

# The man departed (Quality good)

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Preacher: Wood, Clement (1920-2010)

- [ 0 : 00 ] In dependence upon the Lord for all needed help, I venture to draw your prayer for attention to John chapter 5 and verse 15.
- John chapter 5 verse 15. The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole.
- The three words largely on mind are these. It was Jesus. It was Jesus.
- The testimony of the impotent man that had been made whole.
- It is or should be the constant testimony of all the dear people of God.
- [ 1 : 26 ] That we might more often speak of what the Lord has done for us.
- So, seeking the all needed help of God, I first would seek to consider the case said before us.
- And then as enabled the language of this text, that is not only at the beginnings of the work of grace in a sinner's heart, but also should be the constant confession of our faith.
- That we should speak of him, our dear Lord and Savior, and testify. It was Jesus that heard my prayer.
- It was Jesus that helped me. It was Jesus that delivered me from that dreadful temptation. It was Jesus that lifted me up from that low place.
- [ 2 : 37 ] It was Jesus that spoke to my poor heart and brought peace into my soul. There was a feast of the Jews.
- And Jesus went up to Jerusalem. The males went up at the set times of feast. It is not clear exactly which feast this was.
- It was the Passover. It matters not. But it was one of the set faiths. And this teaches us too how the Lord Jesus, prior to his death, honoured the Lord and went up to Jerusalem.
- And here we read that in Jerusalem there was this pool. And it was called Bethesda. As you well know.
- And it's very beautiful. The name means the house of mercy. For poor sinners, feeling their sin, feeling their poverty, acknowledging their guilt.
- [ 3 : 52 ] This is a very sweet word. Bethesda, the house of mercy. There was a great multitude.
- There was this great multitude. And what a sight it must have been. There were those that were impotent.
- They were blind, haught, withered. What were they waiting for? The moving of the water. It is so pleased the Lord at this time.
- That an angel would go down and agitate the water. And the first one that went down into that water was healed of whatsoever plague or illness or disease that he had.
- The picture is a vivid one. A great mercy if we see ourselves.
- [ 5 : 00 ] Some of us look back to when or before we were called by grace. When under the conviction of sin we were just in that very spot.

Impotent. We saw others blessed. We heard others were blessed. But as yet, no word, no blessing for our soul.

Let's look at this word impotent. It means no help in self. They could not help themselves. Could not heal themselves. Could not save themselves. We cannot keep the law of God. We cannot redeem our souls from the demands of the law of God. We cannot make ourselves right for heaven.

[ 6 : 17 ] We cannot in and of ourselves begin the work of grace in the heart. Impotent. So these poor things were waiting.

Waiting. Hoping. Looking. Could it be for them? And so, friend, we look back on that experience.

And also this. I don't want to get this out of context. But whilst the Lord does and has begun that work of grace, yet we are from time to time brought into a situation afresh of feeling in ourselves impotent.

Helpless. And a great mercy to be brought there all the time. We think that we can do things. We are in dire trouble.

But there was a certain man there. I expect you've noticed in the gospel, there's a word certain, a certain man.

[ 7 : 35 ] A certain place. A certain time. And has that been in your case?

Has there been a certain place? A certain time? When God started to deal with you?

Bring you into concern over your sin? revealing to you how you've sinned and come short at the glory of God.

Look at these people. Impotent. Blind. How before Christ is revealed, while we may have a head knowledge of Jesus, but not a saving knowledge.

Blind to the beauties of Christ. Blind to the blessings of the finished work of Christ. Blind to the invaluable blood of the dear Savior shed on Calvary's cross.

[ 8 : 45 ] Blind to that fountain open for sin and for uncleanness. Haunt. Feeling almost, perhaps we can look at it in two ways there.

That cannot walk properly. Lame. Or haunting between two opinions. Withered. Oh friend, what a sight this is.

But there's a certain man. And he'd been there. Or had the infirmity. We don't know that he was at the pool all that time. That we must leave.

But we do know that he had this infirmity for 38 years. A long, long time. And also there was something dark behind it.

Because when Jesus met him in the temple, he said, Behold thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

[ 9 : 52 ] It would seem to my mind that there was this dark cloud of some great sin in this man's life.

When the Lord says, sin no more, of course. And we speak with deep reverence as we speak of the very words that Jesus uttered. I mean to say that we should ever be free from sin.

But what it does mean, don't go back to sinful ways or sinful habits. However, I say, here there's this man in all the hopelessness, helplessness of his state and of his condition.

And he says, even then, he says, I've no man, nobody cares for me. Nobody helps me. Nobody can deliver me. And if the angel comes, somebody steps down before me.

And I'm left out. I'm still left here with my weak state and condition, impotent as I am.

[ 11 : 02 ] I just put in a word here, perhaps maybe slightly out of context, and yet I feel to venture to say it. Those who have been blessed, who would long to come and say it was Jesus, and yet something holds them back.

Perhaps it's for years you've seen others almost as it were stepping down before you and you are left.

Oh dear soul, may the Lord help you break down the barriers, encourage you, loosen your bonds.

there's this consolation. The Lord knows all those who do love him.

Those who desire to love him. Those who desire to fear him. Those who tremble lest they presume.

[ 12 : 27 ] Those that mourn their lack of faith. those that are sorely tried by Satan. Another steppeth down before me.

You see others wrought upon. You see the work of grace manifests. But now I can't say that.

Some may say. Jesus saith unto him here wilt thou be made whole.

Is there as I gather with these words a desire in your heart to be made whole.

You may say well Jesus would know that of course and I say that myself. But Jesus asked the question to draw out the desires that he knows are already there within the heart of a seeking soul.

[ 13 : 45 ] Wilt thou be made whole? How these words must have almost I can't describe it. The dear man must look well it's the very desire of my heart but it's impossible.

I've waited. Look at my sin. Look at my state. Look at my helpless condition. And look there's no one to help me. I should never get there.

It will never be for me. I'm out of the secret. I must I should perish. and I deserve it. By the sin of my life.

Wilt thou be made whole? As he answers as I've already said another step is down before me. Jesus speaks to him rise take up thy bed and walk.

As you'd understand the word bed would be like a quilt or something like that or mattress that the poor man would rest upon helpless hopeless waiting and yet why should I wait anymore?

[ 14 : 59 ] Sure it will never come. And yet Jesus says rise. He has a voice he's never heard before. He has a voice that is a voice of authority.

authority. Now we can sometimes hear a voice of authority but he was a voice of authority and power mingled together.

He took hold of him. And here by the grace of God we read immediately the man was made whole and took up his bed and walked.

the power of God's word. Now I want to be careful here knowing full well indeed in my own personal experience that I cannot say or look back in the beginnings of the movings of my soul in concern over my sin and seeking the savior of a word quite like this.

But in waiting upon the Lord brought to see my lost state brought to acknowledge nobody can help me nobody can save me.

[ 16 : 22 ] I had praying parents I had praying pastor had a praying Sunday school teacher but I knew as much as they might and did pray for me.

They could not save me but there came the time when the Lord through the ministry through his word spake a word to my poor heart from time to time raised up a little hope and brought out those desires those longings and that venturing to lean upon him and trust in him and so this man was made whole took up his bed and walked on the same day was the Sabbath.

I felt encouraged with the hymn that we've just sung my soul wait thou only upon God God oh that our souls could wait at all times on the Lord and watch that wisdom's gain whose mercies will afford a constant flow of every good to souls that trust the lonely God.

Friend, if you cannot say much at the moment, if in fact sometimes you feel so confused and yet underneath and you must bear witness in your heart is there this desire to trust solely and wholly in the Lord God.

Wait on him, wait for him. the Lord is rich indeed and richly will supply the waiting sinners need with blessings from on high.

[ 18 : 23 ] My expectation is from God, then wait my soul upon the Lord. Oh that the Lord may encourage you and help you still to wait upon the Lord.

And though and doubtless in the waiting, you fear, oh how can I bear the piercing thought, what if my name should be left out when thou for them shalt call?

Oh Lord, say unto my soul, I am thy salvation, do speak the word, do set me free, do grant that liberty, do tell me that thy precious blood shed on Calvary's cross was washed away my sin, I'm the sinner, I'm this poor one, I'm helpless, I deserve the wrath of God, my life is full of sin, but thou art the saviour, thou art mighty to save, thou art able to save, thou will save the coming sinner.

Will thou cast me out? Will thou have nothing to do with me Lord Jesus? Oh do come, come even, come even to pay and do grant that evidence confirmed in my soul of that spiritual life, that quickening grace, that liberty, that setting free of my chains, my bondage, my darkness, overcome Satan and his terrible temptations, and do deliver me from this dreadful sin of unbelief, keep me Lord from presumption, yes, but do deliver me from unbelief, hugging my doubts and fears, oh Lord do keep me, do appear for me, do set me free, now this dear man, remember this was done on the Sabbath, I remember so well in the early seeking days how I longed for the Sabbath and for the weeknight services, because even as a lad

I went to the weeknight service and premiere, I'm not boasting of that because the Lord gave me the desire to do that, and then there were little helps by the way, encouragements there, I heard the voice of Jesus through the gospel, I couldn't doubt it, sometimes it was just as though, and the pastor knew nothing about, I never said anything about what was going on in my heart at all, he didn't know, all he knew was that boy or young lad sitting in the congregation, but there was, just as he knew what the Lord was troubling me, or bringing a word that God gave him to encourage me, and so even though I could not come before the church then, I could say inwardly, it was Jesus, do you mean to say, that you've never had that, nothing at all, nothing sealed at all, no word upon which you're hoping, no word, no,

[ 21 : 49 ] I'm, don't misunderstand, lose sight of me whether it's your pastor or any other ministry, the ministry, I'm not speaking of any minister whatsoever, through the preaching of the gospel, is there something you say, it was Jesus, by the word that came with divine power into my soul, encouragement, because I could not bring that to myself, I could not apply it to myself, I could not deliver myself, I'm absolutely impotent, but when that came, it had a strange, how can we describe it, only those who know it can tell me about it, but a strange effect, it was power, I don't say it was for liberty, but it encouraged you, if I may put it, and I speak with the greatest care, a sense that the

Lord Jesus had taken notice of you, heard your poor prayers, and come and speak into you, encouraging you, to help you on, so once as we name so often, in the sovereign purposes of God, it's not always a sudden conversion, not always sudden out of darkness into light in the way of a gospel liberty, but step by step, and this means patience, waiting, and the moving, what is it, the moving of the spirit, that's what you want, isn't it, and that's what you seek after, you don't want anything borrowed, you want it sealed by the spirit in your soul, am I right?

I am right, real religion isn't just something borrowed, it's not something that you want just to learn out of a book, you want it written in your heart, applied with divine power, and faith to lay hold upon it, God given faith, to receive it, he couldn't say who it was, he didn't know who this man was, when the Jews asked him, who was it that has told you to do this, but afterwards he was found in the temple, this man that perhaps for 38 years had never been able to go there, and there again, do not we see this, that when the Lord starts with a poor sinner, with a blessing here and a blessing there, just a crumb to start with, perhaps I'm speaking for the seeker perhaps longer than I intended to, but I say it's real, it's real, and as the Lord blesses it, and you could say it was

Jesus, but you are in the temple, in the house of God, and as you come, you come differently, the Bible's a different book now, oh you see there's so much I don't understand, I'm so ignorant, but is there nothing here that's given you a little help, is there nothing here that you're resting some hope upon, I'm speaking again to the seeker, that it was Jesus, look where the man was, it was Jesus that made me whole, to pursue this line just a little further, why do hope is profitable, you're very troubled, it was Jesus, and once you've had it, you want some more, now, oh yes, wait a minute, I know that even with the blessings of the gospel, with the flowings of his love, that there are times when we get into a very cold state, almost feeling perhaps, well it's no good, going on, but the

Lord will as it were, reawaken that work, he'll bring us back, but taking as a whole, when you've had a taste, when you've had a crumb, when you've had a handful of purpose, or just an ear of corn, you want a handful of purpose, when you've had a drop of heavenly dew, you want a shower in his season, when you've had the shower, you want the sound of abundance of rain, when you've had a little glimpse of Christ, you want to see more of his beauty, when you've had a little blessing in your soul, you want the fountain, as it were, to flow afresh, when perhaps your, I won't say your cup has run over a shed, but you long for it, now pray for it, keep of the throne of grace, waiting upon the Lord, exercising your soul, and if Satan tempts you, to give up, no more to call on Jesus' name, plead Lord, come and speak again to me, confirm my soul, draw near to me, and deliver me, so that I can thank thee that I was tempted, because thou didst come, and answer the devil, and send him right away, and deliver me, it was

[ 27 : 28 ] Jesus, and to pray on, dear friend, and I do wonder how some of you really feel about baptism, it's not just an option, it's a commandment, I say that deliberately, and clearly, if he loved me, keep my commandments, oh man, I don't draw you, I don't drive you either, but I want the Lord to do it all, and to bring you to such a place, as a dear old soul, a godly member of my old church, when I was in deep exercise about baptism, she just quietly said to me, are you exercising, well I didn't say anything, she said, the Lord give you no rest, until you come forward, those prayers were answered, but when I say no rest, it's hit me seeking, hungering, thirsting, longing, because there comes a time when you would long to speak of Jesus, he means so much to you, you dare not deny it, and yet you're silent, you say nothing,

I say that, your walk gives some evidence, of where your affections are, oh yes, but actual open testimony, if you love me, keep my commandments, what doth hinder me to be baptized, now I'd no thought of speaking about baptism tonight, so this has come quite unexpectedly upon my mind, because I want us to close down, the time has got a bit beyond me, but on one or two little aspects, just brief thoughts, because of the time, it was Jesus, now, the time has come, and may it come with others, when you were baptized, we've been baptized, now does that mean to say that this word means nothing, it's a sad thing, there's too much silence today about Jesus, we need that the redeemed of the Lord should say so, my pastor, you see, if they don't, who will, no one else will, we should speak more of Jesus, should declare what he's done for us, so we declared what he did for us, how we had the sweet assurance of blessed hope, that he delivered us from the powers of death, raised up the hope in his great mercy, brought to us a sweet blessing from the gospel, encouraged us, so in love to Jesus, we come and declare, it was

Jesus, it's Jesus that I seek to love, it's Jesus I want to obey, it's Jesus I want to profess my faith before many witnesses, but now, friends, still to go on to pray more and more that we may say, it was Jesus.

And have we not, I speak to baptized members now, have we not those seasons when you've been in the depths of trouble, have you not been almost back where this man is, you were absolutely impotent, in trying to handle the matter, or fought under such darkness, such temptation, you may say, what a baptized believer, yes, you may have been in such a state that you didn't know, when you just wonder where you were.

Now, I'm not encouraging doubts and things, but I'm just saying the experience. And then the Lord has come. Perhaps you were in a backsliding state. I've told you before, certainly before I baptized, how the Lord preserved me from taking a wrong step when I was in the Air Force, and then the chasing hand of God was upon me, and I was in such darkness of mind, and bondage, and hardness of heart.

[ 31 : 22 ] But he came. It was Jesus. It was a service that I had to attend to, though I was on convalescence from a major operation. And the service of debtors, those seats there.

And the last hymn, but it was this, son of my soul, S-U-N, son of my soul, it is not night, if thou art near. He came.

It was Jesus. Why do you know it? Because my bonds went, the night shone, my Jesus had come again. It was Jesus.

And so, friend, it's good for us to speak of these things, to testify of these things. Has he not made himself precious? Has he not come last night? I was favored to hear Mr.

Ashby at West Street, and I had a sweet touch. It was Jesus. You may say, why? How do you know? Because he was power. It wasn't just, it was so beautiful just to look at it as a study of the word of God.

[ 32 : 26 ] It came with sweetness into my soul. Actually, it started as he read the scripture before he even started to preach, even before he started to pray. It was Jesus.

Oh, friend, these things are real. This is what we want. The dealings of Jesus with us in our poor hearts, him coming to speak to our poor souls, and visitors that keep speaking to us.

Oh, be not silent unto me, lest thou be thou silent unto me. I be like unto them that go down to the pit. Hide not thy face far from me, and put me not away in thine anger, for I am thy servant.

Friend, how we need to pray. It was Jesus. Jesus, and yes, there, under fresh conviction of sin, yes, like Peter, failed, denied, and the Lord has turned and looked upon us, and we've known a little bit, just a little, of true repentance.

It was Jesus. It was Jesus. And there in the midst of your troubles and your trials, in that time at the hospital, I know our friends here, had been in it, so I want to be careful there, but there, you could say, it was Jesus.

[ 33 : 40 ] I have to testify that, and many of you that have been in that path could say, it wasn't the surgeon, you thank God for that surgeon, or the doctor, or the treatment, and the care, but it was Jesus, because there was a secret help, there was a word to uphold you, underneath, you dare not deny underneath the everlasting arms, you were ready to sing, but it was Jesus that held you up, and held you on, blessed be his name.

There again we could go on, sore temptation, sometimes God's children are kept, held fast by some dreadful temptation, or attacked by the devil, until the Lord comes, and it was Jesus that set you free, the word of God that comes with divine liberty, dear, look at dear, I can't think of his name now, that dear man that was in the hospital there in Warlingham, walking about, restless, couldn't calm him down, he wasn't, not dangerous at all, but Everett, I can't think of his Christian name for the moment, and I just felt he was hopeless, I just, before I left, I just said to him, well, here, I can just say this, I must go, and I just quoted the word, lo, I'm with you all the way even unto the end of the world, that brought him out, friend, you wouldn't even thought that he heard it, he did, it was Jesus, that's what we want, clear voice of Jesus speaking to us, faith to believe it, now, let me say,

I don't say you look for, I always hear a literal voice, but you do deserve power of the word of God, the application of the word of God, and faith to lay hold upon and even when you're in the dark, and we are sometimes and I must stop, but when you're in the dark, faith still to lay hold, Lord Jesus, that is said, it's in thy word, I can't see it, I can't feel it, I can't, I'm still in bondage, but I can't let go, I must hold on, I must look up, I still must trust in thee, it was Jesus, and so, my dear friends, when we've reached glory, it will be for a never ending eternity to say, it was Jesus that saved me, Jesus that brought me through, unto him that loved me, and washed me from all my sins, the Lord bless his word and pardon all of this, amen.