

SERIES: I'm Him

MESSAGE TITLE: Poolside Rule-breaker

MESSAGE OVERVIEW: This Talk centers around a beautiful miracle, the third in this series. It's set at the "Pool of Mercy," a misleading name because, the truth is, it was a mess. It's where the sick and outcast of society were left, hoping for healing. In just such dark and impossible spaces, Jesus invades with strength, power, and hope.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: John 5:1-15

BREAKING IT DOWN:

1. The Jewish festival brought over 3,000 blind, lame, and sick to Bethesda. In this packed and hopeless place, Jesus singles out a man who'd been waiting for healing at the pool for 38 years. His question "do you want to be well?" might seem unnecessary, but it reveals: 1.) that true love gives a choice, and 2.) our hearts. What is Jesus asking you about? Is there something you've avoided because the road there appeared too long or difficult?
2. Jesus could see this man's heart (just like he sees beyond our barriers, filters, apathy, etc.)—he *wanted* healing, but wasn't capable on his own. "Rise, pick up your mat, and walk" sounds blunt, but sometimes what seems harsh to us, is what we really need. He didn't expect the man to suddenly find the strength on His own. With a step of obedience, the strength was given to him. When has God done this for you?
3. As he goes, walking for the first time in 38 years, the Jewish leaders stop him. Instead of excitement for his healing, they wanted "justice" for the breaking of the Sabbath. Though they weren't upholding God's law, they were enforcing man-made additions to it. They created a burden for the people and confused their understanding of God. In what ways can unbiblical standards or legalism impact us? Our eternity? Why is it so important to maintain the Bible's teachings accurately?
4. The *I'm Him* moment is an intimate one. Jesus finds the man in the temple and reintroduces himself; the one who everyone's been waiting for, the Messiah. His curious statement "stop sinning, so something worse doesn't happen to you," means that as terrible as a lifetime of suffering may be, an eternity is worse. He's reminding the man to stay faithful.

WAYS TO LIVE THE MESSAGE THIS WEEK:

1. Don't ignore the call - If you sense Jesus guiding you, respond. Don't avoid moving forward out of fear, take that next step faithfully, and He will equip you.
2. Make the most - No matter where we're at in life, we have the opportunity to trust in and thank God. Pain and hardships dull when our eyes are on Him and our hearts are grateful.

