

Do You Want This Life

by G.W. North

The sermon challenges listeners to embrace the life of Jesus Christ over the pursuit of worldly success and recognition.

Duration: 1:25:01

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 5:19, John 5:30

Topics: "Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having a Bible and encourages the congregation to share their Bibles with others. He then mentions that he will be preaching from the Gospel according to John, specifically chapter five. The preacher expresses his initial intention to continue along the same theme as previous sermons but feels led by God to focus on this particular passage. He highlights the miracle performed by Jesus at the pool and explains that Jesus often used miracles as a basis for his teachings.

Transcript

I want to share with you this morning from the Gospel according to John, and do so because the Lord has brought it to my heart to do so. Although I wasn't going to continue, I wasn't going to do this, I was going to continue along the line in which we've been meditating during these last three evenings together, and in which God has blessed us so much. At least he has me, and I trust he has you as well.

I want to talk to you rather now about the life of the Lord. I think it sort of began to conjure in me, conjure is the word to use in this connection, when in prayer and waiting upon God, something like this was said, it isn't the things we're after Lord really, it's after thee, it's thy life. And I'd like to ask you a question, do you fundamentally, really, do you even believe it yourself? And if you told anybody else, would they faintly believe that you were being true? Do you really want to live the life of Jesus Christ? Whose life is it you really want to live? Most people fix their mind on some fantastic figure who can earn twenty-five thousand pounds a week or something, and have a yacht in the Mediterranean, and live the high life, boss people about, have power, and die as penniless as he was born.

They don't think so, they think they're dying worth a million, you die worth not a one p when you die. You were worth more when you were born and you had nothing then, but when you die, you've got nothing. Am I right or wrong? So easily do men deceive themselves, you know, not long ago, I was staying in someone's home, and as usual, because I'm this sort of a fellow, when we go to a place, my wife says, oh

there's a bookshop there dear, and she sort of leaves me looking in the bookshop, and she goes off and buys apples or something, or thinks I need a new shirt, so I sort of go poking about, see if I can find some gem in the second-hand department, and so if I come to your home, you'll be sure I'll look over your bookshelves, and into your library if you have one.

And I was staying actually in this home, and I saw a very lovely leather-bound copy of a book, and it was red, and it attracted me, and had some nice gold lettering on it, and when I looked closer, the name Moran was on it, M-O-R-A-N. Now you may know that this man was a very, very famous medical man, and he was the medical man that looked after the great Sir Winston Churchill, if he was greater than Moran. And he'd written, as a personal friend and medical advisor, a man who knew Churchill well, and he wrote of the great man.

I glanced through it, and it was a tremendous volume, about, I should say, quite three times thicker than this Bible I have, closely written, and very nicely done. How much it would have cost to buy, I haven't the faintest notion. I dipped, because I was only staying a day or two, and you'd probably need, well, the rate I can read, because of pressure, a month or something like that, if I was going to really seriously read it.

And he started, and he went through the life of the great man. Nobody doubts he was a great man. Probably on the earth, in his day, he was the greatest man, the worst.

Now, what do you think of him politically? I'm talking about the men now. I'm not talking about that. And so I just dipped here, and dipped there, and dipped there, and came to the end of the book.

We always like to see how it ends, don't we? And just at a certain point in the book, he closed down talking about the great man. And he said something like this, that because of the respect he had for him, he wouldn't talk about the closing years of his life. He became more or less a fool.

You didn't know that, did you? You read the right book, you will, it's there. I didn't invent it. I was shocked.

This man who had held the lives of probably everybody in the world in his hands, you might say, at one period, died. You couldn't take any notice of what he was saying. It wasn't to be relied on.

You didn't know that, did you? You couldn't get it in the library if you wanted to check it out. Perhaps it would be better if you don't. It's best to hold lovely memories of him.

There he was, he would have been probably the most envied and powerful and I don't know what man in the whole wide world. And he died. Well, is that the kind of life you're after? So that even your best friends wouldn't want to talk about it? The people who knew you most in kindness drew down the veil.

Do you? Jesus Christ comes to offer you his life. You and I must never get it into our heads that Jesus Christ came and lived a very short and brilliant and wonderful life and just to sort of show himself in the world and advise us of some few marvellous things and return home and set a marvellous example of how a good man should die. You and I have to understand that Jesus Christ came into the world and departed out of it for the express reason of sending his spirit into it that he may enter into you and live in you.

And so far as Calvary is concerned and the day he died there, it was to purchase the right to do so. And to redeem your life from destruction and especially from yourself for you will be your own destroyer and you then must see that this is the great life that Jesus Christ is offering us. That's why he had to rise from the dead obviously.

He couldn't give us his life unless he was alive. Everybody else that's alive can't give us their life. They may as lean on it for a little while and they join their lives to us for a little while in some sort of alliance, marriage or business association or military duties or you know, you don't need me to tell you that.

But Jesus Christ rose from the dead to enter us and live his life in us. Now that's what it's all about. Unless you've got that, you've missed the whole point.

He never lived it to live it there as a bright star in the hellish darkness of the night that we may seek to hitch our wagon to it, long for it, move toward it, pray around it, make up stanzas of poetry about it, sing them and call them hymns. That is not why he came. He came that he may receive you by virtue of the price he paid for you on the cross and remember he's God.

He's not a Churchill, not a mere man. He's not a Montgomery. He's not one of these people.

He's God. He's come down to buy you utterly and because he's God he's not expecting to enter into any compromise agreement with you. He's God and you're his and you will have to account in the end why you did not respond to him.

You will have to give an account to him for it. He will accept no excuses. You may have been born black or white with a wonderful brain or with hardly any.

Doesn't make any difference. This is a love relationship. It's not merely an intellectual affinity.

That's why he said go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He didn't say just go to the universities and tell the dons. Neither did he say merely go to the jungles of Amazon and tell them.

He meant go into your house and tell you as well as everything else that you might understand that he has laid claims on you. If you argue with him you brand yourself a fool. If you yield to him he will come into you to the exact extent that you will allow him.

And he will then as you cooperate with him live his life through you. Again to the exact extent that you will cooperate with him. That allowance, that reception, that cooperation is what the basis to approach the 5th chapter of the gospel according to John.

Before I stood up I made sure with Dave that I hadn't preached on this here before. Not that that would have deterred me had God insisted but I couldn't understand unless the Lord wanted me to speak about it to you why he had brought it to my heart. But Dave has assured me that you won't go to sleep because you have heard it all before.

At least I hope you have heard it all before for after all any man who preaches Christ can only in the end repeat the same truth. Thank God they don't vary. Bless God they are plain and simple and straightforward.

The technical word in the Bible is the gospel. In then John chapter 5 I hope you have a Bible if not someone will loan one. I want you to follow down the Bible through me.

I am not going to sermonize through you. I want you to check it out. Please share your Bibles well you don't sit there like a stuffed dummy.

Just see that anybody who happens to have forgotten theirs has one. It is amazing you can talk to a people who are perhaps a 50% university trained and they don't understand what you are saying. They sit there like that.

It is amazing. Look around and see that everybody has a Bible. It is absolutely important that you see what is in the Bible.

It doesn't matter about anything else much. Alright. In this great fifth chapter I am to take time.

I am informed. We are going to be out at a certain hour for lunch. You will be alright.

Now there is one thing that you have to understand first basically. You may not live your own life. Now everybody else may allow you to.

At least you think so. But I guarantee there isn't one of us in this room that is really basically living our own life. I mean whether you call yourself a Christian and are one or whether you call yourself a Christian and aren't one or whether you call yourself nothing at all.

Nobody lives their own lives. Nobody does. I mean if you had your way you wouldn't pay so much in the pound income tax.

You are not allowed to live your life. Just take a simple basic thing. You wouldn't pay all the money you pay for petrol if you had your way.

What you would have done with these oil shakes nobody would say. You see nobody is living their lives. So I am going to please myself.

You just can't and that's it. And it would be very foolish for us to even try to convince ourselves that we can. You don't even choose your own career.

You think you do. But they send you to school and then to university for so many years and some fellow talks an idea into your head. And you sort of get yourself trained and you know.

Nobody lives a totally independent life as to please themselves. So let's banish that idea right out of our heads. But you and I have to understand very basically that you cannot even think that you could live the life that you think you are living as your own life and be a Christian.

You can't do that. That's impossible. And you see the life that Jesus Christ is offering to men and women is so totally different from what they think.

That people just can't think that he means what he says or is capable of doing what he offers. Take this one. Let's read it together.

Are you following me now? In this 5th chapter. We'll cover it all through. I'm not going to read it in an orthodox manner.

In this marvelous 5th chapter, let's read verse 19. Jesus is speaking and he says unto the people, verily, verily, I say unto you, the son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the father do. If you read lower down in verse 30 for instance.

I can of mine own self do nothing. How about that? You see this is so totally different from everything that the human mind conceives. I'm going to live my own life.

I can do this. I can do that. Jesus says, I can't do anything of myself.

What a tremendous challenge that is to your heart. Do you see where he's bringing you? Or let's go lower down the chapter. How about this one? Oh it's so great isn't it? Verse 43.

I am come in my father's name and you receive me not. If another shall come in his own name, him you will receive. You see? You can't even live in your own name if you're going to live the life of Jesus.

You've got to live in this world if you have this life. So you can make up your mind whether you really want it or whether you don't. You cannot live it in your own name.

Now we have a very famous name with us this morning. He won't mind if I sort of give him a shove on that. His name is Medlock.

It's spread on bill heads. It carries this that and the other. But I want to tell him and you that if he's living in this world in the name of Medlock he's in sin and he's in and out of failure.

You see this is what the world does. It's up goes the big name. It's alright.

My name has been on heads of tithes till I came out of business. I know what I'm talking about. And this whole tremendous thing.

Now if you're going to live for Jesus Christ you cannot live in your own name. You've got to live in this world in the name of Jesus in the name of another. Praise God.

Mind you if we're sensible we've got the idea about this for you will have heard of men that are called reps haven't you. It means that their name may be Joe Blocks for instance. Or what shall we say Oliver Twist.

And they're reps so they don't go round to the places. They go in the name of their father. We understand this.

I was talking with a gentleman the other day. Since I've been in Reading I won't look where he is. I'll look up in the ceiling.

And he apologised for wearing a nice suit. He said I don't usually wear a suit. What's happened I've changed my job and so on and so on.

He wanted to wear lounge clothes and have an open neck shirt I suppose or a big polo collar up here or something you see. And have his hair up here or down there or something you see. But he says now I understand.

It's alright. You've got to present yourself because you represent the firm. Yeah that's right he said.

You see. This is quite true in everybody's experience. I'm not talking about ideas that you don't know about.

You see. You don't live in your own name if you're a rep. You don't live your own life.

That is you can't suddenly decide that you're going off fishing in Scotland or something. You represented your firm. And you have appointments to keep.

And I know a man that's just recently lost his job. A very very good job because of domestic trouble and he had to give so much time to home affairs that he couldn't represent his firm. So he lost his job.

You see you've got to be able to represent your firm. You've got to stand in that place and you've got to be there. I know that we have mercy and we make allowances for all sorts of things but in the main you know that you represent another.

Now that may involve a change of habits. You can call it work habits or what you want. But it doesn't necessarily involve the change of the man.

Work is something a man gets up in the morning and puts on. He goes to the office and he's very polite. And he does this and that and the other to keep his job and he goes home and swears at his wife.

You see he puts it on. Not with the great things of business are we treating now. We're talking about the change of life.

Fundamental. You cannot live it in your name. And what has your name ever stood for? Think of it.

Present yourself. Failure. Isn't that right? I was driving not so long ago.

I'm getting sort of reminiscent this morning. I don't want to be garrulous. I was driving with a man not so long ago.

A young man. He's somewhere now between 30 and 40. He was driving me from one appointment to another.

And so we talked. And he said, you don't know me do you? I said, no. I was very pleased to meet him.

Evidently there was a great work of grace being brought in his heart. And he went back over his life just slightly. Never got all his history.

But I heard his testimony unto Jesus Christ. He was born in a very good family. Went to a very good school.

And had very good education. And he was very well placed. He decided that he would go into the antique dealer's business.

Make a lot of money that way. Provided you could start off with a lot. And he was alright.

He could do that. And he came to the conclusion as he had viewed life. He'd got a good education and everything else.

He said, I saw that what you've got to do is be a man of the world. And he said, I'd got it all buttoned up that by 30 I was going to have really got all the answers. See? He said, and so I lived my life.

But I want to tell you that on the day of my 30th birthday and my birthday cards arrived, I couldn't open them. Because I knew I hadn't made it. I knew I hadn't got it all buttoned up.

I knew I hadn't got all the answers. Because we could have told him that if we'd known beforehand. But he had so deceived himself.

And he hadn't got the answers. Well, I said, well, now what's this, well, what's changed you? He said, well, for three days I didn't open my birthday cards. I was honest with myself.

And then he said, I had all sorts of hi-fi equipment and I don't know what. I picked up an advert. A young man was wanting to sell his stuff and he read, got down what he said and what he was to sell.

And I saw it was good stuff. So I thought, well, I can get it. And he was going to make a lot of money out of him as well.

Very keen businessman. But he said, I said to this man, why are you selling? He said, do you want to know? He said, yes, I do. Because this is great stuff you've got here.

Why are you selling? He said, well, I've met Jesus Christ. And he told him how Jesus Christ had come into his life. And he said, I've lost all my taste for this.

I don't want it. Well, he said, I'm ashamed to say to you now, I stung him. He wanted to get rid of it.

He was a soft thing. He said, but that stuck in me. And that was the first word that ever reached his heart about it.

Well, it wasn't long because he was an honest man and facing the truth before he too, I've covered all the details, had opened up to Jesus Christ. He said, I went back and gave him back 200 pounds. He twisted him on 200 pounds.

It's called business. You see, it changed him too. Tremendous life when Jesus Christ comes in.

It's life. Life that's acceptable with God. That's the tremendous thing.

And what a glorious position it is. You can't live in your own name. At 30, he realized that his name stood for failure.

All the world thought it stood for success. How twisted we all are. You can't live in your own name.

You've got to live in another's name. Look at this one. Are you ready? Are you looking down? We'll start at 43.

I am come in my father's name and you don't receive me. If another shall come in his own name, him you will receive. How can ye believe which receive honour one from another and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? 41.

Eyes up the chapter. I receive not honour from men. How about that? If you're going to live this life of Jesus Christ, you can't receive and you can't live your life to receive honour from men.

Now check yourself out. Think now. Back.

You geared your life to receive honour from men? The honours that men can give? Oh, we do like men to think we're someone, don't we? You think the deceptions you've practiced back in your life to try and get some people to think that you are what basically you aren't. Oh, the clothes we've worn, the houses we've

bought, the cars we've got, the conversations we hold and everything else just to get people to think that we're someone. You're living in your own name, you see.

You want honour from men. Hallelujah. And did you know that this prevents you believing? He says, how can you believe that receive honour from one another? This is why the multitude in the world, our civilised England don't believe.

They can't believe. They're on the wrong track. Their mind is geared wrongly.

If you're seeking to receive honour from men, then you're doomed. There has to come an understanding to your heart that your life has to be linked with a man that died a felon's death nailed on a cross outside the city wall where the lepers were. That's the whole truth.

The cross of Jesus Christ is God's summary of the world. Do you want it? Sums up the world. God gave the world an opportunity to handle him and they crucified him.

It's the summation of men's opinions of God and their responses to Jesus Christ. On which side are you? You cannot believe, and I hear so many people say, well I can't believe, I can't believe. This is why they're seeking honour from somewhere.

They think the devil's got them blocked off or something. But all the thing is that they're seeking the opinions of flesh and blood instead of the opinion of God. Seek the honour that comes from God only.

Now I'll ask you a question, I'm nowhere near through, but we'd better pause here. Do you really want this life? Think. You must remember and you will find it written in John chapter 6, that is the chapter following this one, that just there, and this occurred at the end of the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 with which we're so familiar, that he challenged the men that were following him, his chosen disciples, that bore the name apostles already.

He said, do you want to leave me? You can if you want. That's the end of chapter 6. Think. What is it you want? There are certain things that Jesus Christ cannot give you.

Did you realise that? I could list perhaps a hundred things already, I could start, that Jesus Christ can't give you, because he won't handle them. His set purpose is to bring you out of them. His intention is to destroy them out of your life.

He will not have them. God will not have them in his kingdom. He will not have them in his people.

But think of the things that Jesus Christ can give you. Not just as handing out golden handshakes or something, but by coming into you, and living in you. Living his life in you.

Think of them. Let me start with just a few. Peace.

No more tranquilizers. Peace. No more trying to drown your sorrows in drink, but of course you know they swim.

They don't ever get drowned. They can swim. No more of trying to do this then and the other.

You see, peace has come. Rest of heart. A right relationship with God.

So that if you say, Our Father which art in heaven, it's not the repetition of a prayer, it's a confession of a relationship. Father. Hallelujah.

Think of that. I know how deeply this is embedded in the human heart. I tell you how I know.

I think there must be thousands of people all over the world that call me dad. They are looking for a father. Someone, you know, that just about sums up what you believe to be a father.

That's a marvelous thing. You can have this. Father.

Hallelujah. You know, don't you, that your mind, this thing up here, isn't capable of handling the greater things of life. You might be able to think your way through the things that Euclid couldn't answer.

You may be able to draw through all the squares on your drawing board. You may be able to think like a computer. And I don't know what, but these things aren't the answer.

Hallelujah. The glorious thing is that basically you want a father. That's right.

Someone who can father you through these un-plumbable depths through which you somehow know you've got to wade as you live and then when you cease to live on this earth. What then? These are the things that are so important, beloved. Hallelujah.

His love, his joy, his contentment, so that you're not always reaching out after this better thing, that fuller thing, this bauble. And you start to get your teeth into something and you find it sand in your mouth and ashes in your belly. To live for Christ.

Hallelujah. It's all that, beloved. The only things that really count.

The things he can give you. You don't care anymore what men think about you. That doesn't mean to say you're trying to live to upset everybody.

Jesus Christ didn't live to try to upset everybody. But everybody got upset at him. He once said, alright, when they took up stones to stone him, he said, I've done many good works.

Now for which of these do you stone me? They said, we're not stoning you for good work. It's because you say you're God. That's what we all have.

We all want this God. We'll have your miracles. These are social benefits.

We don't mind you coming with your humanism, if it is humanism, but don't talk about God. They crucified him ultimately because he was God. Never stoned him because he did good works.

That, beloved, is the basis of everything. You and I have got to come in and live this life utterly. He's got to come right in to us and live his wonderful life.

There is so much. And it brings us back to an understanding of these words when he says, you know, I can of my own self do nothing. And he even said this in that first verse that we read together in that fifth chapter.

You may remember. It's in 20, 19 and 20. Jesus says, the double affirmative, verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do.

For what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth. And so he went on.

He could only do the things that Father showed him. How about there? You say, well, this is, what kind of a life is this? Listen, do you know why he lived this life? Not because he had to, but because he humbled himself to do it, to show you the way you must live. To show me.

That's why. Our God became a man. He humbled himself.

The Bible testifies to this. Jesus Christ says it. He humbled himself to live this way to show you there's no other way to live.

That's why at the end of his life, he was saying things like this. I'm the way. I'm the truth.

I'm the life. That's right. And if he's not in you, and living this life, you're dead.

I'm the life. That's why he did it. He humbled himself to this, so that he could humble himself still further, further to get into your heart.

And he did that by a death, and a burial, and a rising again. There was no other way. He didn't come to convert us to his teachings.

He came to get into our lives. And if he hasn't got there, I'm the way, you see. Then you're not on the way.

You haven't got it. You haven't got a clue. I had to discover this for myself.

Praise the name of the Lord. Jesus Christ comes into a personality. And then it comes to life as God reckons life.

Comes to light. Comes to reality. Then, and only then.

Now, there's so much about this that you and I need to learn. You must see this. I wonder if I may point you to this.

He starts to speak about John Baptist. You know John Baptist baptized him in the river Jordan. John Baptist imparted nothing to Jesus.

Nothing at all. This man, he said in verse 33, Jesus speaking, you sent unto John. He bare witness of the truth.

But, listen, I receive not testimony from men. But these things I say that you might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light.

And you were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. When did John lose his popularity? He was the most popular figure in Israel. We're told that he preached out in the wilderness and thousands of people went to him.

He was the last great revivalist prophet of ancient Israel. And they went out to him. He was the popular figure.

He burned and shone for a season. He was the most popular man even above Herod the king and everything in the country. But from the day he testified that he'd only come rarely so that men could see Jesus and testified that Jesus Christ of Nazareth is the Son of God, he lost his popularity.

Soon after that he lost his head. When you're popular you can say things against the high ups. Lose your popularity and your head rolls.

We know that in all our what we call business and political and what not associations. You see, he denounced Herod for his sinful living and Herod couldn't touch him. He was too popular.

But once he lost his popularity, don't bask in popularity friend. Oh, your head will roll. The principles that work in psychology work in the mass of psychology too.

Political realms, business realms, we're rocking with them. He lost his head because he said that all I came for was to point out to the world that Jesus is the Son of God. So he lost his head too.

Perhaps you might. But he said listen, I don't receive witness from men. I'm just telling you this to bring you back to sanity he says.

But he doesn't receive testimony from men. Now here's another thing, this is subtle. We want testimony from men.

We want somebody to say, good old day, good old wonderful day, we receive their testimony. We like that. Jesus said if you feed yourself, no matter what people think about you or what people say about you, you've got to have something in you that says I don't want it.

You can't stop people saying it. John said it, well Jesus said what he said is true. You don't stop him saying it.

But when they say it, you don't take it in here and feed on it. Don't think I say aren't I a wonderful fellow. You know, you've learned to bite it.

Men even wove it into fairy tales. You know, mirror, mirror on the wall. Who is the fairest of them all.

That's right see, feeding on it. Now beloved, let's come down to sanity shall we. Let's come to reality.

Jesus says I'm reality. You either believe it or you don't. You receive it or you don't.

You receive or you reject. And what a glorious thing it is when you receive. Now you may understand and you will understand this as you become more and more familiar with the scriptures of truth.

That Jesus often did a miracle and then made that the basis for his teaching. Or the miracle illustrates in a parabolic manner the things that he's going to teach. You see, we've been taking the teaching from Jesus' own lips in this chapter.

But you may know that the chapter starts with the great miracle that Jesus performed. Let's read it in the opening part of the chapter. Because the miracle is an illustration of necessarily foreshortened one.

Actions at times speak louder than words. But they don't say it in quite the same detail. Alright, here is the action.

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.

Blind, haught, 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. I want you to notice this whatsoever. 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 said unto him, would thou be made whole? The impotent man said unto 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 said 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. I wonder if you are one of these people. Who approach the things of God.

On the sort of a gambling basis. That you think there is a pool of healing. And we are all sort of in, you know, we are all getting into the pool.

Like when you play the pools. So, who is coming out of this pool alright? Who isn't? Let's think of the idea. Do you think that only one would have got into the pool? Why, I reckon about a thousand would have jumped in altogether.

But who was the first one without a photo finish? I don't know. Who can tell? One out of perhaps a hundred or two that jumped in was made whole, you see. A gamble.

A hit or miss. Now you have got to get that right out of your system. Right out of your system.

That's got to come altogether. Praise God. Here comes Jesus.

Is Jesus going to put me into the pool? He didn't know he was Jesus. As the story develops, he sees a man. Who is interested in him.

And he thinks he has got someone to get him into the pool first, you see. Jesus doesn't dip you into the pool. He keeps you right away from it.

You have got to come off this chance, business. Unless you have got a soul that has got a moving reality, you will never know this. Here is the place of true faith and life.

Bethesda. Now if you are familiar with your Bibles, I am sure lots of you are. You will know that Bethesda means the house of loving kindness.

That's its meaning. The house of loving kindness. It was the sheep market.

And there was the pool. And here let us all be introduced to the loveliness of Jesus. This book says that all we like sheep have gone astray.

Think of the young man. He has gone astray since he was a boy. Thought he was going to have it all buttoned up by the time he was thirty.

He had gone astray. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way.

And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. With his stripes we are healed. So the shepherd comes to find the sheep.

He goes to the sheep market. You will also know that five is the number of grace in scripture. It had five porches.

Chesed, the Hebrew word loving kindness, is the equivalent of the Hebrew word grace. So when you read loving kindness and you sing it, you know. Thy loving kindness is better than life.

You are singing thy grace. It is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek word grace. So here then comes Jesus in his grace.

Isn't it beautiful? See the selective inspiration of John. He is pointing us to a truth but watch him because he is going to lay bare your heart. Here they are.

They are all equally diseased. They haven't got the same disease. Whatsoever disease.

They are all equally in deep need. The disease of your heart. Not talking for the moment about physical diseases.

The disease of your mind. The particular canker that is eating into your soul. May not take the same form of that which ate into mine.

Crippled me. Made me quite impotent. So far as God is concerned.

I mean it doesn't matter whether people think you are potent or impotent. Doesn't matter whether they think you are dynamic or what they are. What does it matter? Naked came I into this world and naked go I out.

That doesn't matter. People's opinions have got to be dead so far as you are concerned. But does God think you are impotent? That is do you matter? Do you count? Are you even a cipher in God's kingdom? That's the thing that matters.

What a tremendous thing it is. To know that you have power as the Bible says with God. And that's what Jesus Christ has come for.

But when he talks to this man. You will notice that he said to him going up to him lying on the I suppose near to the brink as he could get. So that if he couldn't walk he could try to fall it.

He says will thou be made whole? And you know the answer. The answer is no I don't think I will. Now there are lots of people.

You may come regularly to this fellowship church or whatever you call it. Wherever you go and you go there every meeting. Do you really think anything is ever going to happen? See he has been there 38 years he has been in that case.

That man perhaps he was just 38 years old. I don't know. And he has gone there regularly to try and sort of get some luck in the pool.

Nobody to help him you see. And when Jesus says will you be made whole he says well no not really I don't expect so. Nobody here to help me.

Nobody you see. Are you sure you aren't like that? You've got big deep needs down inside you. And you know you have.

Great big needs. And nothing in this life can answer. Marriage won't answer it.

Children won't answer it. Money won't answer it. Fame won't answer it.

Nothing answers it. Nothing. I once read a little bit written by Malcolm Muggeridge.

I suppose he is a name that we have all heard about. If not I suppose we must be considered ignorant. And he said he was speaking at university.

And he said I don't know what you something like this don't what you young men are after he said. Is it fame? He said I know what fame is. I know what it is he said.

To be walking down the street. That's Malcolm Muggeridge. It's nothing he said.

At least he comes to see there. What in the world are you after man? Nothing in this life can answer it. Nothing.

He said here's Jesus. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Do you think you're going to have anything left in your life today? No.

No. Not really. And this is the death and decimation of the sheep that lie around the pool.

What in the world do you keep coming for then? Oh well. I suppose one day it may happen. Beloved.

Jesus Christ has come to your little pool. Jesus Christ. And whilst you're working it all out bless him.

No wonder it's the pool of loving kindness. And God's great grace. He doesn't enter into arguments with him.

He says rise. Take up your bed and walk. And he rises.

Takes up his bed. And he walks. Hallelujah.

Now what I want to bring from this miracle. And we're going to link up with where we started our reading. In this same chapter.

Is this. When Jesus Christ comes to your life. Now I don't know whether you want this or whether you don't.

Make up your mind. He said. He.

Let me say what he didn't say first. He didn't say it now. Would you like to feel better? Because anybody with any sense would say yes.

Yes. Now would you like me to give you some advice? You know I'm a psychiatrist. He said listen.

Do you want to be whole? Do you want to be a real man? Do you want to be whole? Praise God this is the way he talks to you. Do you want to be whole? Or do you want to go out butchered and broken and torn apart? He was butchered and broken and torn apart. He took that on the cross.

Not the nails and the spear and the crown of thorns hurt him most. He was more ripped in soul than in body. He went out there to bear all that.

He's no light talker. He's not prescribing pills. He's not coming up with some sort of economic answer.

For as soon as you get out of one muddle you're in another one. At last they're beginning to understand that oil wells run dry and gold mines peter out. At last they're beginning to understand.

At last they're beginning to understand that physical capabilities and abilities die away. And some men who might die labelled a fool with a capital L says well a short capital F might say well a short life and a merry one. Merry? What out of a bottle? Doesn't come out of a bottle.

Nor out of a checkbook. The glorious truth about you beloved is that you can be made whole. Absolutely whole.

The Lord can get hold of your broken heart and your wounded mind. He can take your scarred soul. He can wash right clean out of you all the causes.

All the bitternesses. All the wrong doings your own and other people's. For you've been as much ill treated as you've ill treated others.

And He can deal with everything. Utterly everything. He can make you whole.

Praise Him. Praise Him. Isn't it wonderful.

They said rip Him apart. Tear Him apart. Let the carrion feed on Him.

Tear Him apart like a malefactors. They put Him in a grave torn to pieces. He got out of it whole.

Walked out of it whole. That's what He's offering you. Wholeness.

Wholeness. He didn't even need somebody to help Him get the grave clothes off Him. Whole.

God from heaven. Hallelujah. He'll make you whole man.

Will you be made whole? Listen. Whatsoever your diseases. Moral.

Spiritual. Mental. Ethical.

We're all diseased there. Until Christ gets hold of us. Toading to men.

Banding with the devil. Fooling ourselves. Chasing a myth.

A woman or a man. Or something. And here's the Christ of God patiently waiting.

The good shepherd of your soul. You feel like a sheep. He loves you.

You haven't understood. You didn't know. But listen.

You know now. The shepherd's come. Praise God.

Alright. Whole. Let's go on.

Now Jesus was in deep trouble. Because He made this man whole. On the Sabbath day.

Praise God. It was a tremendous thing. Now you will know that the great teaching of Scripture.

In the Old Testament. The Sabbath day was to be a day of rest. So once the Lord makes you whole.

You enter into rest. Rest. He deliberately did it on the Sabbath day.

Praise God. To make you see that when you're made whole. You're in rest.

Now let me ask you a question. Are you in rest? In your heart? Then if you're not in rest. You're not whole.

There's something wrong. Still. You'll have to let the Lord Jesus deal with you.

You've sort of been treating Jesus Christ. As though. He's a pool that you jump in.

And if you're lucky. You'll be alright. But if not.

Well it might be. That something else should happen. And so on and so on and so on.

Now let God really get down to your heart. Beloved. You're made to rest.

You've got to come to rest. When a heart's in rest. As God gives rest.

He just doesn't cease for a day. To start again tomorrow. That's what the day's Sabbath rest was.

In outward things. He didn't have respite for a little while. For all the turmoil.

To build up again tomorrow. The dread tomorrow. Rest.

Eternal. Let me testify to you. I can remember when God brought me to rest.

It's so long ago now. And I'm so used to it. But really I've nearly forgotten what it's like.

Not to be in rest. Rest. To walk with God.

Doesn't he ever have any troubles? Yes. Plenty of troubles. I mean the scripture says.

Whilst you're in the world. You'll have tribulation. Which you know is the old English.

For tribulation. You'll have plenty of trouble. While you're in the world.

Didn't Jesus Christ have plenty of trouble? But you see. He didn't make troubles of them. He got rest.
And they came. But he's rather like the exhibition. He gave you in this mansion.
He said rise. Take up your bed. So the fellow got up.
Rolled up. Put it on his head. That's right.
He carried that easy. Carried it easily. Here then.
Is the answer to it. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Are you in rest? Blessed rest.
Heavenly rest. About the past. Oh yes.
About the present. Yes. About the future.
Oh yes. About this. About that.
About the other. Oh yes. Walking in rest of heart.
With God. Ceasing as the Bible says. From your own labors.
Not trying to make yourself rest. By much praying. Fasting.
Not trying to work the oracle. Pull the strings. Bluff yourself.
But walking in the glorious rest of God. Alright. And so.
I'm speedily coming to an end now. We'll break bread tonight. I was given permission to say.
That if I wanted. We'll have a communion tonight. So come along.
And. Here we go then. We're going to read it.
The Jews. Verse ten. Said to him that was cured.
Oh. So you see. This making hope.
Cures you. You don't go back to it. It doesn't manifest itself in your life again.
That's what curing means. Doesn't it? Cured. Hallelujah.
Marvelous. I remember. Let me tell you this.
To God's glory. I remember the time. When I got one of these things.
Called a slipped disc. Oh dear. Oh dear.
I didn't know it was possible. To have such pain. Because men are babies.
As you know. Women make them. Sort of put up with it.
But I didn't know. That men could ever. Could ever have such pain.

Apparently. My sort of. Lumbar nerve.
Or whatever it was. Or sciatic nerve. Sorry.
Got nipped in it. And it was permanently held. By this bone.
I was in terrible pain. With it down my leg. Woke up the neighbor.
Groaning. Big baby that I was. Praise the name of the Lord.
I. All sorts of things. We tried. Everybody did it.
One night. In the middle of the night. I was groaning.
My wife was sleeping. In our bedroom. I'd gone into a little side room.
And she said. What's the matter dear? I said. I said.
Go downstairs. Get a bottle of oil. See.
Like this. There it is. Not that bottle.
And anoint me. And pray for me. Will you dear? That's what the Bible says.
Oh. She said. Because she's only a little woman.
I was going to say. But you'll understand. And.
Well. I mean. She was comparing herself.
With these great sort of elder men. In the church. Oh.
I said. Oh. Go down dear.
Anoint me. Well. She said.
I don't think I got any. So at least she found some salad oil. Downstairs.
Then she came up. And according to scripture. She anointed me.
And prayed for me. And in ten minutes. I was right.
And I'm cured. Never had a recurrence of it. Never had a recurrence of it.
I'm cured. I'm not boasting. I'm telling you.
For the glory of God. That. This.
This book. What this book says. It's true.
God did it. In answer to my. Wife.
And mine too. Prayer. Cured.

In other words. You don't get something suspended. For instance.

All the punishment. For your sin. The things you've done wrong.

Isn't a suspended punishment. But. You see.

So now. All right. All the time.

I will suspend punishment. You see. Hallelujah.

Jesus Christ took the punishment. Took it away. It's not as hanging over your head as a threat anymore.

That if I just step out of line. I've had it. No.

No. No. This is God.

In his goodness. He's. He comes.

And he cures you. So that you don't go back to the swine drops. You're cured.

The old habits don't reassert themselves. Go on with God. Walking.

He didn't say. Now it's all right. Go home and get comfort.

He said. Get up and walk. And this is the next thing I want you to see.

That he says walk. Why? Because. He wants everybody to walk.

What he's done. He said. Go and shut yourself up in a corner in your house.

Don't let everybody know. Go on. Get out there.

Let everybody see it. Let everybody see it. Because I want other people to know.

That what I've done for you. I will do for them. Once I'm.

Oh. But. Sir.

He's. He's. He's.

Found him in the temple. What has he gone there for? To give God the glory. If Jesus came looking for you this morning, or about Wednesday, where would he find you? Jesus knows where to find him.

He went to the temple. The work was genuine. The man was real.

Finds him in the temple. And this is what he says. Behold, it is me that I have made whole.

Sin no more. As the worst thing come unto thee. The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole.

Sin no more. That's Jesus talking. Jesus doesn't come and say now look here I offer you a solution to your problems.

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. Will you become a Christian if I solve your problems for you? What cheap cost a mongering and touting is that? He says you have made whole. Sin no more.

Do you want this life? Do you love your sin? And want that? You love it. You plead for it. Men will decide or devise all kinds of religious beliefs as long as it can include sin in them.

But Jesus won the life. Go and sin no more. And the basic elements of sin are those things that he dealt with.

That is in human beings. But that we talked about before. You want to get on.

You want to get on. You want to be hickory. You want something to witness to.

You want to move in your own name. You want to live your own life. That's the basis of all sin.

Do you really want this life? Will you come right out of everything and live for Jesus? Will you? Do you really believe it? You can't believe it you see if you are living for the honour of others. You can't. Jesus has said so.

He has laid down the basic psychological and spiritual principles upon which it all functions. But who believes him? Do you? And if you believe him, do you want him? And do you want what he has to offer? Glory be to the name of the Lord. He'll say to you, Behold, he's come in gracious mood.

Behold, he says. Rise up. Walk.

Be a man after God's own heart. Go out there and live. Walk.

Let people see you. Let them understand. Live pure.

Live clean. Live free of all these enslaving things that have bound your life. Go out there.

Live in my name. What a privilege that Jesus should grant his name to a man's life. Hallelujah.

Avoid all the pitfalls. Live for self. Live for sin.

Live for slavery. Live for Jesus. And live for eternity.

Live. Live. That's what it's all about.

Well, I think I've finished talking to you. But has God been talking to you? Do you know why Jesus comes? Why should he wend his way down to a pool that morning? There was a man there, and his heart of love was toward him. 38 years.

How old are you? 38 years. Jesus comes and grants the mercy of the Lord to a man. He comes in grace to their heart.

He says, ah, will you? Will you? Lord, I will. I'll quit it now. I'll quit it for life.

I'll quit it for eternity. Make me whole, Lord. Make me whole.

Let him do it. You've got to, haven't you? Only by pressure of God, not by pressure of man. Let's pray, shall we? Go and sin no more.

It's sin that's blasted your life. I know there have been other things, other factors, millions of them, more than we could count. But don't make them a vast forest through which your soul can find no way.

He understands that. But it's still your sin. And he's come.

Directly to you, man. Will you respond to him? If I gave you an opportunity to make response, would you do that? Or would you sit back there, hiding it still? This is the basic thing of life, that we respond utterly to Jesus Christ. Do you want to do that? Tell him so now.

Don't say prayers. Talk to him like I've talked to you. Talk straight.

When Jesus dealt with this man, he said, rise. All right? You rise to your feet where you're sitting. If you're going to respond deeply to the Lord, get clear what we're talking about.

And you know that basically you've never really done this. Now, don't think you can drift in. Jesus didn't drift through life.

You don't drift in. There comes a moment when you make your decision. There's one man on his feet.

That's right. God bless you. How about you? What are you saying to the Lord now, inside you? Don't say, Lord, help me.

That's what he's come for. He's seeking your response now.

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