

6th Sunday of Easter May 26, 2019

Year C – the Gospel of Luke

Lutheran Living the ^ Lectionary

*A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the rhythms of the readings part of the rhythms of your life.*

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Thlipsis

<https://steadfastlutherans.org/2013/05/in-jesus-peace-in-the-world-tribulation-sermon-on-john-1623-33-by-pr-charles-henrickson/>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 556 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 387

“Dear Christians, one and all, rejoice”

“This, Luther’s first congregational hymn, appeared in print in 1524. It is almost autobiographical in nature; the first stanza reveals the frustration Luther felt in the monastery. What is true of Luther is true of every human: all are flawed sinners by nature, and yet there is reason to rejoice since God sent His Son to live, die, and rise from death for our salvation. The doctrine of justification by grace through faith is one of the fundamentals of the Reformation. The tune of this hymn is exuberant and dance-like, reflecting the influence of the Renaissance....”

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-41LGJ70YI> Segment 16 of the Martin Luther Hymn Fest held at Immanuel Lutheran Church of Colorado Springs on October 22, 2017...performed by organist and Music Director, Dr. Donald Zimmermann of Immanuel Lutheran Church. The organ setting is by Paul Manz. ...an American Lutheran church musician who popularized hymn festivals such as this one and who did much to encourage creative singing of Lutheran hymns and chorales.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U5H6mph9F-E> Piano from TLH. [Andrew Remillard](#)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MnMvt9vORpM> Organ solo. From the organ book Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice: Partita on "Nun freut euch" (Reformation Partitas No. 3) by Kevin Hildebrand

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

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1st Reading – “...God had called us to preach the gospel”

Psalm – “May God be gracious to us...”

Epistle – “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.”

Gospel – “Ah, now you are speaking plainly..”

“It is good to include all the scripture lessons for the day into the sermon...”

- <http://clba.org/6th-sunday-of-easter/> Pastor Dale Hanson

Acts 16:9-15; RCL, the same reading (Next week: Acts 1:12-26; RCL, Acts 16:16-34)

“Occasionally the Lectionary’s choice of where to begin and end a text boggles preachers’ and teachers’ minds. This Sunday’s text is a good case in point. It’s not just that it begins in the middle of a paragraph in most English translations. It’s also that this text begins in the middle of what we often call Paul’s second missionary journey. So Acts 16’s preachers and teachers may be wise to begin with perhaps verse 6 and end, as the Lectionary suggests, with verse 15.

This text’s broader context is Paul and Barnabas’ decision to take a trip to visit the churches they’ve planted. However, since Barnabas wishes to take John Mark with them, Paul

and he go their separate ways. As a result, Silas accompanies Paul on their extended missions trip.

However, while the missionaries seem to have an itinerary for it, God has God's own plans for the second missionary journey. Earlier God had shown Peter God had plans for smashing the barriers that kept Jews from doing mission work among gentiles. Now, however, God erects a barrier to mission work. In verses 6 and 7 we read Paul and his companions "were kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia..."

- https://cep.calvinseminary.edu/sermon-starters/easter-6c/?type=old_testament_lectionary Doug Bratt

Acts 16:6-8

⁶And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. ⁷And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. ⁸So, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas.

⁹And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰And when Paul^[a] had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

The Conversion of Lydia

¹¹So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, ¹²and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the^[b] district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. ¹³And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. ¹⁴One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

- a. [Acts 16:10](#) Greek *he*
- b. [Acts 16:12](#) Or *that*

"...Though the team apparently wastes no time in getting to the city, the mission still requires patience. Not much happens for a while. They were there for "some days" (just how long was that?). The appeal in the vision is urgent, and the response to it is immediate; but the results are not seen right away. When God does begin to work in Philippi, it comes with a surprise. Paul's vision had involved a Macedonian man. But the first to welcome the gospel in Philippi was a woman, and in fact a woman from the area that Paul had just left in the east. Any simple expectations about God's mission are clearly going to be wrong. How odd, and grace-

filled, that this woman from Thyatira, in Asia where the Spirit had forbidden Paul to go, is now met in Philippi and hears the gospel.

Lydia listens, but the Lord must open the heart to believe (verse 14). At this crucial point, Paul practically disappears from the story. It is not the charismatic personality of the pastor or preacher that has the power to create faith; it must come from God's own merciful activity. From beginning to end, this text stresses that it is God who is in charge of the mission, God who sets its direction, and God who determines its results.

Lydia's faith becomes immediately active: she is baptized along with her whole household, and she opens her home. Social and cultural barriers crumble, and this corner of the empire is beginning to be changed by God's grace. The author says that Lydia "prevailed upon" (NRSV) Paul and his companions to stay with her and accept her hospitality. There is only one other place in the New Testament where this word is used: in Emmaus on Easter evening, as the two traveling disciples urged the risen Jesus to stay with them that night (Luke 24:29)..."

- http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1627 [Brian Peterson](#) Professor of New Testament, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, SC

Psalm 67; RCL, the same reading (Psalm 133; RCL, Psalm 97)

The sixth Sunday of Easter may feel a bit like the twelfth day of Christmas -- officially still in the zone but, practically speaking, most people have moved on.

All the presents have been opened: preachers have proclaimed the Easter story, the most familiar Easter songs have been sung, the lilies have either wilted or been taken home. What better time, then, to try preaching from the Psalms! Psalm 67 offers a strong framework for building a late-season Easter sermon. It has at least two solid themes to choose from, and pairs well with either the Acts or the Revelation texts appointed for Easter 6...

We get to eat dessert first in Psalm 67. The Psalmist serves up the benediction right away instead of saving it till the end: "May God be gracious to us and bless us, and make his face to shine upon us." (67:1, many have noted, echoes Numbers 6:24-26). A benediction is "a word wishing someone well," writes James Limburg. [2] That well-wishing is not only for the faithful few, but for "all nations." The blessing is signature, God's way of communicating "saving power" to "all nations" (67:2). The outcome: "all the peoples" praise God (67:3). God's blessing spreads far and wide, overflowing all boundaries.

When used on the sixth Sunday of Easter, whether as the main preaching text or a supporting text, Psalm 67 works well for preaching. It declares that God's blessing -- and there is no blessing greater than Easter -- is for all people. Church folk might be tempted at this particular time of year to feel deflated if the Easter crowd has drifted away. Psalm 67 does not go there. It imparts joy and prompts us to spread the Easter message everywhere..."

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1651 [Nancy Koester](#) Adjunct Professor, Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minn

Make Your Face Shine upon Us

To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. A Psalm. A Song.

67 May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us, **Selah**
² that your way may be known on earth,
your saving power among all nations.
³ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!

⁴ Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. **Selah**
⁵ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!

⁶ The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, shall bless us.
⁷ God shall bless us;
let all the ends of the earth fear him!

“Psalm 67 begins with a prayer for blessing that draws its words from the great priestly blessing in Numbers 6:24-26 (verse 1).

In the Numbers passage God directs Aaron and his descents to bless the Israelites with the words, “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you.” The psalmist adapts the Aaronic blessing to introduce a prayer for divine favor. In its original context, the blessing was for Israel and the focus was on the priests’ role in speaking the blessing to the people. In Psalm 67, however, the purpose of the blessing is to reveal God’s greatness to the nations (verse 2) and lead the people of the earth to praise God (verse 3) to the “ends of the earth” (verse 7).

As Psalm 67 adapts the Aaronic blessing and expands its purpose, it echoes two great Old Testament theological traditions. The psalm recalls the promise God made to Abraham to bless him and, in turn, to bless all the families of the earth (Genesis 12:1-4). While the election of Abraham cannot be reduced to its function of universal blessing, that is an unmistakable part of the promise.

Abraham and his descendants were not blessed to the exclusion of others. Rather, all families of the earth were to find their blessing in or through them. This plays out in the Genesis narrative as Abraham sojourns in Canaan. Those who welcome him and see God at work in him receive God’s blessing, and those who did not recognize it were cursed (Genesis 12:10-20; 14:17-24; 20). So Psalm 67 invites the nations to celebrate God’s work among the people of Abraham and to acknowledge God’s guidance of them as well (verse 4)...”

Read in the season of Easter, Psalm 67 has **two primary messages** for the church. **First**, the wish for God’s blessing (verse 1) and gratitude for God’s provisions relate to the experience of resurrection for Jesus’ followers. Like the Israelites of old who thanked God for the earth’s bounty, so also Jesus’ disciples experienced the life-giving force of the Creator God when Jesus

was raised from the dead. The wish for blessings, however, also acknowledges that there is a “not-yet” quality to this celebration. The jussive verb in verse 1 (“may God be gracious to us and bless us”) is a kind of petition. It recognizes a need for blessing that is not at present complete or experienced in full.

Second, the psalm anticipates the Gospel’s appeal to the Gentiles. God’s saving power began among the Israelites, but God’s work had an appeal to “the nations,” to those outside the covenant community. Thus, Psalm 67 pairs nicely with Acts 16:9-15 in which Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth in Thyatira, hears Paul’s preaching and commits herself to Christ. As the first Gentile convert in Europe, Lydia exemplifies how the Gospel took hold among “God fearers,” that is, Gentiles associated with the synagogue. Lydia was a prime example of how Israel experienced God’s blessings and “the ends of the earth” erupted in praise (Psalm 67:3, 5)...

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=4066
Jerome Creach Robert C. Holland Professor of Old Testament, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Penn

Revelation 21:9-14, 21-27; RCL, Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5 (Revelation 22:1-6 (7-11)12-20; RCL, Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21)

“...Last week we heard that that’s where we’re going, New Jerusalem, as we just got started in Revelation 21. Now today we pick up our text in verse 9 of that chapter: “Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, ‘Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.’”

What a jarring contrast of images! First we see an angel who has “seven bowls full of the seven last plagues,” ready to be poured out upon the earth—what could be more gloom-and-doomish than that? And then this angel wants to show us the heavenly “Bride,” a way to speak about Christ’s bride, the Church, adorned in beauty and splendor—an image of joy and celebration! You see, even while it looks like earth is going to hell in a handbasket, we have this heavenly hope to look forward to! The angel lifts John’s sights from the destruction and the judgment coming on the earth to give him a glimpse of the glory still to come for God’s people...”

- <https://stmatthewbt.org/2010/05/09/take-a-tour-of-the-city-revelation-219-14-21-27/> Rev. Charles Henrickson

The New Jerusalem

⁹Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.” ¹⁰And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ¹²It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed— ¹³on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. ¹⁴And the wall of the city had twelve

foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

¹⁵ And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. ¹⁶ The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia.^[a] Its length and width and height are equal. ¹⁷ He also measured its wall, 144 cubits^[b] by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement. ¹⁸ The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass. ¹⁹ The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, ²⁰ the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. ²¹ And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

²² And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴ By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, ²⁵ and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. ²⁶ They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. ²⁷ But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

- a. [Revelation 21:16](#) About 1,380 miles; a *stadion* was about 607 feet or 185 meters
- b. [Revelation 21:17](#) A *cubit* was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

“In this book of so many visions, we arrive at the final vision; final not only because it is the last in this book, but final because here we see the ultimate goal to which God will bring the world.

John gives us a more detailed presentation of the same city that he had glimpsed in 21:2. It is often stated that the New Jerusalem has no temple, but that is not quite right. It has no separate structure which could be identified as a temple, because God and the Lamb are the temple in this city (verse 22)...”

➤ http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=573 [Brian Peterson](#) Professor of New Testament, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, SC

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Well, listen again to what he (John) says. An angel **“carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.”**

Notice first that St. John’s heaven on earth is not made by human hands, or even by human ideas. We do not build it according to our own dreams and schemes. In fact we cannot build it. That’s what makes this vision of heaven on earth very different. What we can’t do, God does. Which is why it’s heavenly and perfect.

And since John wants us to look forward to this heaven on earth, this life of the world to come, he tells us what it's like. His description is extravagant and lush. Unfortunately, quite a bit of it was left out of our reading for today. So I'll clue you in now.

Consider, for starters, the size of the city. It's one thousand five hundred miles long, fifteen hundred miles wide, and – get this – fifteen hundred miles high. So, if we try to put that into terms we can attempt to grasp in human terms: Think of the area from Houston to San Diego, up to Vancouver, across to Minneapolis, and back to Houston.

Well, even that extremely large area is not quite as big as the base of the heavenly city. Now, imagine that it stretches just as far into the sky! This city is huge! There's room enough for us all.

And this vast city is a magnificent work of art. And a work of art usually has a signature on it somewhere to tell us the name of the artist. This city has the signature of none other than God Himself on it. We know this first by its perfection. It's a perfect cube. All the measurements of the city are multiples of twelve for the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles of Christ.

God also applies His name to the city and its inhabitants with great generosity. His handiwork is lavish. There is no restraint, but gift upon gift. No holding back as the jeweler's vault is opened and the walls and gates of the city are set in precious stones.

And these stones, like the city itself, are enormous. For instance, we're told that each of the city's gates is some four hundred fifty feet high. And each gate is made from a single pearl. That's some pearl. John is trying to describe the indescribable. It's a way of saying that God's extravagance to us knows no bounds..."

➤ <https://www.stpaulaustin.org/sermons/a-new-world-coming/>
Rev. Sherman D. Stenson, Associate Pastor

John 16:23-33 or John 5:1-9; RCL, John 14:23-29 or John 5:1-9 (John 17:20-26; RCL, the same reading)

"Hear again the words of Jesus at the end of John 16, verse 33: "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." This is our text.

"In Jesus, Peace; In the World, Tribulation." This is what our Lord says his followers can expect. It was that way for his disciples back then. It is that way for his disciples still now. On the one hand, peace; on the other hand, tribulation. Both guaranteed, at the same time, for all those who follow the Savior in faith. How does this apply to you and me?..." (continued after the reading)

"The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 16th Chapter"

²³ In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. ²⁴ Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

I Have Overcome the World

²⁵ *“I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. ²⁶ In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; ²⁷ for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.^[a] ²⁸ I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”*

²⁹ His disciples said, “Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech! ³⁰ Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God.” ³¹ Jesus answered them, *“Do you now believe? ³² Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. ³³ I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”*

- a. [John 16:27](#) Some manuscripts from the Father

“...In the world you will have tribulation,” Jesus continues. “You will have.” It’s guaranteed. You can count on it. The tribulation is going to come. Expect it. Be ready for it.

“In the world you will have tribulation.” “Tribulation,” trouble—the Greek word here is “thlipsis.” “Thlipsis” has the idea of “pressure,” being pressed hard, pressure being brought to bear against someone. Certainly the disciples of Jesus went on to face their share of pressure, tribulation, “thlipsis.”... All this was “thlipsis,” tribulation, extreme pressure, exercised by the world, against Christians. And really, it’s been no different ever since. In every century the church, as it has been faithful, has experienced pressure and trouble from a hostile world. “In the world you will have tribulation.” Jesus is saying that to us, too, to all of us here today...

Thlipsis

Now is there a way to avoid “thlipsis,” to avoid this pressure and tribulation? Sure there is. Just surrender to the world, give up the fight, do what they say, and the world will leave you alone. They may even applaud you for seeing the light and being so tolerant.

But that’s not us. No, we will be faithful to God’s Word, by God’s grace. We will speak the truth, no matter how the world rages against it. And what will give us the confidence and the courage to do so? It is this: Christ’s promise of peace. Jesus here assures his disciples: “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”...

- <https://steadfastlutherans.org/2013/05/in-jesus-peace-in-the-world-tribulation-sermon-on-john-1623-33-by-pr-charles-henrickson/> Pastor Charles Henrickson

“The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 5th Chapter”

“The man healed in this story is perhaps the least willing and the least grateful of all the people Jesus heals in John’s Gospel.

The setting of the healing is a pool called Bethzatha near the Sheep’s Gate in Jerusalem (John 5:2). Lying in the porticos around this pool are many invalids -- blind, lame, and paralyzed (5:3). The earliest manuscripts of John do not explain why the invalids are there, but later scribes added an explanation that appears in certain manuscripts (5:4). According to this explanation, people believed that an angel of the Lord would come and stir the waters, and that whoever was the first to enter the pool after the waters were stirred would be healed of his or her malady.

When Jesus sees a man who has been ill for thirty-eight years lying there (John 5:5), he asks him, “Do you want to be made well?” (5:6). We might expect a resounding “Yes!” Instead, the man offers a complaint, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me” (5:7)...”

- https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=839 [Elisabeth Johnson](#) Professor, Lutheran Institute of Theology, Meiganga, Cameroon

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“Again, we have a small section from a much longer, more complex passage, [John 5:1-20](#), and on their own these 9 verses do not tell us that the healing took place on a Sabbath, nor that Jesus’ command, “Take up your mat,” violates the Sabbath law to carry no burdens, nor that: “For this reason the (Judeans) were seeking all the more to kill (Jesus), because he was not only breaking the Sabbath, but was also calling God his own Father, thereby making himself equal to God. John 5:18*

Nor do they tell what Jesus says in response: “(By my word of honour), I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise.” John 5:19

*So. Without Verses 11-20, we might not realize that Verses 1-9 are a high-stakes sign performed by Jesus to show the work that the Father is doing: **WORK** the Father is doing - even on the Sabbath day of **REST**...” (continued after the reading)*

The Healing at the Pool on the Sabbath

5 After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

² Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic^[a] called Bethesda,^[b] which has five roofed colonnades. ³ In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed.^[c] ⁵ One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, **“Do you want to be healed?”** ⁷ The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.” ⁸ Jesus

said to him, **“Get up, take up your bed, and walk.”**⁹ And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

Now that day was the Sabbath. *(this last phrase is actual part of the sentence that is verse 10.)

- a. [John 5:2](#) Or *Hebrew*
- b. [John 5:2](#) Some manuscripts *Bethsaida*
- c. [John 5:3](#) Some manuscripts insert, wholly or in part, *waiting for the moving of the water; ⁴for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and stirred the water: whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was healed of whatever disease he had*

“This is the Gospel of the Lord” “Praise to You, O Christ”

“...as we read this story today, we too should focus on the healing of broken relationships, and not on the physical symptoms.

Verse 1. Parallel to Jesus' first sign in Cana (changing water into wine) so too, after his second sign, also in Cana (healing a Royal officials son), Jesus goes to Jerusalem where he will be in conflict with the Judean elite authorities. The first time was for the Passover festival. John does not specify which festival this time.

Verse 2. These waters and their healing properties are attested to in Roman records.

Verse 3 and 5. To be an invalid was to be a social outcast, a beggar, and probably homeless. The man had been ill for 38 years - which in itself is longer than the average life span at the time of Jesus.

Verse 4. This verse is placed as a footnote since it is regarded as a later addition explaining the healing properties to generations long since removed from this time and place.

Verse 6. John doesn't explain how Jesus knew he had been lying there a long time. Jesus' question: *Do you want to be made well?* should be read as: *Do you want to be restored to your right relationships?*

Verse 7. The sick man honourably does not answer Jesus' question directly - to do so would be to ask a favour that he, as an invalid, could not honourably ask of a stranger. Instead, the sick man - assuming that the means of healing is the pool of water - explains his situation. He is truly isolated since he has "no one," that is, no close family who can assist him to get into the pool ahead of all the others.

Verse 8. In response, Jesus tells the man to do 3 things: (1) Stand up; (2) take up your mat; and, (3) walk.

Telling the man to do these things creates the impossible possibility of a right relationship with Jesus - obedience.

The relationship is impossible because: (1) the invalid is not worthy of such a thing - he is a nobody - less than a person; and, (2) the invalid cannot possibly do what he is being commanded to do - that is, cannot possibly do these things if we are focusing on the physical symptoms alone.

But if we focus on the social relationships as Jesus and everyone there would be doing, our jaws would have dropped way back in Verse 6 when John said, "Jesus **SAW** him, and **KNEW**, and **SAID** to him."

It is actually these 3 actions of Jesus that are the "miracle" of this story, because in so doing Jesus has broken every social norm of his time by creating the beginnings of a relationship with a nobody.

Verse 9. Well of course the man was immediately made well. Taking up his mat and walking was the easy part after the difficult work or restoring his right relationship with his community was done by Jesus stopping and seeing, knowing, and speaking with him.

Anyone here tried stopping, seeing, knowing, and speaking with a beggar recently?

It is too bad the Lectionary doesn't include Verses 10-20, because that would help us realize what dangerous work it is."

- <https://www.holytextures.com/2010/03/john-5-1-9-year-c-easter-6-sermon.html> Permission is granted for non-profit use of these materials. "David Ewart, www.holytextures.com."



As the saying goes: "It's funny because it's true." Throughout the Gospels, the disciples are constantly mishearing and failing to understand the words of Jesus..."

- <https://modernmetanoia.org/page/28/?wref=bif>
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- *The sheep are taking this week off. Agnus Day appears with the permission of <https://www.agnusday.org/>*

Ascension Day is Thursday, May 30 2019. The readings for that day are: Acts 1:1-11, Psalm 47, Ephesians 1:15-23 and Luke 24:44-53