



Daily Reflections

April 2, 2019

Scripture

John 5: 1-16

There was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem at the Sheep Gate a pool called in Hebrew Bethesda, with five porticoes. In these lay a large number of ill, blind, lame, and crippled. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been ill for a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be well?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; while I am on my way, someone else gets down there before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your mat, and walk." Immediately the man became well, took up his mat, and walked. Now that day was a sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to carry your mat." He answered them, "The man who made me well told me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'" They asked him, "Who is the man who told you, 'Take it up and walk'?" The man who was healed did not know who it was,

for Jesus had slipped away, since there was a crowd there. After this Jesus found him in the temple area and said to him, "Look, you are well; do not sin any more, so that nothing worse may happen to you." The man went and told the Jews that Jesus was the one who had made him well. Therefore, the Jews began to persecute Jesus because he did this on a sabbath.

Our Scripture Reflection

Please note: Jesus did not ask the paralyzed man if he wanted to walk again. No, He asked him if he wanted to be well. Why? Because the Divine Healer knew that the man's paralysis was a surface-level issue. He had a deeper problem that needed to be addressed; a problem that existed at the level of the heart. He was paralyzed by sin and he had, therefore, a real lack of faith. And even though no one would give him the time of day, Jesus would never ignore him. After all, He is "the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world." The man is freed from his spiritual bondage, and therefore, his physical bondage, and then he becomes a witnesser to Jesus.

Food for your Journey

Is this miracle enough for anybody? Or has the thunder of "God loved the world so much" been so muffled by the roar of religious rhetoric that we are deaf to the word that God could have tender feelings for us?

—Brennan Manning, *Abba's Child: The Cry of the Heart for Intimate Belonging* (Colorado Springs, Colo.: Navpress, 1994), 53-54.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear God, You sent Your only Son to set me free from all that has me held bound due to the power of sin. May I experience the true freedom that comes from turning my life over to You by accepting Jesus as my Lord and Savior. Amen