

Do You Want to Be Made Well?

by Bryan Gibson

This was the very question Jesus asked a man who had suffered with an infirmity for thirty-eight years (John 5:6). Can you imagine the man saying, “Thank you for asking, but I think I would like to keep suffering”? No way. Like anyone else would who had suffered this long, this man wanted to be made well. And Jesus did make him well. Jesus said to him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk” (John 5:8), and the next verse says, “immediately the man was made well, took up his bed and walked” (John 5:9).

But suppose you had some infirmity far worse than what this man had, far worse than any physical ailment—worse than cancer, worse than blindness, worse than the most crippling disease you could imagine. Suppose you were sick with sin (Mark 2:17). Here’s what Jesus told the man whom He had healed of his infirmity: “Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you” (John 5:14). Say what? What could possibly be worse than being sick for thirty-eight years? Well, if this man had continued in sin, he would have been lost in hell forever (Mark 9:43-48). Can you think of anything worse than that? Look at it this way. You can lose your sight and still go to heaven. You can lose a limb and still go to heaven. You can be eaten up with cancer and still go to heaven. You can be sick from the first day of your life to the last and still go to heaven. But you cannot go to heaven in your sins (John 8:21-24). Indeed, the consequences of sin sickness are far worse than the consequences of physical sickness. There is simply no comparison.

Jesus didn’t come to the earth to heal physical sickness. He did heal many people (Matthew 4:23)—to prove that He was the Son of God (John 20:30-31), but His real purpose in coming was to heal sin (Luke 19:10). On one occasion a paralyzed man was let down through the roof so that Jesus could heal him (Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12). Jesus surprised them all when he said to the man, “Son, be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you” (Matthew 9:2). Jesus saw in this man a much deeper need than his physical affliction. Jesus did go on to heal this man, but notice the explanation: “But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the paralytic, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and walk.” Jesus used power that they could see in action to prove that He had the power to do what they could not see in action—forgive sins.

What about you? Are you sick with sin? If so, Jesus is asking you the same question he asked the man in John 5: “Do you want to be made well?” Wouldn’t you be foolish to say no, especially when you consider the consequences of remaining in sin? Jesus has the power to heal you of your sin, and He will, if you follow some simple instructions. What instructions does Jesus give you? Believe in Him (Mark 16:16; John 8:24); repent of your sins (Acts 2:38); confess your faith in Him (Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37), and be baptized in water (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16). Obey these commandments today, and Jesus will heal you. He will make you well. “Be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you.”