

How's Your Mat Working for You?

John 5:2-11 & 19-21

John notes that a disabled man was laying by the pool of Bethesda when Jesus came to Jerusalem. The pool was located by the _____ Gate where sheep were herded into Jerusalem for _____. John often records subtle messages displayed in seemingly incidental occurrences. Here John tells us the _____ of God entered Jerusalem through the Sheep Gate.

Water has been significant in John's Gospel and here again, a multitude of the infirm are waiting by a pool of _____ water hoping that it will heal them. Day after day, healing _____ them.

A superstition with both Jewish and pagan roots said that the pool's water, when stirred, could _____. This explains the huge number of sick people just waiting there. In this massive crowd, Jesus noticed one disabled man on a _____. John says he'd been this way for 38 years—the exact number of years the Israelites _____ in the _____ before entering the promised land.

Jesus' question to the man is the passkey for understanding the text: "Do you want to get well?" In context, Jesus is really asking, "_____?" Jesus knew the man wanted to get well so he showed him a better way. Jesus was the _____. The world's water, its ways, will never make us _____.

Many people are waiting by the world's pools with _____ souls, hoping an angel or luck or hard work will stir the water and bring healing and wholeness.

How did the religious leaders respond to the man who was healed? They _____ the man for breaking the Sabbath by carrying his _____. They were saying, "_____!" _____ to the rules of the world. The evil one wants you back on one of his mats too—anything that would keep you from really _____. Once you've met Jesus, don't let yourself get _____ or _____ back on one of those mats.