



THE SIGN OF HIS AUTHORITY

BIG IDEA: Jesus works in a way that goes beyond our expectations.

DATE: Sunday, January 25 and Wednesday, January 28, 2026

SCRIPTURE: John 5:1-11; 17-20

OPENING QUESTION

What gimmick, infomercial or sales pitch did you buy into but later regretted?

There is something about that late night infomercial that draws you in and gets you to believe whatever they are selling. In Jesus' day the gimmick was found in a pool of water believed to have special healing powers. In today's passage we will read about a man who believed in this and yet, when he met Jesus, his life was truly changed forever. This man's healing became one of the signs used to demonstrate the nature of Jesus's relationship with God the Father.

SETTING THE STAGE

Jesus's first two miracles recorded by John were somewhat private in nature. The servants and the disciples knew that He transformed the water into wine, and the servants and the nobleman's family knew that He had healed the sick son. The miracles recorded in John 5 was not only public; but it was performed on the Sabbath Day and incited the opposition of the religious leaders. We see here the beginning of "official persecution" against the Savior. (*Warren Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary*).

SCRIPTURE READING

John 5:1-11; 17-20 (CSB)

After this, a Jewish festival took place, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ² By the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem there is a pool, called Bethesda in Aramaic, which has five colonnades. ³ Within these lay a large number of the disabled—blind, lame, and paralyzed. ⁵ One man was there who had been disabled for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and realized he had already been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to get well?" ⁷ "Sir," the disabled man answered, "I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I'm coming, someone goes down ahead of me."

⁸ "Get up," Jesus told him, "pick up your mat and walk." ⁹ Instantly the man got well, picked up his mat, and started to walk. Now that day was the Sabbath, ¹⁰ and so the Jews said to the man who

had been healed, "This is the Sabbath. The law prohibits you from picking up your mat." ¹¹ He replied, "The man who made me well told me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"

¹⁷ Jesus responded to them, "My Father is still working, and I am working also." ¹⁸ This is why the Jews began trying all the more to kill him: Not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal to God. ¹⁹ Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, the Son is not able to do anything on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, the Son likewise does these things. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing, and he will show him greater works than these so that you will be amazed.

DISCUSSION

READ JOHN 5:1-7

Why were people drawn to this particular pool for healing?

What is a modern day "pool"? Where do desperate people go today hoping for a miracle to happen?

READ: JOHN 5:8-11

Why do we often respond to human authority over Christ's authority?

When has Jesus met your needs in a surprising way?

READ: JOHN 5:17-20

Great Expectations. We all have expectations - from the dinner we are served at a restaurant to a family vacation to how our life will pan out. To engage in this lesson, let's do some reflection. The man Jesus encountered had been disabled for 38 years. Subtract that number from your own age. If you are 40 or under, subtract 18 years rather than 38. Then turn to your neighbor and answer these questions.

- What were your biggest hopes during this period of your life?
- What were your biggest challenges?
- What do you hope God does with the rest of your life?

What does Jesus's life show us about the character of God?

In what ways do people reject Christ's authority today?

RESPONSE

What is holding *you* back? For this man it was a physical disability. Maybe yours is doubt, fear, guilt, etc. What is your "Pool of Bethesda"? What false place have you looked for help? And finally, what's your mat? What does Jesus want you to take with you from this experience? Remember, because of His authority, Jesus works beyond our expectations!

READING PLAN

WEEK 4: 1/25-Exodus 1; 1/26-Exodus 11; 1/27-Exodus 12; 1/28-Exodus 13; 1/29-Exodus 14; 1/30-Luke 22; 1/31-1 Peter 1