The Healing Place

(A Study of the Gospel of John; Message #14)
John 5:1-16

A. Jesus encounters a man near a large pool; it's Bethesda

B. Picture this place as a battleground strewn with the wounded

1. Better, we say, not to get involved; so we keep walking...

2. Jesus stops. This might be a teaching moment - for you and me...

CHRIST'S CARING

A. Jesus came walking among the sick and the suffering

"When they suffered, he suffered with them..." (Isaiah 63:9)

B. This story is about us (John 5:5)

1. We need to identify with the paralytic; he's an invalid

2. What do we have in common? Answer: Our predicament and our hope

"Anyone whose life is not holy will never see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14)

a. Our predicament is "*Only the holy will see God*"

"You must be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matthew 5:48)

b. Our only hope is that God will do for us what he did for this man

"When you were spiritually dead because of your sins and because you were not free from the power of your sinful self, God made you alive with Christ, and he forgave all our sins. He canceled the debt which listed all the rules we failed to follow. He took away that record with its rules and nailed it to the cross. God stripped the spiritual rulers and powers of their authority. With the cross he won the victory and showed the world they were powerless." (Colossians 2:13-15)

c. Actually, the paralytic was better off than we were. He was alive

CHRIST'S QUESTION

A. Jesus asks a strange question: "Do you want to be well?"

B. Notice the response: Is he complaining? Feeling sorry for himself? Just stating the facts? Expressing his hopelessness?

CHRIST'S COMMAND:

A. "*Stand Up*!" "*Arise*!" "*Get Up*!"

1. Note the impossibility of obeying this command; all God's commands are impossible to obey

2. The healing/strength to obey comes during our obedience, not prior to it

3. We know his will. We need to surrender to his will

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work in us..." (Ephesians 3:20)

B. "*Pick up your mat*;" "*Take Up Your Bed*"

1. In this command, Jesus removes the possibility of relapse or retreat

a. Packing up one's bed means they're healed; the need for a bed no longer exists

b. Healing/renewal also requires "burning some bridges; " i.e., letting go

2. With his obedience, this man stirs a controversy; obedience usually does

C. "*And Go*!" "*Move*!" "*Walk*!" The impossible happens!

D. Jesus meets him again later in the Temple

1. Jesus tells him the important new fact of grace in his life: "*You have been made well*"

2. Jesus gives him an important new command of Truth for his life: "*Now stop sinning so something worse doesn't happen*"

3. First remember grace; then remember to live out this grace in the truth of holiness

CHRIST'S CONNECTION

A. This "invalid" takes Jesus at his word

B. A gentle Savior steps into our hurting world, walks among us, and offers us his hand? Will you take it?