

The Pool of Bethesda

John 5

by Don Falkos

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Jesus was in Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. He went to the Pool of Bethesda. There were a number of disabled people waiting by the pool. According to tradition, an angel would occasionally disturb the water. They believed the first person to enter the pool would be healed. One man had been there for thirty-eight years. Jesus asked him, "Do you want to get well?"

The man replied, "I don't have anyone to help me into the pool, someone else always gets in ahead of me."

Then Jesus said, "Get up, pick up your mat, and walk." The man was instantly healed. He picked up his mat and walked.

Some religious leaders stopped the man and said, "Today is the Sabbath. It's against the Law for you to carry that mat."

He replied, "The man who healed me told me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.' "

The religious leaders chastised Jesus for breaking the Sabbath, but he said, "My Father continues to work, even on the Sabbath; so I continue to work, even on the Sabbath."

They were very upset. "This man not only breaks the Sabbath but makes himself equal with God by saying God is his Father."

Jesus said, "I can't do anything by myself; I can only do what I see my Father doing. Whoever hears my message and believes in the One who sent me has eternal life. You think that by studying the scriptures you will have eternal life. The scriptures are talking about me, and here I am; yet you refuse to come to me to receive the eternal life you seek. If only you believed the scriptures, but you don't, so how can you believe me?"