 In The Morning - So - He Woke Up At 2:30 - Got To The Airport At 4:00 - Picked Up Some Coffee At 5:00 - And Was Ready At The Gate Well Before His Departure Time - So - He Listened To Some Music Through His Headphones - As He Sipped On His Coffee & Waited!
 - At 5:25 - A Large Group Of People Walked By Him - And Boarded A Plane Near Him! But - His Flight Wasn't Until 6:05 - So - He Was OK!
 - As Time Passed - He Realized He Was Still All Alone! Until - At 6:00 - When He Got Up & Asked An Attendant About His Flight!
 - Only To Find Out That - The 5:25 Flight Was His Flight! And He Missed It Completely!
 - As I Read Through His Story On Face-Book The Other Day:
 - I Thought:
 - Did Anyone Else See Him:
 - Just Sitting There:
 - By Himself?
 - Did That Attendant:
 - Or Anyone Else Even Think To Ask Him:
 - “What Are You Waiting For?”
 - Since He Was Just Sitting There - Sipping His Coffee - As Everyone Else:
 - Left For Denver?
 - After All - His Plane Was Already There!
 - His Way Home!
 - And - Nobody Told Him!
2. Obviously:
 - No One **Did** Think To Ask Him:
 - “What Are You Waiting For?”
 - But - It Sure Would Have Been Nice:
 - If Someone Had!
 - Well - He Did Finally Get On Another Flight:
 - And Made It Home:
 - Though Much Later Than He Had Originally Planned!
 - But - As We Head Back In Our Bibles This Morning:
 - To John 5 - This Is One Of The Reasons:
 - Why - I Think - The Lord Had John:
 - Tell Us About The Next Incident:
 - We Come To:
 - In The Life Of Christ!
 - It Was So That - In Reading These Words:
 - **We** Might Hear The Lord Asking These Words:
 - “What Are **You** Waiting For?”
 - Let's Read Together:
 - John 5:1-9 - “After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. / Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. / In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. / 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. / And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. / 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? / 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. / Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. / And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath!”
3. Now - Back In 5:3:
 - John Tells Us That:

- At The Pool Of Bethesda:
 - Which Was A Pool Used For Ritual Cleansing:
 - Just North Of The Temple:
 - The Ruins Of Which You Can Even Visit Today!
- There Was A “Great Multitude” Of People:
 - Who Were - “Impotent” - People With:
 - Severe Sickness & Disability!
 - And - They Were All There:
 - “Waiting!”
 - They Were “Waiting” For:
 - Something To Happen!
 - They Were “Waiting” For:
 - Someone / Anyone To Help Them!
- But - It Was While They:
 - Were “Waiting” - And While:
 - One Particular Man:
 - Was “Waiting” - Jesus:
 - Came To That Pool!
 - And So:

* The First Thing We See In These Verses Is:

I. *The Circumstances For Christ!*

- The Circumstances That Showed:
 - These People’s Great Need:
 - For Christ - In 5:1-5!
 - Because - There Were Many There That Day Who Were:
- Frail - Without Christ’s Help!
 - According To 5:3:
 - Some Of Those Invalids:
 - Were Blind:
 - And Could Not See!
 - Some Of Those Impotent Folk:
 - Were Halt:
 - Which Means - They Were Lame & Could Not Walk Well:
 - For Some Reason!
 - And - Some Of Those Disabled People:
 - Were Withered:
 - Or Even Paralyzed:
 - So They Could Not Walk At All!
 - And - John Records That There Was:
 - A “Great Multitude” Of These People There!
- But - Why Were They There?
 - Well - For One Reason:
 - It Was Because:
 - They Were Excluded From The Temple Itself!
 - The Temple Of God At That Time:
 - Was Just Steps Away From This Pool, Which Was Just Outside Of:
 - The “Sheep Gate!”
 - This Was One Of The Main Pools:
 - That The Jews Could Use:
 - To Wash Themselves & Even Possibly Their Sheep:
 - To Prepare For Worship In The Temple!
 - But - These People Were Deemed Unworthy:
 - By The Religious Authorities:
 - To Even Enter The Courts Of The Temple!
- And - This Is One Of The Reasons Why:
 - That “Great Multitude Of Impotent Folk” Was At:
 - The Pool Of Bethesda That Day!

- It Was The Closest They Could Get To The Temple!
- **IE**: Like Jews Today At Western / Wailing Wall!
- But - There Was Another Reason:
 - Why They Were There! Even - The Main Reason:
 - It Was Because - According To 3:b-4 - They Were - “Waiting for the moving of the water. / 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!”
- Now - In Many Recent Translations:
 - You Will Not Find The Words I Just Read - 3b-4:
 - In The Text Itself - You Might Have To Look In The Margin Or A Footnote!
 - But - They Provide A Good Explanation For What We Will Come To Later - In 4:7!
 - And - It Shows The Sad State Of Religion:
 - For Many Of The People Of Israel:
 - At That Time!
- Those Sick People:
 - Believed That - Whenever There Was:
 - Some Kind Of Significant Movement In The Water:
 - It Was Because An Angel Did It:
 - And Would Heal The First Person To Jump In!
- Now - Whether These Verses:
 - Are A Spurious Addition To The Text - Or:
 - They Are Just A Superstition - Or:
 - Even If It Was A Real Supernatural Occurrence!
 - This Is What Those People Believed!
 - And That’s Why They Were There!
 - **IE**: People Have All Kinds Of Superstitions & Will Go Anywhere & Do Anything - At Great Lengths - For Just A Chance At Blessing Or Healing! Martin Luther - Scala Sancta - 28 Holy Steps - Rome - 1510 - “Redeem A Soul From Purgatory” - At The Top - “Who Knows?”
 - They Were Frail - And Desperate:
 - And They Believed Things Would Stay This Way:
 - Until & Unless - God Did Something:
 - For Them!
 - And **This**:
 - Is What They Were Waiting For!
 - But Then - In 5:5 - John Turns Our Attention To:
 - A Single Man - Who Had:
 - The Same Struggle:
 - As The Others There! And:
 - The Same Superstition!
 - However - He Was Even More:
- Forlorn - Without Christ’s Help!
 - “And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years!”
 - This Man Was Probably:
 - In The Worst Condition:
 - Than Anyone Else There!
 - He May Have Been A Paralyzed Man:
 - Who Had Been This Way:
 - For 38 Years!
 - And - He Wanted To Be At That Pool:
 - As Often As He Could:
 - For Just A Chance:
 - To Be Healed!
 - **IE**: Like The “Chance” At Winning The Lottery!
 - And So - For 38 Years:
 - Not Only Did He Live:

- In The Prison:
 - Of His Own Body!
- He Also Lived:
 - In The Prison:
 - Of His Own Belief & Superstition!
- And - That Is Why **He**:
 - Was Waiting There!
 - But - We Can Also See That He Was:
- Frustrated - Without Christ's Help!
 - When Jesus Came To Him:
 - And Asked Him - In 5:6 - "Wilt Thou Be Made Whole?"
 - The Man Didn't Give Jesus:
 - A Straight Answer!
 - Instead - In 5:7:
 - "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!"
 - How Frustrated & Exhausted This Man Must Have Been!
 - Physically & Mentally & Emotionally!
- And Yet - He Was Still There - Waiting!
 - He Still Had Some Hope:
 - In Whatever Power - If Any:
 - Was There In That Pool!
 - But - On This Day:
 - **Jesus** Came To **Him**:
 - To Meet His Greatest Need!
 - Now - The Man Did Not Yet Know:
 - Who Jesus Was!
 - But We Do! And - We Have!
 - For A Long Time!
 - And Yet - How Many Times:
 - Do You Go Through Your Life:
 - In The Same Kind Of Condition:
 - Spiritually - As Those People Were In:
 - Physically?
 - If You Feel:
 - Spiritually Frail Or Forlorn Or Frustrated:
 - What Are You Waiting For?
 - It's Exhausting:
 - To Go Through Life:
 - On Your Own!
 - Draw Nigh To The Lord!
 - After All - He Has Already:
 - Drawn Nigh Unto You!
 - And - This Is What Took Place:
 - In John 5 As Well!
 - Not Only Do We See The People's:
 - Great Circumstances & Need For Christ! We Also See:

2. ***The Compassion Of Christ!***

- In 5:6 - "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?"
 - Just Like When:
 - Jesus Met With:
 - The Woman At The Well:
 - In Samaria! And:
 - Just Like When:
 - Jesus Met With:
 - The Nobleman In Galilee:

- Whose Son Was Sick Unto Death!
- When Jesus Meets With:
 - This “Impotent Man” - It Was All:
 - According To God’s Plan & Purpose!
 - No Interruption - But:
 - A Divine Appointment!
- Because - In Jerusalem At This Time:
 - There Were **Two** Large Pools:
 - Used For Ceremonial Washing:
 - Before A Jew Would Go Into The Temple!
 - South Of The Temple:
 - Was The Pool Of Siloam!
 - North Of The Temple:
 - Was This Pool - Pool Of Bethesda:
 - Where A “Great Multitude Of Impotent Folk” Would “Lay!”
- Now - If You Were On Your Way:
 - To Worship At The Temple:
 - Which Pool Would You Chose To Go To?
 - Most Jews Chose:
 - The Pool Of Siloam!
 - After All - The Sick Probably:
 - Were Begging For Alms:
 - At The Same Time As:
 - They Were Waiting For The “Moving Of The Water!”
- But - Where Did Jesus Go?
 - This Time - The Pool Of Bethesda!
 - It Was The Right Place:
 - For Him To Meet The Right Person:
 - In Order To Help Him With His Problem!
- And - That’s Why **Jesus** Was There!
 - He Wasn’t There:
 - **To Wait!** He Was There:
 - **To Work!** And He Wasted No Time To Do So!
 - So - In Compassion - He:
- Saw His Need!
 - “Jesus Saw Him Lie!”
 - As The Sick Folk:
 - Were Looking At The Water In The Pool:
 - Jesus Looked:
 - At Them!
 - And - He Was “Moved With Compassion”:
 - Toward Them - And:
 - Toward This Man Especially!
 - Jesus Saw **Him!**
 - Is This How:
 - You & I See Others?
 - The Way Jesus Did?
 - Its So Easy For Us:
 - To **Look Past** People:
 - Like This Man!
 - But - Jesus Would Have Us:
 - **Look For** Them!
 - Even As He Did!
 - But - Jesus Did Even More!
 - In Compassion - He:
- Sensed His Need!
 - In 5:6 - John Also Tells Us That:
 - Jesus “**Knew** That He had Been Now A Long Time In That Case!”

- Of Course - Jesus Could Have:
 - Inquired About This Man:
 - And Learned About:
 - His Need!
- But - I Think Something More:
 - Is Going On Here!
- Just Like When Jesus Knew:
 - All About Nathanael - In 1:48
 - And Told Him - "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee!"
- Just Like When Jesus Knew:
 - All About The Samaritan Woman - In 4:29!
 - So Much So That She Told Everyone - "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"
- In The Same Way:
 - Jesus Did Not Need Anyone:
 - To Tell Him About This Man!
 - Because - As The Son Of God:
 - He Was Informed By His Own Omniscience!
- He Knew This Man:
 - Inside And Out!
 - And - In Compassion:
 - He Cared! And Then:
 - In Compassion - Jesus:
- Spoke To His Need!
 - Again - In 5:6 - Jesus Asked Him:
 - "Wilt Thou Be Made Whole?"
 - "Do You Want To Be Restored?"
- Of Course - The Man:
 - Would Only Think In Terms Of:
 - Physical Healing!
 - After All - He Thought That:
 - If The Physical Was Fine:
 - Then Everything Else Would Be Too!
 - If He Could Just Walk Again:
 - He Could Clean *Himself* Up:
 - In The Pool!
 - He Could Walk *Himself* Up:
 - To The Temple! And:
 - He Could Once Again:
 - Be Accepted In The Society Of Israel & Even By God Himself!
 - Just Get The Physical Well:
 - And Everything Else:
 - Will Line Up In Place!
- But - I Believe - When Jesus Asked This Question:
 - He Was Digging Deeper!
 - Even Deeper Than His Physical Needs!
 - "Wilt Thou Be Made Whole?"
 - In Spirit & Soul & Body!
 - For Jesus - True Healing & Restoration:
 - Begins In The Heart!
- But - Instead Of Saying To Jesus:
 - Yes! I Want To Be Made Whole!
 - The Impotent Man Explained To Jesus:
 - Why He *Couldn't* Be Made Whole!
 - But - What Was He Waiting For?
 - Jesus Was Already There!
 - The Place Noone Else Wanted To Be!

- And In Great Compassion:
 - He Saw His Need!
 - He Sensed His Need! And:
 - He Spoke To His Need!
 - Even To His True Need!
 - His Spiritual Need!
- And Yet - What Are You Still Waiting For?
 - If You Are Still Lost:
 - Jesus Came To Find You!
 - This Is Why He Came & Lived & Died & Rose Again!
 - Won't You Respond To His Compassion & Believe In Him?
 - What Are You Waiting For?
 - If You Are Feeling Alone & Forlorn:
 - Jesus Came To Offer His Fellowship To You!
 - This Is Why He Did Not Leave Us Without The Witness Of:
 - His Spirit & His Word! Won't You Spend Time With Christ & Have Fellowship With Him?
 - What Are You Waiting For?
 - If You Are Struggling With Sin:
 - Jesus Came To Sanctify & Cleanse You:
 - In A Way No Water Ever Could!
 - So, Repent From & Confess Your Sin & Receive His Forgiveness!
 - And Through His Grace & Help:
 - Go And Sin No More!
 - What Are You Waiting For?
 - If You Are Experiencing Weakness:
 - Even In Your Service For Him!
 - And Are Becoming "Weary In Well Doing!"
 - Jesus Still Provides His Strength To You! Won't You Rely Upon His Might & Power & Strength?
 - What Are You Waiting For?
 - Jesus Is Still Moved With Compassion:
 - Toward People Like Us!
 - And He Sees Your Need & Has Already Spoke To Your Need!
 - Now - What Are You Waiting For?
 - Because - Just Look Again At What Jesus Can Do! And At:

3. ***The Change By Christ:***

- Upon That Man - That We Find Next In:
 - 5:8-9a - "Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. / And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked!"
 - Through The Same Powerful Word:
 - That Jesus Used To Heal:
 - The Nobleman's Son:
 - He Causes That Man's Legs:
- To Wake!
 - **IE:** Ever Had Your Arms Or Legs Fall Asleep - To The Point Where You Can't Even Feel Them Or Use Them? Takes A Little While - To Get The Blood Circulating Again!
 - That's Not What Happened With This Man!
 - Jesus Said - "Rise!"
 - And - Through The Power Of His Word Alone:
 - "Immediately The Man Was Made Whole!"
 - As One Writer Put It:
 - His Healing Was:
 - "Neither Gradual Or Partial!" Instead:
 - It Was Immediate & Complete!
 - And - "At The Word Of Jesus, New Strength And Vigor Surged Through This Man's Whole Body!" (William Hendrickson)

- What A Sight This Must Have Been!
- And - What A Sign This Was!
- To Him & To Us!
- A Sign - So That:
 - “You Might Believe That Jesus Is The Christ, The Son Of God; And That Believing You Might Have Life Through His Name!” (20:31)
- Only Jesus Christ:
 - Can Make This Kind Of Change:
 - In Your Life! In Anyone’s Life!
 - He Also Caused That Man:
- To Work!
 - Something He Hadn’t Been Able To Do:
 - For Years!
 - He Told Him: “Take Up Thy Bed!” (5:8)
 - And - What Did He Do?
 - He “Took Up His Bed!” (5:9)
 - He Obeyed The Word Of Christ!
 - Now - We Are Not Told That This Man Had Any Kind Of Faith!
 - But - The Evidence Of A Small Seed Of Faith Is Seen:
 - In This Simple Act Of Obedience!
 - But Then - Jesus Also Caused The Man:
- To Walk!
 - In 5:8 - Jesus Told Him - “Walk!”
 - And In 5:9 - The Man “Walked!”
 - And He Walked Away:
 - From The Place Where He Had Lain For Many, Many Years:
 - Just Waiting For This Very Thing To Happen To Him!
 - But - Where Did He Go?
 - Well - In 5:14 - We Are Told That:
 - After His Healing - “Jesus Findeth Him In The Temple!”
 - Which Shows Us That Jesus Changed Him:
- To Worship!
 - To Bring Him Back Into:
 - The Place Of Worship & Fellowship:
 - Which He Had Probably Long-Since:
 - Given Up Any Hope:
 - Of Returning To!
- But - Because Christ:
 - Met Him & Changed Him:
 - He Could Now:
 - Do All Of The Things:
 - He Only Dreamed Of Doing:
 - For 38 Years!
 - Because Jesus Met Him & Changed Him:
 - He Could Now:
 - Walk & Work & Worship:
 - On His Own Two Feet!

Conclusion:

1. And - This Is Still:
 - What Jesus Can Do:
 - For You - When You Struggle:
 - In Your Own:
 - Relationship With The Lord!
 - If You Need The Lord:
 - To Wake You Up:
 - From Spiritual Slumber & Sluggishness:
 - Or Even Sin - Then - What Are You Waiting For?

- Jesus Can Bring This Kind Of Change:
 - Into Your Life!
 - If You Need Help:
 - In Your Work For & Walk With:
 - The Lord - Then:
 - What Are You Waiting For?
 - Jesus Can Bring This Kind Change:
 - Into Your Life As Well!
 - If You Struggle:
 - In Your Worship Of The Lord!
 - If You've "Left Your First Love!"
 - Then - What Are You Waiting For?
 - This Is Still:
 - The Kind Of Change & Transformation:
 - Jesus Can Bring Into Your Heart!
2. And So - When You Hear The Lord Ask You:
- Like He Asked:
 - The Impotent Man - In 5:6:
 - "Wilt Thou Be Made Whole?"
 - Don't Delay!
 - Cry Out To The Lord - Yes!
 - Change Me! Transform Me!
 - From The Inside Out!
 - And - Stop Waiting! Don't Wait:
 - Any Longer!

* What Are You Still Waiting For?

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