

# SIGNS

in the Book of John



## The Lord of the Sabbath

### Key idea:

Jesus healed the lame man with His powerful word on the Sabbath to show that He is Lord of the Sabbath because He is One with God the Father and does the works of the Father.

### Key text:

John 5:1–18 NIV2011

Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals.<sup>2</sup> Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades.<sup>3</sup> Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed.<sup>5</sup> One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years.

<sup>6</sup> When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?”<sup>7</sup> “Sir,” the invalid replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.”<sup>8</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.”<sup>9</sup> At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

The day on which this took place was a Sabbath,<sup>10</sup> and so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat.”<sup>11</sup> But he replied, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’”<sup>12</sup> So they asked him, “Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?”<sup>13</sup> The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

<sup>14</sup> Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, “See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.”<sup>15</sup> The man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well.

<sup>16</sup> So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him.<sup>17</sup> In his defense Jesus said to them, “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.”<sup>18</sup> For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

### **Key points:**

1. Jesus' fourth sign is the healing of the man who had been lame for thirty-eight years.
2. Although healing the lame was a sign of the Messiah and His coming, the real issue in this sign was that it occurred on the Sabbath.
3. Jesus purposefully did the healing on the Sabbath and told the man to carry his bed to provoke a discussion with the leaders regarding Jesus' true identity as the Lord of the Sabbath.
4. Jesus' consistent actions that violated the extra-biblical Sabbath regulations and His clear claims to Divinity prompted a consistent, sustained opposition and ultimately a desire to put Him to death.

### **Questions for discussion/application:**

1. What part of Sunday's text and teaching stood out most to me? Why?
2. When I began reading the story, what did I think was the point John wanted me to understand? Was I surprised by the "plot twist" regarding the Sabbath? Why did John withhold this information until verse 9?
3. How does the lame man compare and contrast with the royal official from John 4:43-54? Are there any similarities? How are they different? Does the lame man give evidence of faith at any point in this story?
4. What actions of Jesus show that he wanted to provoke a discussion with the leaders over the Sabbath and His identity? Why is this important for Him?
5. Why does Jesus say "See you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen"? What is the relationship between sin and sickness? Are they always related to one another? How does this compare with Jesus words in John 9:1-3?
6. Do the leaders show any interest in the sign of the man being healed, or are they only concerned with breaking Sabbath regulations? Why are they this way? Can I think of similar tendencies in my own life, or that I have seen in the modern church?
7. How does Jesus defend His actions (see verse 17)? What does this tell me about Jesus' identity? How do the leaders understand His claims? Why is this important in the story line that John is telling?

8. Why do people try to reduce Jesus' claims to be God? What ways have I heard people do this? How do I respond to these statements?
9. What difference does the Deity of Christ make in my life? How is it challenging? How is it comforting? How can I live in light of this today?
10. Whom can I pray for, share what I have learned, and invite to church this week?

**Preview of next week: The Lord Who Feeds His People (John 6:1-14)**