

St. Paul's Dorking Small Groups May 25th 2008

Focus : Witnessing with Jesus - at the Pool John 15 -15



Word: Key points from Sunday's sermon: John writes his gospel to help his readers draw verdict on the identity of Jesus. To do this he called up witnesses. To date we have heard First witness : John the Baptist from Andrew , Simon (Peter) and another (John ?, Philip and Nathaniel; Nicodemus; Woman at the well in Samaria and witnessed the healing of the Roman Official's Son. This week we come to the second healing miracle which is counted as one of Jesus 'Signs'. There are 7 in total in the Gospel : Water into wine in Cana Jn 2 Heals Roman Official's son in Cana Jn 4, Heals Lame man at Bethesda, Jn 5 Feeds 5000(+) in Galilee Jn 6 Walks on Water, Galilee Jn 6 Heals Blind man at Siloam Jn 9, Raises Lazarus from dead Jn 11 in Bethany.

Why Signs?

- 1) : CH 5 32-35 *Testimony in a court was not allowed from the defendant , Jesus talks about the testimonies given of him: v32 There is another who testifies in my favour, and I know that his testimony about me is valid. **You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth. Jesus then say this : v 36 I have testimony weightier than that of John.** For the **very work that the Father has given me to finish, and which I am doing, testifies that the Father has sent me.** He has already said this v 19-20 Jesus gave them this answer: I tell you the truth, **the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing,** because whatever the Father does the Son also does. **For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does.** These Signs are part to the works Jesus refers to here and to they bear witness to who Jesus is.*
- 2) They happened in places at specific times. Bethesda can still be seen today with its pools and porticos excavated beneath the beautiful Crusader church of St Anne's in the Old City of Jerusalem. They give an historical anchor to Jesus' existence, life and ministry. Either he was here and did these things or he wasn't. These can't be read as myths and legends.

Jesus is here with us to day to do works the bear witness TO HIS NAME AND TO DO THEM THROUGH US *We can expect there to be signs in our lives. and for response to them to be very mixed. We are called to pray for the sick as a witness.* These signs roused the fury and anger of his opponents, they caused fear and rejection.

The man : For years this man had waited. It seems that these pools were an **instrument of Gods healing** and that whilst they were stirred there was healing freely flowing.. a time and a place. Jesus is not interested in the man's reasons for not being healed he is interested **in what he really wants..** do you want to be healed.. do you want me ? do you want full shalom..? **We can ask that of those who debate with us and may have done so endlessly.. what is you want.. do you want God's shalom wholeness and healing ?**

What was the man's state : 'All abandoned and helpless..' Lonely and abandoned, Withered all dried up sorry for himself, Years of frustration. *This may describe you , or some one you know at work or a neighbour family friend..*

Jesus : Jesus however is here right beside him, HE is the giver , he initiates (gives the word) From a distance Jesus saw him, Jesus learned about him, Jesus asked him a straight question, Man replies have no one, Jesus speaks word of healing, AT ONCE man is healed. **Healing is immediate.. no protocol needed,** no way of earning it, Jesus turns him away from the revered waters and turn him to himself .a turning key on our part repentance. Jesus tells him not to sin again. This is key. To be repentant to turn to Christ. Jesus will work signs that bear witness to him through our lives, we are to draw near, to challenge if necessary AND to show his compassion



Witness: questions to discuss

1. Use the image of water **in worship to meditate** on how it is used in Johns Gospel to bear witness to Jesus work in our lives : **The use of water** : Chapter 1 Baptism- cleansing Chapter 2 Cana : transformed into wine Chapter 3 Nicodemus : born of water and spirit Chapter 4 Samaritan woman well being thirsty and satisfied with Jesus water : Chapter 5 : water for healing

Water is used **To cleanse To transform To give life To satisfy/quench thirst To heal**
Next time you drink or wash your car your hands jump in a puddle think of these five things.. and thank GOD

2. How real is Jesus to me ? What convinces me that He walked this earth? What relevance does his life have to those around me at work, in the community?

3 The waters in this account were 'troubled'. What causes troubled waters around me ?

4. Which parts of my life have withered and dried up? Do I want to be healed?

5. Can I trust Jesus word of life?

6. How does this help overtly in my witness to colleagues and friends and family.