

“Faith that Acts”

John 5:1-14

Hello friend and welcome to *Hope for Today*. My name is J. Mark Horst; I’m your friend and Bible teacher. The program you’re listening to is produced by Heralds of Hope, an international Gospel radio and literature ministry.

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The Bible is the only source of lasting hope. It is God’s Holy Word. You know as well as I do that we cannot rely on the words of men because men change. But God is unchanging, His Word is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The Psalmist, David, said in Psalm 119:89, “*Forever, O Lord, Your Word is settled in Heaven.*” My friend, you can depend on God’s Word.

In a few moments, Dr. Yoder will speak to us from John 4:20 to 26. But right now, let’s pray together.

Heavenly Father, we come to you in the precious name of Jesus, your Son, and our Savior. We praise you that you have revealed yourself to us in the pages of Holy Scripture. For those of us who are your children, we understand that faith comes by hearing the Word of God.

In a few moments Dr. Yoder will share his teaching from the Word, and I pray that you will open my heart and the heart of my friend who is listening to receive that Word. I pray that each one listening will gain a better understanding of the true meaning of worship. And I pray this in His name, Amen.

Now, here’s Dr. Yoder.

In my experience and study, I have learned that everybody believes in something. The widespread practice of religion proves it. Even though a man may be practicing a very strange and odd religion the very fact that he does practice religion proves that he believes in something. In fact, I would say that even the attempt to stifle religion proves that everybody believes in something. Those who deny God would not work at it so hard if they did not believe down deep in their hearts that He does exist.

We are made with the ability to believe. That is one distinguishing quality which separates us from the animals. They can't believe; they were not created that way. We are made so we can believe. There was King David who said once, "The fool has said in his heart there is no God." I'm quoting the Bible, my friend, the words of King David who said only the senseless person, only the fool, will say, "There is no God."

That brings me back to my statement, everybody believes in something. It is of the utmost importance what we believe in, and then how our faith acts. In this Bible text, John 5:1-14, we have the experience of Jesus when He performed a miracle in Jerusalem.

- 1 After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.*
- 2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.*
- 3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.*
- 4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling off the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.*
- 5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.*
- 6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, wilt thou be made whole?*
- 7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.*
- 8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.*
- 9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.*
- 10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, it is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.*
- 11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, take up thy bed, and walk.*
- 12 Then asked they him, what man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?*

13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

This sick man's experience demonstrates for us the PROCESSES by which faith is brought to action. That's what I want to talk about, FAITH THAT ACTS.

Here is the first of these processes: **The Man Was Waiting.**

The Bible tells us there was a multitude waiting. There was a great multitude of helpless sick people waiting, waiting expectantly because this pool was known as a place for healing. So they came, many of them; all of them sick: people with paralysis, people with blindness, people with fevers, people with all kinds of problems. This man came waiting, waiting, waiting for the moment of healing.

My friend, in order for faith to act there must be a kind of waiting, of expectancy when the moment of experience will come. This man was in that process, waiting for the exact moment when that healing could take place in the pool.

But there was more to faith that acts than simply waiting. When Jesus came by and saw the man, that he had been sick these thirty-eight years, He asked him would he like to be well. The man told him how helpless he was.

It brings to me the second process that will enable faith to act: **He Was Weary.**

He had been sick thirty-eight years. Maybe he was born with this sickness; maybe he was only thirty-eight years old and had known nothing except to be sick. He said, "I come here and wait and wait. When the water is troubled, I try to get to the pool but while I am coming another steps down before me.

In other words, the man said, "I am totally helpless. I've come here many, many times and I always go away the same as I came. I can't do anything for myself, and nobody helps me."

Ah, he did not know that his faith was going through a process of extreme importance. He admitted he could do nothing for himself. Then it was possible for the Lord to do something for him. That's true of you, my friend. Waiting is important; weariness is important. Then you come to the place where you realize that nothing you can do is going to help. Jesus said to that man, "Rise, take up your bed and walk!"

Here we have then the third process of this man's faith to bring it to action: **He Was Walking.**

When Jesus gave him that startling command, he arose. Immediately he was made well. He took up his bed and walked. There was no hesitance. There was no questioning. No, there was no waiting. When Jesus gave him that startling command he immediately rose up. He did what Jesus told him to do. No delay, nobody else needed to come raise him up because the word of Jesus had made him well and he arose and was walking.

He picked up his bed and started for the temple to worship and praise God that he was healed. Do you know why he was able to walk? He was able to walk because he did exactly what Jesus told him to do. He did not argue. When Jesus gave him that startling command he immediately responded. That's why he was walking. His faith acted right at that point.

This leads me to the fourth process which made faith act: **He Was Well.**

You might call this the result of faith in action. The question was, "Would you like to be well?" And after he was made well then, he responded to those who questioned him about his work of carrying his bed on the Sabbath day. He said, "He that made me well told me to carry my bed." And when Jesus found him later in the temple He said, "Behold, thou art well." For thirty-eight years he had been sick but now he was well, cured of a thirty-eight-year-long sickness.

"Behold, thou art well." I don't know what your problem might be. Perhaps you have some physical sickness. If you do not know Jesus Christ, I know that you have a spiritual sickness, and it may be of long standing. But just like this man, you must act in faith and listen to what Jesus says to you. Would you like to be well? Act on His Word and you can be well in your spirit.

To put faith into action, notice these four processes: the process of waiting, the process of weariness, the process of walking, and the process of being well. Now see how these may apply

to you. Wait; don't give up in your weariness; when He says walk, walk; and you will be well by His Word.

Thank you, Dr. Yoder for that helpful teaching. My friend, do you have an active faith, a working faith? Do you believe that what Jesus says is true? Have you seen God intervene in your life in response to your faith? I have, and I know He will respond to your faith too.

Do you have questions about Jesus and about faith in Him? If so, write to us. We will take your questions to the Word of God and find answers that will help you learn about the truth about Jesus. So, if you have questions write to us today.

The quickest way for you to contact us is to send an e-mail to mail@heraldsofhope.org. That e-mail address is mail@heraldsofhope.org. That email address again is, m-a-i-l@heraldsofhope.org. Or you may write to *Hope for Today*, Box 3, Breezewood, Pennsylvania 15533. Remember too, you can request a printed manuscript or an audio CD of this teaching, "Faith that Acts." I'd be happy to send one to you.

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Now friend, I urge you to tune in next week as we continue study in the Gospel of John. In his teaching, Dr. Yoder will speak to us about "God the Son – His Nature." And until then, keep looking for that blessed HOPE.