

Dr. Jerry Nelson

## Pool of Bethesda and Opposition

1. (V. 5:1-2) What reason might John have for being so specific about the exact pool to which he is referring?

2. (V. 5:3-5) Again, what reason might John have for being so descriptive of the situation and the man?

Notice that verse 4 is missing in the NIV. Scholars have evidence it was added later apparently in an attempt to explain the “water is stirred” in verse 7. We don’t know what the “stirring” was about.

3. (V. 5:6) Idle speculation: Compare this verse with 2:24-25 and consider whether Jesus was omniscient or not.

Jesus’ question would seem to have an obvious answer. What else might Jesus have been asking by this question?

What might have been the invalid’s emotional and spiritual condition?

4. (V. 5:7) What does the invalid’s response indicate about his emotional state?

5. (V. 5:8-9) Attempt to describe what must have taken place in the invalid’s mind and heart in these verses. How does he perceive Jesus? (Consider verse 13 before answering.)

What happens in him between verse 7 and verse 9?

6. (V. 5:10) “The Jews” in the Gospel of John almost always refers to the religious leaders. Do you think “the Jews” recognized this man as the one who had been an invalid for so many years?

Do you think their objection is a valid concern for their “law,” or do you think they already suspected it was Jesus who had done this and they were looking for a way to trap Jesus?

Why?

7. (V. 5:11) Consider several ways the man’s response is so fitting.

8. (V. 5:12-13) What does verse 13 possibly indicate about the healed man’s faith or even gratitude? Why might Jesus have slipped away (cf. 2:4)?

9. (V. 5:14-15) Based on Jesus' comment to the healed man, what reason might Jesus have had for searching ("he found him") for the man?

What does Jesus suggest when he says, "Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you."?

Compare John 9:2-3. Are infirmities always the result of the individual's sin?

Was the man testifying or tattling when he told the Jews it was Jesus who healed him?

10. (V. 5:16-17) How is Jesus' remark in verse 17 a response to the Jews' criticism of his working on the Sabbath (cf. Luke 14:5)?

11. (V. 5:18) For what two reasons does the text say the Jews were attempting to kill Jesus?

What did the Jews understand Jesus to mean when Jesus called God his Father?

12. (V. 5:19-20) Does Jesus say the Jews were right or wrong in their understanding (verse 18) of his claim in verse 17?

What argument does Jesus use to further his claim to a special relationship with the Father?

13. (V. 5:21-23) What two activities has the Father given to the Son and what significance does this have?

What results from these two activities and what does Jesus say it specifically denotes?

14. (V. 5:24) What claim is Jesus here making about his relationship with the Father?

In the experience of the believer, what is the result of hearing and believing?

When does the "crossing over" take place, now or at death?

15. (V. 5:25) Is Jesus referring to the "physically dead" or "spiritually dead" or both?

16. (V. 5:26) What does this statement add to Jesus' claim to deity?

17. (V. 5:27) How does this verse enlarge upon the claim in 5:22?

What does Hebrews 2:17 add to our understanding of Jesus' reference to himself as "the Son of Man"?

18. (V. 5:28-29) When does this "coming out" take place? Now or at the resurrection?

Who are raised from their graves?

What two destinations are specified?

Verses 24 and 28 could appear to be contradictory. How are they not?

Which verse (24 or 28) is describing the means by which we become Christians?

Which verse (24 or 28) is describing one of the results of being a Christian?

19. (V. 5:30) How does this verse relate to verses 20-23?

Again, what is Jesus' claim in these verses?

## Reflection Questions

There are several different scenarios mentioned in this passage. In each one, people responded to Jesus in different ways. As you think about their responses, think about how you respond to Jesus in similar situations.

How did the invalid ultimately respond to Jesus? Repentance? Belief? Gratitude? When God meets an urgent need in your life, how do you respond? Do you truly believe that it was accomplished by God? If so, what actions follow?

The invalid's true need was a need of repentance. How do you respond when confronted with sin and a need for repentance?

The Jews responded to Jesus with persecution and a desire for vengeance ("they tried all the harder to kill him"). How do you respond to the truth of the Gospel when it means that you must disregard a lifestyle or belief system that is contrary to God's Word? How do you respond to others who are angered by the claims of Jesus?

The response of those who believe that Jesus is the Christ is eternal life. Do you believe the claims of Christ? If so, what does your response entail?

The response of those who do not believe Jesus is judgment and condemnation. What is your response to those who do not believe?

If you are not currently in a Small Group, we encourage you to discuss your reflection questions with a family member or a close friend. Previous lessons are available on-line at [www.sgc.org/John](http://www.sgc.org/John).

If you would like to be part of a Small Group, please contact Dori Sear at [dsear@sgc.org](mailto:dsear@sgc.org)

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