

## Teaching Notes: John Chapter 5

### "The God-Man"

Text: John 5:1–47

**Theme:** Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. He has divine authority to heal, to give life, to judge the world, and to fulfill the Scriptures.

**Introduction** John's Gospel was written so that people would believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing they might have life in His name.

In John 5, the conflict around Jesus begins to intensify. The first miracles in John were more private, but this miracle is public, AND it happens on the Sabbath. Because of this, the Jewish leaders begin their official persecution of Jesus. They are not merely upset that a man was healed. They are upset because Jesus' actions and words reveal His true identity: **HE IS EQUAL WITH GOD**.

John 5 teaches us **three major truths**:

1. Jesus has **power** to restore the helpless.
2. Jesus has **authority** as the Son of God.
3. Jesus is the **fulfillment of the Scriptures**.

#### **I. The Cure: Jesus Restores the Helpless** (John 5:1–15)

Jesus comes to Jerusalem and visits the pool called Bethesda. Around this pool lay many people who were sick, blind, lame, and paralyzed. Among them was a man who had been sick for thirty-eight years. Jesus asks him a direct question: "*Do you wish to get well*" — John 5:6?

At first, the question may sound strange. Surely, he wants to be well. But his answer reveals something deeper. Instead of simply saying yes, he explains why healing has not happened for him: *He has no one to help him into the pool*. This man's body was paralyzed, but in some ways, so was his hope.

##### **A. Jesus came to him in grace.**

The man did not seek Jesus. Jesus came to him. That is grace. Jesus did not heal him because he had strong faith. He did not heal him because the man fully understood who He was. Jesus came to a helpless man and spoke a life-changing word.

- B. **Jesus healed him by His word!** Jesus said: *“Get up, pick up your mat and walk.”* — John 5:8. Jesus commanded the man to do the very thing he could not do. But when Jesus commands, His word carries the power to obey. The man was healed immediately.

This is a picture of salvation. Sinners are spiritually helpless. We cannot raise ourselves. We cannot save ourselves. But when Christ speaks life, the dead live.

- C. **The religious leaders missed the miracle.** The Jewish leaders did not rejoice that a man had been healed after thirty-eight years of suffering. Instead, they focused on the fact that he was carrying his mat on the Sabbath. They cared more about their rules than the man’s restoration. Their legalism blinded them to grace.

**Application:** It is possible to be religious and still miss what God is doing. We must be careful that our traditions, preferences, and unwritten rules do not become more important to us than people being made whole by Jesus.

## II. The Controversy: Jesus Claims Equality with God (John 5:16–18)

The healing led to conflict because it happened on the Sabbath. The Jewish leaders accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath.

Jesus responded: *“My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working”* — John 5:17.

This statement enraged them because they understood what Jesus was claiming. He was not merely saying that God was generally Father to all people. He called God *“My Father”* in a unique sense. John tells us plainly: He was *“making Himself equal with God”* — John 5:18.

- A. **Jesus did not deny the charge!** He did not say, *“You misunderstood Me.”* He did not say, *“I am only a prophet.”* He did not say, *“I am merely a moral teacher.”* Instead, He explained His relationship with the Father. The Jewish leaders accused Him of blasphemy because they understood His claim: Jesus was claiming deity.
- B. **Jesus exposed their spiritual blindness.**
- The leaders saw a healed man, but they did not see the Son of God.
  - They saw a Sabbath violation, but they did not see divine compassion.

- They knew religious regulations, but they did not recognize the Redeemer standing in front of them.

**Application:** Knowledge of religion is not the same as knowing God. A person may know Scripture facts, religious customs, and theological vocabulary, yet still reject Christ.

### III. The Claims: Jesus Reveals His Divine Authority (John 5:19–47)

1. **In response to their accusation, Jesus gives three major claims**—He Jesus claims equality with God in three ways:
  - A. **Equal in works**—What the Father does, the Son does: *“Whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in the same manner”* (John 5:19). Jesus is not acting independently from the Father. He is perfectly united with the Father. The Father and Son work together in perfect harmony.
  - B. **Equal in giving life**— *“Just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes”* — John 5:21. Only God can give life. Jesus claims that authority for Himself.
  - C. **Equal in judgment and honor**: The Father has given judgment to the Son so that all will honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. *“He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him”* — John 5:23. This is a massive statement. You cannot truly honor God while rejecting Jesus Christ.

**Application:** Many people claim to believe in God while denying Jesus. But according to Jesus, to reject the Son is to reject the Father.

2. **Jesus has authority to raise the dead** (John 5:24–29). Jesus then speaks about life, death, resurrection, and judgment. John 5:24 is one of the clearest salvation verses in the Bible: *“He who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.”* Notice the certainty:
  - Has eternal life — present possession.
  - Does not come into judgment — future security.
  - Has passed out of death into life — completed transfer.

Salvation is not merely “turning over a new leaf.” It is passing from death to life.

- A. **Spiritual resurrection**—The lost sinner is spiritually dead. Dead people cannot revive themselves. But when sinners hear the voice of Christ and believe, they live.
- B. **Future resurrection**—Jesus also speaks of a future day when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice. There will be:
  - A resurrection of life for those who belong to Christ.
  - A resurrection of judgment for those who reject Him.

Today, Jesus is Savior. One day, He will be Judge.

**Application:** Every person will respond to Jesus either now by faith or later in judgment. The issue is not whether we will meet Christ. The issue is whether we will meet Him as Savior or Judge.

3. **Jesus has witnesses who confirm His identity** (John 5:30–47). Jesus appeals to WITNESSES who testify that He is the Son of God.

A. **John the Baptist**

John testified that Jesus is the Lamb of God and the Son of God. He was a burning and shining lamp, but many enjoyed his ministry without submitting to his message.

That still happens today. People can enjoy preaching, music, church culture, and spiritual excitement without truly surrendering to Christ.

B. **The works of Jesus**

The miracles of Jesus were signs. They were not random displays of power. They revealed who He is. The healing at Bethesda was not only an act of compassion; it was evidence that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God.

- C. **The Scriptures** Jesus said: *“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that bear witness about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life”* — John 5:39–40.

The religious leaders knew the text, but they missed the Person to whom the text pointed. They had Scripture in their hands and heads, but not in their hearts.

**Application:** The goal of Bible study is not merely information. The goal is transformation through Christ. If our study of Scripture does not lead us to love, trust, worship, and obey Jesus, then we are missing the point.

**Conclusion** John 5 presents Jesus as the God-Man.

He is truly man: He walks into a place of human suffering and shows compassion to a helpless man.

He is truly God: He heals by His word, claims equality with the Father, gives life, executes judgment, and fulfills the Scriptures.

The healed man was asked, “Do you wish to get well?” That question still confronts us.

Do we want Christ to make us whole?

Do we want His life, His authority, His forgiveness, and His lordship?

Or will we cling to religion, excuses, tradition, and pride?

The tragedy of John 5 is that the religious leaders were close to Scripture but far from the Savior.

The invitation is simple: **COME TO JESUS AND HAVE LIFE.**

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What religious traditions, preferences, or “unwritten rules” can sometimes keep people from seeing the grace of God clearly?
2. Why do you think Jesus chose to heal this man on the Sabbath when He knew it would create controversy?
3. What is the difference between knowing the Bible and coming to Christ through the Bible?