

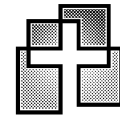
The Gospel of John



Notes From the Podium

These notes are intended to augment your own reading and study of the lesson. Please use as an aid to help you incorporate the main message of the lesson into your lecture.

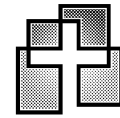
- I. In an attempt to make more manageable John's many layered meanings, a new approach will be attempted. The text will be approached by way of three questions each attempting to draw lessons at different levels.
 - a. First, what is happening at this moment in the Sacred Text?
 - b. Second, what might John's apparent pastoral point be to the faithful reader? Why did he choose this excerpt of Jesus' life to record under divine inspiration for the Church? What was the apparent pastoral motivation being harnessed by divine inspiration that compels him to write this account – aside from the fact that it occurred?
 - c. Third, How does our understanding of what we read deepen/enrich in light of the Old Testament?
- II. First approach
 - a. (vv 1-10) There are many in Jerusalem who are ill and approach a pool of water in the hope that God might use it to heal them.
 - i. Our Lord does not presume that the man's desire to enter the water is a true expression of his desire to be healed.
 1. As stated in Points to Ponder, there are too many cases where people choose to hold onto their ails.
 2. The man answers by intimating that his desire to enter the pool is an expression of his interior desire to be healed. However, others are interfering and making it difficult.
 3. Our Lord heals him with a simple command proving Himself to be the true water through which God's work of healing takes place.
 4. God's work takes place on the Sabbath.
 - b. (vv 10-17) Sabbath becomes the central issue.
 - i. Jesus fades into the crowd – the Jews question the man about carrying the mat and becomes the object of their judgment regarding the Sabbath law; he defers to the authority of the one who healed; the One who healed is now the object of judgment for healing on the Sabbath.
 1. The irony is of course the Jews in this case have used the Sabbath given by God for man and his works to condemn God and His works.
 - ii. Jesus approaches the man and then tells him to "sin no more unless something worse befalls you."
 1. There are worse fates than physical infirmity – spiritual/moral infirmity.
 2. Physical healing is at the service of spiritual/moral healing.



Notes From the Podium (cont.)

Catholic Scripture Study

- c. (vv 17-47) There is a shift in focus by those who are judging Jesus. Now they are no longer judging Him by the Sabbath law rather because He, in defense of His working on the Sabbath, equates Himself with the Father in Heaven.
 - i. The charge, “He is making Himself equal with God.”
 - ii. Jesus confirms their charge and drives the point home.
 - 1. Whatever the Father does the Son does likewise
 - a. Raising the dead
 - b. Power of Judgment (note the irony – the One who is being Judged is the One through Whom God will judge.
 - c. Honor of God belongs to Him
 - iii. Jesus clearly lays their misunderstanding at their feet.
 - 1. He says, “you don’t know the Father...v37”
 - 2. Moses will be their judge
 - iv. Jesus is one with the Father
 - 1. Trinity, recall the analogy of Light to explain.
- III. Second approach
- a. (vv 1-10) There are many in Jerusalem in need of healing, not merely physical.
 - i. “I have no **man** to put me into the pool” Recall the previous lesson on Nicodemus 2:24-3:1. “Jesus did not trust Himself to them because He knew all men and needed no one to bear witness of man; from He Himself knew what was in man. Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.” The man who is all states in v.7 “sir, I have no man to put me into the pool...and while I am going another (man) steps down before me.”
 - 1. One might see in this passage that many who are sick in Jerusalem are in need of one who might bring them to the healing power of God. Yet like the faith of men so too are his works, “men” serve only to interfere (recall Temple elite, Nicodemus...). Now standing before the needy of Jerusalem is on such man who brings one to the healing power of God and does not interfere as other men do.
 - ii. As this is done on the Sabbath – God’s work is done on the Sabbath.
 - b. (vv 11-17) Jesus searches out the healed man to say “v14”
 - c. (vv18-47) John is clearly identifying Jesus’ unity with the Father.
 - i. Following Christ leads one to eternal life “the hour is coming and now is , when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.”
 - 1. Dual meaning: spiritually dead and physically dead
 - ii. V.39 Sacred Scripture bares witness to Christ and does not offer eternal life as He does. Rather, Sacred Scripture points to Eternal Life -> Him.
 - 1. In quoting this passage of Our Lord, John is justifying his own gospel account which is steeped in Sacred Scripture.



Notes From the Podium (cont.)

Catholic Scripture Study

- IV. Third approach
- a. (vv.1-10) 38 years: Duet 2:14-15 says Israel wandered for exactly 38 years. Num 13 and 14 explain why – Because 12 spies were sent into the promised land to scope out what lay ahead if they follow God’s plan into the promised land. Only two Joshua and Caleb projected a positive fulfillment in following God’s lead into the promised land – filled with hope and trust. Israel listened to the other 10 naysayers and doubted. For this God would not allow their entrance into the promised land until that generation was purged from their midst – with the exception of Joshua and Caleb.
 - i. Jesus is the new Joshua (same name) who speaks a message of hope and trust in God in order to be led into the promised land of Heaven despite the apparent difficulties and challenges that could frighten one away.
 - ii. This could also be a pastoral point for John’s community – don’t abandon the new Joshua as our fathers did! Trust, hope and believe.
 - b. (vv.11-17) What is the meaning of the Sabbath?
 - i. Sabbath was made for man. It is the sign of God’s first covenant with man and is the day on which man comes to know his high destiny – to rest/commune with God.
 - ii. The Sabbath is also a reminder of God’s promise to complete His creation. We cease from work on the Sabbath to remind us that it is God who will bring our work to fruition. Given Original Sin God’s grace is needed.
 - c. (vv.18-47) Jesus is the Joshua / Priest / Sabbath
 - i. Joshua – as already mentioned
 - ii. Priest – Joshua in Zechariah 3 refers to another Joshua as the High Priest.
 - iii. Sabbath – as mentioned already
 - d. The above points John is making (as the OT comes to bear on interpreting his writing) are further amplified by Jesus clearly identifying Himself with the Father.
 - i. He is the Sabbath on which He will offer a priestly sacrifice leading the people as a new Joshua into the promised land of heaven.

Notes From the Podium are written by Fr. Patrick Winslow and published expressly for Catholic Scripture Study International. All rights reserved. No portion of these materials may be reproduced without written permission. Proper acknowledgement should be given to the author if these notes are read in a lecture.