

# THE FIRST 15

Friday, April 12, 2024

Today is Friday, April 12 and we are studying the Gospel of John chapter five.

## OPENING PRAYER

*Holy and loving God, as a new day dawns I praise your holy name. Thank you for your constant presence in my life. I lift up my hands to rejoice in your love, care and companionship. Please provide your wisdom and guidance for today's comings and goings. As I read from your Holy Word and reflect on John's Gospel, speak to my heart through the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE

***Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?" "Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me." Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. John 5:1-9***

## REFLECTION

Jesus is known as the Great Questioner. One of Jesus' favorite modes of communication was to ask a question. In fact, Jesus asked many more questions than he provided answers. To be precise, in the Gospels, Jesus asked 307 questions. He was asked 183 questions of which he only answered three. Our Lord masterfully used questions to engage people and teach vital spiritual truths.

In John 5, Jesus was in Jerusalem at one of the festivals. There was a pool called Bethesda that contained bubbling waters, springs that from ancient times were attributed to the healing of ailments. Bethesda was where the disabled would come and lie in numbers, hoping to get into the healing waters. Jesus encountered an invalid man who had been lying there for 38 years. Jesus asked the man, "Do you want to get well?" That may sound like a silly question to ask someone who has been unable to walk for 38 years. Jesus was asking for more than information. His question invited the man into a conversation and a relationship. Healing of all kinds begins in a relationship with Jesus.

Where is the place of my healing? Some seek healing from physical ailments, emotional problems, mental bondage, relational issues or financial setbacks. Some seek to be free from that which binds and paralyzes in life - anxiety, fear, grief, sorrow, regret, addiction, or chronic pain. People get stuck in life. We can find ourselves paralyzed by thoughts, feelings or

circumstances. We get stuck. Unfortunately we can get stuck for a very long time- even 38 years worth of “stuck.”

Whatever wholeness I lack in my current existence, I might hear Jesus ask me a question. “Do you want to get well?” Jesus’ question might be rephrased, “Are you willing to work with me here?” Jesus wants to heal people. Jesus wants to heal me. Jesus came to bring me life - salvation and wholeness. Healing of all kinds begins in a relationship with him. With Christ, I am able to do all things - heal, mend, overcome, strengthen, improve, be set free, and be made whole.

**Ask:** What question is Jesus asking me this morning? What will be my answer?

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Jesus, You know me better than I know myself. You see me clearly and understand the true condition of my body, mind and soul. You know the places in my life that are broken and see the times I lie immobilized while the cure is just within my reach. Sometimes I feel like there is no one who understands me and no one who is able to help. Peer into the depths of my soul and ask me a question. Ask me the question that will cut to the core of my being. Ask me the question that will draw me closer to your side, deepen my relationship with you and engage me in your love. Amen.*