

THAT YOU MAY KNOW

Superstition, Sabbath and the Superior Christ
John 5:1-9
April 3, 2022

MAIN POINT: Vain superstitions and hopes fail us every time; Jesus' sovereign word brings new-creation life, wholeness, and rest.

I. RETRACING OUR STEPS (John 2-4)

- We have walked from Cana to Jerusalem to Samaria and back to Cana, and John has painted a picture for us detailing:
 - Jesus is the Davidic Messiah who ushers in a new age through his God-manifesting life, death as the perfect sacrificial Lamb, and resurrection from the grave.
 - Jesus ushers in a new age that is entered into not by physical birth but by Holy Spirit-wrought new birth which produces faith that unites us to a Bridegroom.
 - Jesus is the Bridegroom who betroths himself to the people he will save, give new-creation life to, and raise up on the last day.

II. THE SCENE (vv. 1-3)

- There is a feast in Jerusalem (v. 1).
 - It is unclear which feast this might be, but Jewish men would have been required to attend three annual feasts (cf. Deut. 15:16-17).
- There is a pool in Jerusalem named Bethesda (vv. 2-3)
 - There were two pools that comprised "the pool," and many of the sick within the city came there to be healed.
 - Those who were blind, crippled, and withered came looking for new creation and deliverance from their plight.

III. THE SUBJECTS (vv. 5-7)

- The Thirty-Eight-Year-Old Invalid (vv. 5, 7)
 - We are not told how the man ended up as he did, but his state would have resulted in him being a perpetual outcast, and led him to vain superstitions.
- The Sovereign Wholeness-Speaking Savior (v. 6)
 - Jesus asks a question that both provokes reflection and hope.

IV. THE SALVATION (vv. 8-9)

- New Creation as Resurrection (v. 8)
- Wholeness and Deliverance on the Sabbath (v. 9)
 - The very things that the Sabbath reminded Israel of (cf. Exod. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15) were on full display in Jesus Christ.

V. A SATISFYING AND SABBATH-GIVING SAVIOR

- The new-creation life that Jesus gives by his word is on full display in John 5:1-9, where the old creation week is passing away and the new creation week is dawning. Sabbath rest is available now, in and through the person and work of God the Son, and Sabbath rest will be consummated when Jesus returns on the clouds to permanently make his enemies a footstool for his feet.

Suggested Reading:

The Bruised Reed by Rischard Sibbes

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please Read John 5:1-9

1. Consider the mass of "invalids" in John 5:3. What would that scene have been like? In what ways does it depict the brokenness of the world? In what ways does it set the stage for Jesus to bring wholeness?
2. How are you like those who gathered around the pool of Bethesda? In what do you hope, vain though it be? What do you think will satisfy your soul outside of Christ? Take some time to pray and identify those vain hopes, confess them before God, and turn from them to the One who brings wholeness.
3. In what ways does the raising of the man in John 5:1-9 anticipate the resurrection to come? In what ways is he a picture of the new-creation life that Jesus brings?
4. What are the connectors here in John 5:1-9 with the old creation week of Genesis 1? Can you think of any other places thus far that John has linked back to the book of Genesis?
5. What is the importance of John telling us that John 5:1-9 occurred on the Sabbath?
6. Take some time discussing how Sabbath rest is ours *now* in Christ and what that means for us today, and allow that to lead you into an anticipation of a greater Sabbath rest to come when Christ returns.