

[00:00:00.410] - Speaker 1

This week's reading is from John 5:

¹Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. ²Now, there is in Jerusalem, near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five colored, covered colonnades. ³Here, a great number of disabled people used to lie-- the blind, the lame, the paralyzed, and they waited for the moving of the waters. ⁴From time to time an angel of the Lord would come down and stir up the waters. The first one into the pool after each such disturbance would be cured of whatever disease they had. ⁵One who was there had been an invalid for 38 years. ⁶When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?" ⁷"Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool. When the water is stirred while I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me." ⁸Then Jesus said to him, "Get up, pick up your mat and walk." ⁹At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

[00:01:08.550] - Speaker 1

The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, ¹⁰and so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath, the law forbids you to carry your mat." ¹¹But he replied, the man who made me well said to me, "Pick up your mat and walk." ¹²So they asked him, "Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?" ¹³The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there. ¹⁴Later, Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, "See you are well again. Stop sinning, or something worse may happen to you." ¹⁵The man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well. ¹⁶So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him. ¹⁷In his defense, Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working." ¹⁸For this reason, they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

[00:02:15.640] - Speaker 1

This is the word of the Lord.

[00:02:20.110] - Speaker 2

So, in January and February, we're looking at the life of Jesus, especially at these incidents, these miraculous signs that the Gospel of John recounts for us, so that we can get to know what Jesus is like, who he is. If you were to write a book, or let's just say you were to write a story about mountain climbing and you'd never ever climbed a mountain, you'd never even set foot on a mountain. So, you write it and you send it to somebody who is a mountain climber. And that mountain climber comes and sits down with you, and the mountain climber says, "Oh, you've really got it wrong in a lot of spots. And it's like this, and

it's like this, and it's like this." And you're listening, and at first, you'll say, "What? Really?" kind of surprised. Then you say, "Oh, yeah." And then you totally rewrite the story. Can you imagine a perfect human being? Can you imagine a perfect man? You say, sure, I can imagine. And you could. Except you have to remember that since none of us are perfect human beings, you'd have to be perfect to perfectly imagine a perfect human being.

[00:03:37.440] - Speaker 2

Let's just say you're imagining a perfect human being. Most of us have some kind of idea, otherwise we wouldn't be criticizing other people all the time. But what if a real perfect human being was presented to you? You would react the same way. You'd look at him, and then you'd say, "What? Really? Oh, yeah." And if you were reading about a truly perfect human being that nobody's ever seen, and you are too imperfect to have perfectly imagined, you would be surprised constantly at him, but also instructed. And the reason you'd be surprised is because these would be the surprises of perfection. Perfection would be surprising to us because we've actually never seen it. The challenge of the New Testament is to read about Jesus Christ, not just once, not just on this, not just read one account, say, oh, really? Page after page after page, let it sink in who he is. And the challenge is that if you do that, you will pretty much be forced to the conclusion, nobody could have imagined someone like this. These stories were not made up. And more and more, as you read about him, you'll see he's not just what we call larger than life,

[00:05:00.820] - Speaker 2

he's bigger than the world! Now, that's what we're doing every week here, looking at the book of John, and I think we've mentioned this before, that John deliberately says near the end of his book of the Gospel of John, he says, Jesus did many, many miracles, but the ones I've chosen to give to you and recount to you are what he calls signs. That is, they're not just miracles. They happened, of course, but he believed, John believed, that they always taught us something. The miracles he chose are the ones that are signs. They symbolize, they signify who Jesus is and what he came to do. So, they're not just miracles that happen, but they're also instructive. So, let's take a look at three aspects of this. This is the third miraculous sign, the healing of the lame man at the pool of Bethesda.

- Let's look at the pool.
- Let's look at the man.
- Let's look at the Sabbath controversy, the controversy about the Sabbath that comes afterwards.

The pool, the man, the Sabbath. What do we learn?

First of all, the pool. The pool is an interesting place. It says here it was in Jerusalem, it was near the Sheep Gate.

[00:06:09.710] - Speaker 2

It was a pool called Bethesda, and it was surrounded by five covered colonnades or porches. We'll get to that in a minute. It was a pool that was reputed to have healing properties. Now, it's interesting when you're reading some of your texts, will point out that verses four and five are actually we're kind of in the margin of the original manuscript. It's not like the Bible is actually teaching that there was an angel that came down. It's describing the belief, the reason why the paralyzed and the lame and the blind sat around this pool was because they believed that when the water stirred without a palpable wind, and sometimes it did (difficult to know how could have been an underground source). But if the water stirred and they didn't feel a wind, if you got down in there while the water was still stirring and you were sick, you were healed. Now, just something about the pool that's of interest, brief, but important. I think in the 18th or 19th century, 18th and 19th century, when modern historical scholarship was beginning to develop, a lot of the historians cast an eye on the Bible to try to figure out whether or not they believed it was reliable history or whether it was legends filled with legends.

[00:07:26.730] - Speaker 2

And one of the things they looked at was this particular chapter. It talks about a pool with five porches. And what many historians concluded was, this is a perfect example of why we can't trust the Bible historically. First of all, at the time, there was no knowledge of ever there being such a pool. There was no record of it, there was no historical record of it. There was no knowledge of there ever being a pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem, number one. Number two, the author of this gospel said it was surrounded by five porches. The Greek word is stoa. The word stoa means, it says here, a roofed colonnade, which is what you and I would call a porch. It was a roof without any wall, but with supported by columns, and around the edge of a pool, it would be a porch. People who came to the pool would sit in the shade. They didn't go out in the sun of that time and climate. They would sit in the shade, go down in the pool, come back out and sit under the porch. And so, what everybody said is the historian said, not only is there no record of any such pool, but to have five porches around it, five stoas, would mean it had five sides, and no one ever had ever heard of a pentagon pool.

[00:08:49.170] - Speaker 2

That just shows that whoever wrote this did not know the architecture of the time. And therefore, this was part of the academic case against the reliability of the scripture that developed in those centuries and said, look, it's very clear whoever wrote this was not a contemporary eyewitness, couldn't have been John the Gospel, the apostle John. It had to be somebody who did not know what Jerusalem was like in those days or the architecture. It must have been written much later. So, it was an argument against it being a contemporary witness. When I was in college, I was wrestling with whether I could trust the Bible, and I came upon a little book that was a classic, and it's still in print by a top flight historian of ancient history, I mean, historian knowledge, new ancient history named F. F. Bruce (Frederick Fyvie Bruce). And the name of the book was the New Testament Documents. Are they reliable? And in the book, one of the things he points out was this pool. He says, for quite a number of years, people said, ah, there is no such record of a pool. It was clearly made up. And even if there was a pool, it wouldn't have five sides to it.

[00:09:58.830] - Speaker 2

And then they dug up the pool. First of all, they discovered that there was a church that the pool was under, a church that had been built many, many years ago to mark the location of the pool. And then secondly, when they actually got down and excavated the pool, they discovered that there were actually two basins. The pool had two parts, two basins, and the two basins were divided by a ridge of rock. And there were five porches like this porch, porch, porch, porch, and then a porch on the ridge. So, there were five porches. On the other hand, there wasn't five sided. And F. F. Bruce says the irony is since probably the pool was destroyed very soon after Jesus' life when the Jerusalem was sacked by the Romans. Now, the pool of Bethesda, in John chapter five, actually is evidence that this was a contemporary witness, that anybody who had lived even very long after Jesus wouldn't even have known about the pool. And so now what used to be evidence that you can't trust the Bible as historically reliable now is evidence that you can trust the Bible as historically reliable. Question what does it matter?

[00:11:15.190] - Speaker 2

What does it matter whether you can trust that the New Testament documents are telling you things that actually happen? Oh, it makes all the difference in the world. And here's the reason why: if Christianity was like all the other religions of the world, all of which say God saves the worthy, if you want God's blessing, if you want God's salvation, you must be worthy of it. You must live a particular kind of life. You must have a particular kind of virtue and character. You must do these sorts of things. God saves the worthy. Now, if that was the case, and Christianity was like all the other religions of the world, it really wouldn't make much difference whether this stuff actually happened or not. Why? Because when you read the life of Jesus, you're getting a blueprint. A blueprint for how to live. Look at how he loves people. Look at how he perfectly he follows God. Look at he goes to the cross, he dies for his enemies. He forgives them as he's dying. Wow! Look at this life of virtue and character and self-denial and forgiveness. Look at that. That's how you're supposed to live.

[00:12:20.420] - Speaker 2

Whether it happened or not doesn't really make any difference. Why? Because you got the blueprint. And what saves you is your life. If your life conforms to this, you are saved. So, whether or not the blueprint happened or not doesn't matter, right? But, of course, Christianity is not at all like the other religions. Jesus says, I come not to call those who think they're righteous, but only those who know they're sinners. Paul says in Romans 4 that God saves and justifies the ungodly apart from anything they do. Christianity says salvation is by free grace, wondrous grace, amazing grace, crazy grace, absolute grace. Why? Because Christianity says we're not saved by our life, we're saved by his. We're not saved by our fulfilling the requirements of the law and loving and doing. We're saved because he has done it all. He has fulfilled all the requirements. He lived the life you should have lived. He died the death we should have died. He did it all in your place. And when I believe in him now, it becomes mine. I receive it as a gift. Do you see? It does matter whether these things happen or not, because if it didn't happen, you can't be saved by grace.

[00:13:43.340] - Speaker 2

You're just going to be like everybody else. You're going to be under the crushing burden of having to be worthy. But if it happened, you can be saved by grace. And it did happen.

Point 2. That's what we learned about the pool. Point 2 is, by the way, the same thing. We're going to learn the same thing, by the way, all three points. It's very repetitious, because the second thing is, let's look at the man and we're going to see the very same idea, which is that our salvation is by sheer grace. Let's look at this man, starting in verse five. Who is this guy? One was there had been an invalid for 38 years. Important to see that we really don't know what caused his inability to walk. The word invalid is a general word that means disabled. It means unable to walk. That's all it means. It doesn't tell us whether it was an injury. It doesn't tell us whether it was a sickness. When it says he'd been an invalid for 38 years, we're not told. Is he 38? So, he was sort of born with some kind of disability. Is he 60 and this happened when he was in his 20s?

[00:14:48.080] - Speaker 2

We really don't know. All we know is he couldn't walk and he's lying there hoping that if the water stirred, he could get in there and get his healing. Now, let's notice three things about him. Basically, these are the three stages in his relationship with Jesus, and each one of them is instructive for us. First, please, first of all, notice that Jesus comes to him. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?" Jesus asked the question. He doesn't come to Jesus. Jesus comes to him. He doesn't ask Jesus for something. Jesus asks him for something. He doesn't know who Jesus is. He is not in any way after Jesus. Jesus comes after him. Now, this is the first thing we ought to notice that we have here a picture of what the Bible says, what the Bible lays down as a principle. And that principle is that if you ever find God, it's because God came searching for you. Now, for example, Paul says it very categorically in Romans, chapter three. First of all, he says no one is good.

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Well, we understand that nobody's perfect. We get that. But then he says no one seeks for God. Now, when you read that and I felt this way the first time I first ten times I read that in my life, that that seemed to be overkill, that seemed to be reaching for too much. What do you mean no one seeks for God? There's a lot of people who seem to be seeking or looking for God and come to realize that what Paul means there is not that no one is interested in God in general or that no one is interested in spiritual issues. What he's saying is no one actually deliberately seeks the true God as he's described in the Bible. Now, here's why he's absolutely right. There's all sorts of concepts of God that are actually pretty attractive. But as a person who's been teaching this stuff for 40 years and has been exposing people to what the Bible says about God, I know that when you actually open the text where it talks about God's absolute sovereignty and he speaks out of the whirlwind and says to Job, I do not have to justify myself to you.

[00:17:17.740] - Speaker 2

Who are you? I created you. Mount Sinai comes down. He says, "I am absolutely holy and I'm on the mountain, if anybody even touches the mountain, if any sinner even touches the mountain, you're going to die." I mean when you see this absolute sovereignty, this utter glory, this perfect holiness that the Bible says is the true God, whenever I open that to anybody at all, we hate it. There's all kinds of Gods that we can kind of be kind of attracted to. But the God of the Bible, the God that is revealed in the Bible, there is a deep, deep, deep, deep allergy to. We recoil from it. And that's because the explanation is Genesis three explains this: The first temptation, the serpent, Satan comes to Adam and Eve and says, "Did God say he'd do that? No, he won't. If you obey Him, this is going to happen. That's going to happen." Now, the old theologians called that the lie of Satan, and at the deepest depths of your heart, there is this lie, still, this belief. It's very deep, and it goes like this, don't get near to God, or he will utterly destroy your happiness.

[00:18:44.390] - Speaker 2

God's a killer. At least he's a happiness killer. And if you get near him and if you start to obey him, if you get control, you will never be happy again. Never. Now, that is according to the Bible, that is the deepest level of your heart. Whatever else is in your heart, you believe that. And if you don't believe that, I don't think you know your own heart. If you don't know that that's in there, you don't know your own heart. And I try as much as possible to only say things up here that I'm absolutely sure of. And that's the reason why when you get near the God, the kind of unvarnished, raw God, not the prettified God, not the God that we tend to pull together, that we're seeking, but the God who reveals himself in the Bible, no one seeks a God like that. No one! You either are going to try to remake him, or you're going to try to run from that God. You're going to try to remake him, or you're going to try to run from him, unless God does something about your blindness, does something about your fearfulness, does something about your denial, unless he penetrates, unless he comes in and starts to take away all that.

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And that's the reason why, what do we have? That's the reason why we have John 6:44 *No one can come to me unless the Father draws him.* Acts 16:14 *The Lord opened Lydia's heart to respond to Paul's message.* 1 John 4:19 *we love him only because he first loved us.*

Tis not that I did choose thee, for Lord that could not be this heart would still refuse thee, hadst thou not chosen me. My heart owns none before thee for thy rich grace. I thirst this, knowing if I love thee, thou must have loved me first.

Isaiah 65, verse 24 *before they call, I will answer, and while they are speaking, I will hear.*

It's the first point, he comes to us.

And by the way, this is good news. I know what you're looking at me like this for. If you want to pray, if it comes into your heart to pray for something, don't say, oh, I wonder whether God's going to hear this. You wouldn't even want to pray it unless he was helping you. You wouldn't even want to seek Him unless he was helping at the moment. So that's good, isn't it?

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Point 2. Now let's take a look at the next level. So, Jesus goes to him, "Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I'm trying to get in, somebody goes down ahead of me." So, Jesus comes and says, "Would you like to get well? And the man says to him, "Yeah, of course I would love some help to get into the water. That's why I'm not well, because I can't get into the water." Now, here again, we have a picture of something that I think is a lot more subtle and, oh my goodness, it's subtle. He is willing to partner with Jesus, you know, if Jesus comes along, "Would you like to be well?" He says, "Hey, I'd love to have help getting to the water." In other words, "Yes, whoever you are, I'd be happy to partner with you to get me into the water, which will save me." In other words, he's not looking at Jesus and saying, "Oh, you're where my salvation rests." He's saying, "Please help me get my salvation." Not, "You are my salvation." We're all like that at the beginning.

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We're all like that at the beginning, every one of us. Honestly, I was, I think you are, you were. Here's what I mean. Usually, we come to Christ. We start getting religious. We start to go to church or come back to church or whatever because something goes wrong in our life. Because we thought Mr. Right or Ms. Right was going to make it all right. And it didn't. Somehow or another or the career is going in a bad direction or something. And so, you start to go toward Jesus. But almost always, almost always what you're really saying is, "I need help to get back in the water." We're laying around the water, the water is Mr. Right or career or something. These are the things that are my joy. These are the things that are my salvation. And I'd be quite willing to partner with Jesus if he helps me. Look, people go into the ministry to serve Jesus, yes, but to feel important, and they haven't been able to feel important somewhere else. In other words, what's really going to save me, what's really going to make me is feel important to do this, to do that, and I'll be happy to have Jesus help me get there.

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We are all like that. I would even go so far as to say, though, in the very beginning, when you're moving toward Jesus, at first, you're sort of saying, please help me get my act together, although I need spiritual strength so I can get my career back on track so I can start to feel better about myself. In other words, we tend to use him as a means to an end instead of just like this guy. In other words, "Yeah, I'll be happy to help you help me get my salvation." Instead of saying, "You are my salvation, I'll be happy to let you help me get to something that makes me feel significance and secure, rather than to say, "You are my significance. You are my security. If I'm in you, if I have your love, if I am in you, then I have it. I don't need to get into the water." I would say, actually, probably even those of us who really, finally figured that

out and to some degree have embraced that truth, probably spend the rest of our life really truly understanding and practicing it. We still say, "I would be very happy, Lord Jesus, for you to partner with me and help me find the things that really are my salvation."

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Instead of saying, "You're my salvation," David, in Psalm 43, there's a place where he says, "My joy", talks to God that way, "You're my joy," not you can help me find my joy if you partner with me, "You are my joy." That's the second thing that we see here. First of all, God has to come to us if we're even going to find Him. Secondly, when he first starts working with us, almost always we're just trying to partner with him, using him as a means to an end to get us the things that we think will save us instead of seeing our salvation in him. Thirdly, now, finally, in spite of all this, in spite of this cluelessness, what does Jesus say? "No, I'm not taking you down in the water. Get up. I am the water. Get up, pick up your mat and walk". And at once the man was cured. He picked up his mat and walked. The day on which this took place was the Sabbath. Now, what's interesting almost immediately is there's a controversy. He has been told to take up his mat and walk. That immediately puts him into violation of the rabbinical at the time, the rabbinical laws on what you could and couldn't do on the Sabbath.

[00:26:02.090] - Speaker 2

And one of the things there was like 39 different things you couldn't do on the Sabbath, and most of them had to do with carrying weights. And one of the things you couldn't do is this. So, it says as soon as he did this, it says, he says, "Get up, pick up your mat and walk." it says, verse nine. And once the man was cured, he picked up his mat and walked. The day on which this took place was a Sabbath. So, the Jewish leader said to the man who had been healed, "It's a Sabbath, the law forbids you to carry your mat." But he replied, "This guy told me to do it." Pretty interesting. Remember, God comes to Adam and says, "Why did you eat the fruit?" "She made me do it." "Why did you give your husband the fruit?" "The serpent." You know, so down the line. Immediately, "Why are you carrying the mat?" He realizes, oh, my gosh, the powers that be are angry at me. "It was his idea," but the guy had left. I mean, Jesus had vanished. And then, when Jesus comes back to him, look carefully here, Jesus comes back to him in verse 14, and he says, "See, you are well again.

[00:27:09.280] - Speaker 2

Stop sinning, or something worse may happen to you." Now, we're not totally sure what that means. It's possible that he's saying that the reason why you were injured was because of some way in which you were living. Or he might be saying, if you don't come to faith now, but maybe God will give you something else in your life to finally wake you up. Jesus 'whole point is, "I didn't want to just help you in the body. I want you to believe. I want you to be spiritually and completely healed. Not just physically healed," but there's no indication that the man in any way responds. There's no indication. When we get to John, chapter nine, we're going to see a man born blind, and he's healed. And immediately Jesus leaves. But when Jesus comes back, he believes in Jesus, and he defends Jesus to the authorities. This guy not only

doesn't respond with belief, but the minute he figures out who Jesus is, look what happens at verse 15. The man went away and immediately told the Jewish leaders it was Jesus who had made him well. See, "Who made you, why are you carrying this mat?"

[00:28:16.340] - Speaker 2

"Not my problem. This guy over here did it." "Where? Where?" "I don't know." And then when he finds Jesus, he runs back to the authorities to try to get in good with the powers that be and says, "There's the guy," you know. "Don't prosecute me. There's the guy." The man doesn't believe. The man doesn't appreciate what Jesus has done. And I know there's a lot of people who say, "What? That's not how it's supposed to end. What do you mean? Jesus heals them, and he's supposed to come back and say, 'Oh, Master. Oh, I believe'." Well, yeah, that happens in some places, but not all the places. I said, well, see, look, I remember some years ago, I was studying the Bible every week with a group of people from very different with very different places in their beliefs. And we were going through as you go through the Bible, everybody, every one of the so-called heroes of faith is very flawed. Here's Abraham lying about Sarah so that people say, "Oh, she's not my wife, she's my sister." So, they take her into bed because he's afraid they're going to kill him for his wife. And then later on, Sarah says, "I can't give you children."

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She says to Abraham, "Take my Egyptian slave woman and sleep with her, and then she'll have children for you." And then as soon as he does and the children are born, a child is born, Sarah gets jealous. The slave gets jealous. Sarah says, "I'm going to send you off into the wilderness, into the desert where you can die." Abraham says, "Leave me out of it", you know. Then, there's Isaac and Rebecca deceiving each other. And then there's Jacob and Esau deceiving each other. And then there's David killing a man to get his wife. And don't get me started on Samson. So, I remember at one point somebody sort of pushed the Bible back and said, this makes no sense at all. These people are all idiots. In fact, there are places where here's Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, we have whole chapters go by without anybody really being a good example. And I remember the person said, I thought the Bible was supposed to be a set of moral examples to inspire us to live. And I said, you've missed the whole point of the Bible. If the Bible's message was God saves the worthy, then of course the stories of the Bible would be all people who responded, who did the right thing, who summons up the blood, who were faithful, who were courageous.

[00:30:52.280] - Speaker 2

But what you actually have is a set of stories about men and women who don't seek God's grace, don't deserve God's grace, and don't even appreciate God's grace once they get it, because salvation is by grace. That's the message. And that's the message here. It's not a bunch of little ESOPs fables, little moral exemplars that inspire us how to live. It's actually to tell us that you'll never be what you should be. You know, you never should be what you should be. And you need to throw yourself on the mercy of God and give your life holy to Him and receive that mercy as free.

Thirdly, this little controversy here at the end is more than you think. When Jesus, they come after Him and they say, "You are healing and doing things on the Sabbath," and what does he say? He says, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I also am working." Now here's what's going on. The Rabbis all taught that the only person who could work on the Sabbath without sinning was God. The only person who could work on the Sabbath without sinning was God.

[00:32:05.520] - Speaker 2

And so, Jesus said, "Okay." "What?" "My Father and I are doing our work." And see, they immediately knew what he was saying. I'm not sure you and I would first time through, but verse eight makes it very clear, verse 18. They immediately knew he was saying he was God. He says, "I'm only doing the work that God does on..." And what is that work? Well, see, if he's saying that the healing of this man was part of his work, what he's saying is my redemptive work, my restoring work, this is what the Sabbath is really all about. You remember how in John, chapter 1, Jesus is called the Lamb of God? The Passover Lamb symbolized atonement. And Jesus is essentially saying, I bring the atonement that the Passover Lamb only symbolized in Point 2. Now he's actually saying, "I'm Lord of the Sabbath," which is, by the way, something he does claim elsewhere. And what that means is "I bring the deep rest and salvation that the Sabbath can only point to." When God rested from his work at the end of the days of creation, in Genesis six, it says he rested from his work.

[00:33:31.730] - Speaker 2

That can't mean that he was tired. It can't mean he needed physical restoration. What did it mean that he rested? It means he was satisfied. It means he was at peace. Okay, and now let's move. Over and over in the Old Testament, though, God says, one day a week you need to rest. Of course, that's physical restoration. One day a week you need to rest. But it's very clear that Sabbath rest refers to more than just physical restoration. Because when the children of Israel are brought out of Egypt, he says, I will take you into the Promised Land, where I will give you rest in the middle of the wilderness. When they disobey God, he says, well, if you disobey me, you will never enter into my rest. He's talking about something deeper than that, and here's why. It is one thing to rest physically for a day, but it's another thing to rest not just from your physical work, but from the work underneath the work. What is that? Remember how Rocky says to Adrian in the first Rocky, the only good Rocky movie, she says, "Do you want to win?" or something like that.

[00:34:48.430] - Speaker 2

And he says, "No, I don't even care about winning. I just want to go the distance. Then I'll know I'm not a bum." Harold Abrams is being asked in Chariots of Fire, why are you working so hard to get the gold? He says, "When that gun goes off, I've got 10 seconds to justify my existence." Some of you come from traditional cultures where you're really working, but you're working, working, but you're actually working to please your parents and your family, make them proud, right? Those of us who are from more Western cultures, we're working, working. But we're really trying to get self-esteem, aren't we? We're trying to say,

I am good. I'm good at this. I can do this. In other words, I'm accomplished, I'm smart, I'm making money, and I'm thin. And these are ways that we're told you can have healthy self-esteem. See, there's work, and then there's the work under the work. There's the work we're doing, which we have to we knock off because we're tired. But the work under the work, which is to justify ourselves. It's to save ourselves. It's to get our self-esteem, our worth, that is crushing.

[00:36:02.850] - Speaker 2

And you can knock off for a day. You can knock off for a week, but what you really need is a rest from that work underneath the work. And of course, the book of Hebrews talks about this, because the Sabbath day is pointing to that rest. And in Hebrews, chapter seven, Hebrews, chapter four, it says, there remains then a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For anyone who enters God's rest rests from his own work, just as God did from his. Now, how do you rest from your own work? When Jesus died on the cross, he said, it is finished. What was he doing? What was finished? His work. What was his work? He was living the life and doing the work that you and I will do unless we rest in what he has done. He says, because I have fulfilled all righteousness believe in me and you'll know that God loves you, God accepts you. You are righteous in his sight. And what that does is when you realize because of his work, because he died on the cross, because of his work, I can rest from that work underneath the work.

[00:37:11.830] - Speaker 2

Of course, I want to please my family. Of course, I want to do well. Of course, I want excellence. But it's no longer it's not the water anymore. It's not the salvation anymore. Now it just becomes a good thing that I'm going to try for, because deep, deep, deep, deep, deep down inside I've got rest. I've got total and absolute rest. Have you got that?

C. S. Lewis in one place says like this he says, this is what Jesus is saying, you know that place where Jesus says, "Come unto me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you" see, making Jesus Christ the person who you live for will give you a deep rest. Living for anything else but Jesus Christ will just crush you with restlessness and weariness. And C. S. Lewis says, this is what Jesus is saying to you, "I am the way, the truth, the life. If anything, whatever is keeping you from God or from me, whatever it is, throw it away. Come to me, everyone who's carrying a heavy load. I am rest. I am life. I am your food."

[00:38:18.190] - Speaker 2

And finally, do not be afraid. I have overcome the whole universe.

Let's pray. So, Father, we thank you that you have shown us again through this miraculous sign that your Son Jesus Christ is not just our helper, he's not just our model, our exemplar. He's our savior. He doesn't just help us get into the water, he is the water. He doesn't just help us work ourselves out of that sense of unworthiness that we have, but he is our worthiness. He is our rest. We thank you that he went through

such agony and died on the cross so that we can say it really is finished. It is finished and we can rest. So, Father, please make all these truths a reality now in our lives through the Holy Spirit. In Jesus name we ask it. Amen.