

## John 5:1-16 & 9:1-41 – A Tale of Two Men

John 5:1-16: The Man lame for 38 years	John 9:1-41: The Man born blind
<p>Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Was he passing by the Pool of Bethesda or was that his destination? If he was coming from the Mt of Olives, he could have entered the temple area by the East Gate (Golden Gate, Beautiful Gate). He could have also entered the temple from the northern side through the Sheep Gate. The Pool of Bethesda may have also been used for ritual cleaning of pilgrims entering the temple. Did Jesus go to the Pool of Bethesda for ritual cleansing or to heal this one man or both? The man was at the Pool of Bethesda which was by the Sheep Gate and not far from the northern temple area. The man was one of many invalid, blind, lame and paralyzed people at the pool.</p>	<p>Jn 8:20, Jesus was in the Temple treasury (a number of contribution jars in the Women’s Court). Jn 8:58 (vs before 9:1) the Jews picked up stones to stone Jesus but he hid himself and went out of the temple. 9:1 Jesus was passing by (παράγω). Jesus had just gone out of the temple. If Jesus exited the southern end of the temple, he would have exited through the double Hulda gates. Next to them were ritual baths for cleansing. The southern gates were used by pilgrims. The southern gates were just north of the City of David.</p>
5:6 Jesus saw him (ὀράω)	9:1 Jesus saw him (ὀράω)
Jesus knew he had been lying there a long time. How?	Jesus and the disciples knew that the man was born blind. How?
There is no mention of Jesus’ disciples in chapter 5.	<p>The disciples had a question for Jesus. They represented the commonly accepted belief that if someone was sick then they must have committed a sin. In this case they thought the parents’ sin may have been responsible for the man’s blindness since he was born that way. The worse the affliction, the worse the sin. How would a baby born blind commit a sin which was much worse than any other baby? Did God do this on the basis of a future sin? Jesus’ answer was “none of the above”.</p>
Jesus asked, “do you want to be healed”.	There is no record that Jesus asked the blind man if he wanted to be healed, he just did it.
<p>The lame man did not say that he wanted to be healed, he just gave an excuse of why he had not already been healed. He sounded a bit defensive. As my grandfather would say, “I think he doth protest too much.” In 5:14 Jesus said “sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you”. Some say that this statement had nothing to do with the man being lame for 38 years. I believe that primarily Jesus was warning the man that if he did not believe in</p>	<p>Jesus said that the man was blind to manifest the works of God and not because of a sin committed by him or his parents. He did not say that the man did not sin or that the parents did not sin but that their sin was not the reason for why the man was born blind.</p>

<p>Jesus that he would experience eternal judgment. That is worse than being lame for 38 years. I think it was secondarily a statement about why he was lame for 38 years. The man had been lame before Jesus was born. Why did Jesus heal him? The obvious answer is that God the Father wanted Jesus to heal this man. But what was to be learned from this healing? It showed Jesus' power to heal someone who had been lame for 38 years. But was there more to the lesson? Was this man a model Christian?</p>	
<p>Jesus did not explicitly make any claim about himself.</p>	<p>Jesus said that as long as he was in the world, he was the light of the world. He backed up his statement.</p>
<p>The man was by the Pool of Bethesda but Jesus did not involve the pool in his healing. Jesus commanded the man to rise and the man was healed. Was the man healed as soon as Jesus commanded him to walk or was the man only healed when he attempted to walk (when he demonstrated faith)? Did Jesus need the man to believe in Jesus' healing power? Notice verse 9. The man was healed and then he took up his pallet and walked. The healing did not appear to be conditioned on something the lame man needed to do first. Jesus spoke and he was healed.</p>	<p>Jesus used the Pool of Siloam in the man's healing. If the man was begging outside of the temple, there were ritual cleansing pools nearby. Instead Jesus sent him to the Pool of Siloam which was at the south end of the City of David. That was asking a lot for a blind man. The blind man believed it was worth the trip to the other end of town. The name of the pool is appropriate because it means "sent" and Jesus sent him there. In order to be healed, the blind man needed to go about half a mile to the Pool of Siloam and wash. Those were his instructions. Jesus didn't explicitly say that after the washing that the man would see, but Jesus implied it when he said "I am the light of the world". Some wonder about whether the distance he needed to walk violated the distance a Jew could walk on the Sabbath (2,000 cubits or .57 miles). Its complicated.</p>
<p>The lame man was told to rise, take up his pallet, and walk.</p>	<p>The blind man was told to go, and wash in the Pool of Siloam. Who had the more difficult task?</p>
<p>The healing occurred on the Sabbath. The lame man was told to take up his pallet and walk. This violated the Jewish leaders' interpretation of keeping the Sabbath day holy. Specifically they thought that carrying a bed roll constituted carrying a burden. Jeremiah 17:19-27 warns against carrying a burden on the Sabbath. It is mostly in reference to carrying burdens into Jerusalem. The Pool of Bethesda was outside the city walls. To go to the temple, he would have had to enter one of the city gates, possibly the Sheep Gate, carrying his bed roll. Obviously Jesus did not buy into this interpretation, that carrying a bed roll was a burden of work. In the eyes of the Jewish leaders, the man who had been lame was guilty of breaking the Sabbath. Since Jesus told him to carry his bed roll, the</p>	<p>The healing occurred on the Sabbath. The man who was blind was not guilty of breaking the Sabbath. I don't think the issue of how far he walked was what the Jewish leaders were concerned about. They never asked him how far he walked. They just asked him how Jesus opened his eyes. They believed that Jesus was guilty of breaking the Sabbath by healing the man born blind. They believed the act of making clay and anointing his eyes constituted an act of work on the Sabbath. As in Jn 5, some considered any non-essential healing on the Sabbath to be work. In Luke 6:9, Jesus asked the Jewish leaders, "is it lawful on the sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?" The Jewish leaders believed that at times it was unlawful to do good on the Sabbath. How messed up</p>

<p>Jewish leaders also considered Jesus guilty of breaking the Sabbath. Some considered any non-essential healing on the Sabbath to be work. Jesus could not have been without sin if he actually broke God’s Sabbath law. Instead, he broke the misguided interpretation that the Jewish leaders had of the Sabbath law. It was an ordinance of man which was counted equal to God’s law. Jesus quoted Isaiah 29:13 in Matthew 15:9 (“teaching as doctrines the precepts of men”).</p>	<p>was that?</p>
<p>Jesus did not send the lame man away from him, but Jesus did depart from the pool because there was a crowd in the place.</p>	<p>Jesus did send the blind man from him.</p>
<p>Why didn’t the lame man follow Jesus?</p>	<p>After following Jesus’ instructions, the former blind man would have needed to find Jesus if he wanted to follow him. If he was trying to do that, he got sidetracked by his neighbors and the Jewish leaders. Maybe he wasn’t thinking about finding Jesus. He may have just been out of his mind with joy that he could see. There were so many new things to see. In verses 27-28 there is an indication that he did want to be a disciple of Jesus when he asked the Pharisees, “do you too want to become his disciples”.</p>
<p>The lame man walked away from Jesus. When he was busted by the Sabbath police for carrying his pallet on the Sabbath, he was told that what he was doing was not lawful. Did the man say that someone told him to do it because he wanted to give Jesus credit for the healing or was he passing the blame to Jesus. “It isn’t my fault, someone told me to do this!” His response reminds me of Adam after he sinned. Adam tried to blame God for his sin when he said “the woman YOU gave me”. The man who was lame didn’t know Jesus’ name! Are you kidding me? He had been lame for 38 years and was finally healed and he didn’t think to ask anyone who just healed him? Where was he going to send the Thank You card?</p>	<p>The former blind man was seen by some neighbors and by some people who were familiar with him as the blind beggar. When they realized that the man born blind could now see, they asked him how his eyes were opened. The first thing the former blind man mentioned was not “how” but “who”. “The man named Jesus” made clay, put it on his eyes and told him to go to Siloam and wash. The man was blind but he still knew that Jesus was the one who healed him. The people’s question was not about who healed the man. The former blind man had already answered that up front without even being asked “who”. They only asked “how”. Once the former blind man told them the “who” and the “how”, they asked him where Jesus was. Obviously the man did not know because Jesus had sent him away to the Pool of Siloam. Jesus did not go with him.</p>
<p>The Jewish leaders had no interest in the man’s healing after 38 years of being lame. They were just focused on the fact that they caught someone breaking the Sabbath at one of their BSD (breaking the Sabbath Day) check points.</p>	<p>The Jewish leaders were interested in how the man born blind received his sight. The Jewish leaders had some problems with this healing. First, Jesus did the healing on the Sabbath. Some concluded that he could not be from God because he did not keep the Sabbath. The problem</p>

some had with that conclusion was that it didn't make sense that a sinner could do something so wonderful as giving sight to a man born blind. There was a division among the Pharisees because they could not reconcile a bad person doing something so good. They asked the man formerly blind what he thought about Jesus. The man said that he was a prophet. Jesus is a prophet but he is more than a prophet. Obviously the man had a positive view of Jesus. His knowledge was not complete. The leaders second problem was that if people heard what Jesus did, more people would flock to him. They attempted to resolve the problem by claiming that the man who received his sight was never blind. It was just a big con. At least they gathered some facts. They asked his parents if the man was their son and if he was born blind. The parents confirmed that the man was their son and that he was born blind. That was a significant admission on their part. By saying that their son was born blind many might think that they were horrible sinners since God had given them a son who was born blind. The leaders had to abandon their hoax theory. Facts had shattered the theory. The leaders called the man who was formerly blind one last time to try to spin what had happened. They tried to convince the man that it was just a coincidence that Jesus put clay on his eyes and told him to wash and then he received his sight. They tried to say that Jesus had nothing to do with him receiving his sight, so give God the glory, but not Jesus. Of course by giving Jesus the glory he would also be giving God the glory. The Jewish leaders didn't see it that way. They went with the original declaration. Jesus was a sinner for breaking the Sabbath and therefore could not give sight to the man born blind.

What did the man who was lame say about Jesus? He told the Jewish leaders that the unknown man who healed him told him to break the Sabbath. That is my take. He told them that he was told to take up his bed roll. But that constituted a Sabbath violation in the minds of the leaders. He did not have much to say about Jesus since he didn't even bother to find out his name. The leaders didn't ask him what he thought about Jesus and the lame man didn't say anything other than that he was healed and told to carry his bed roll. I guess the "don't ask, don't tell" policy was in place. Jesus later found the man in the temple. The man found out Jesus' name. Why? For a second time he left Jesus and went to the Jewish religious leaders to tell

What did the man who was formerly blind say about Jesus? The blind man gave credit to Jesus for giving him sight. Jesus' name was not used in the text containing the interrogation by the religious leaders. But when he said "he placed clay on my eyes", it appears that they knew who "he" was since they never asked him who opened his eyes. The man born blind told the Pharisees that Jesus was a prophet. He knew Jesus' name even though he probably spent about the same amount of time with Jesus as the lame man. When the Pharisees brought the former blind man back to talk to him, they told him to give God the glory for receiving his sight but not to give credit to Jesus ("this man") since Jesus was a sinner (in their eyes). They

them that Jesus was the one who healed him. We are not told what his motive was. Some believe that he wanted to give Jesus credit for healing him. The problem with that is that the leaders didn't care who healed him. They had no interest in his being healed. They only wanted to know why he broke the Sabbath. The man provided them with the name of the person who told him to break the Sabbath (according to them and not according to God). I don't think the man was so stupid so as to believe that what he told the leaders would be good for Jesus. They were passionate about their Sabbath laws being kept. He just gave them the name of the person who told him to break the Sabbath. We can't judge the lame man's motives but we can see the results of his action. The Jews persecuted Jesus when they found out that he was the one who told the man to "break the Sabbath". Who could have seen that coming? Anyone who uses their brain to think. He was more than 38 years old. He should have known better. One way to understand his actions is that he wanted to take the heat off himself and place it on Jesus. Let Jesus suffer the persecution of the Jewish leaders. The former lame man showed his original sin. He wanted to shift the blame just like his "father" Adam.

said that they knew that Jesus was a sinner. The man said "whether he is a sinner, I do not know". Some people criticize the former blind man for saying he didn't know if Jesus was a sinner or not. I don't think the criticism is fair. I think he was saying "You say that you know that he is a sinner but I don't know that because that was not my experience. He gave me sight and that is not something a sinner would do." He made the point explicitly later in their discussion. When they asked him again how his eyes were opened, he asked the Pharisees if they also wanted to be his disciples. Did the man imply that he wanted to be a disciple of Jesus? That is how the Pharisees understood it. They said "you are his disciple". The Pharisees then proudly declared that they were disciples of Moses. As Jesus had already told the Pharisees in John 5, that if they truly believed Moses' then they would also believe in Jesus because Moses wrote about Jesus. The man then gave a full response to the leaders previous declaration that they knew that Jesus was a sinner. The former blind man threw their words back in their face. He said "WE KNOW that God does not listen to sinners but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him." "If this man was not from God he could do nothing". He debunked their statement. Sinners sin, they don't do good things that have not been previously done. The Pharisees brought things full circle. They told the man that he was born in utter sin and therefore had no business teaching them. Jesus had already debunked the idea that blindness only happens because of a sin committed by the person (or their parents). I would have had a question for the Pharisees. If being born blind meant that the man was a horrible sinner, what should they conclude about him once he received his sight? Should they have considered him to be a tremendously righteous person? Because of the former blind man's statements, the Pharisees cast him out. Like the lame man, Jesus found the man for a second time. Jesus asked the man if he believed in the Son of Man. The man asked Jesus "who is he, sir, that I may believe in him". When Jesus acknowledged that he himself was the Son of Man, the former blind man said "I believe" and he worshiped Jesus. That is a good response to Jesus.

#### Summary of the lame man:

- Jesus sought out the lame man.
- When Jesus asked him if he wanted to be healed he made excuses for why he was not already healed. "Poor me, I don't have anyone to help me". Some people enjoy being miserable.
- He didn't know Jesus' name when he left Jesus after he was healed. It seems obvious that the man had no interest in following Jesus. If you want to follow someone, first learn the person's name.
- The Jewish leaders caught him "breaking the Sabbath". When the Jewish leaders told him that it was unlawful for him to carry his bed roll, he shifted the blame to the unnamed person who healed him and who had told him to take up his bed roll and walk.
- Jesus later found the man a second time. He told the man to "sin no more that nothing worse befall you".
- The man left Jesus a second time. Once he learned Jesus' name, he went to the Jewish leaders to tell them that Jesus was the one who healed him. Thus he let them know that Jesus was the one who told him to break the Sabbath.
- The result of the man's actions was that the Jewish leaders persecuted Jesus for breaking the Sabbath.
- My take on the man is that he represented those who followed the ways of the Pharisees. He looked for healing in the wrong place. He thought the Pool of Bethesda would bring him physical healing. Instead, his physical healing came from Jesus. The Pharisees thought that searching the scriptures would bring them eternal life (John 5:39-40). Eternal life only comes through faith in Jesus Christ. The Pharisees were looking for spiritual healing in the wrong place. The man who was lame walked away from Jesus twice. We have no record that he ever looked for Jesus. We do know that he looked for and found the Jewish religious leaders.

#### Summary of the man born blind:

- Jesus sought out the man born blind.
- Jesus never asked the man if he wanted to be healed. He declared that the man's blindness was for the glory of God and not due to a specific sin committed by him or his parents.
- The man walked about half a mile with clay on his eyes because Jesus told him to. He did as Jesus said even though it involved some effort on his part.
- Somehow, the blind man knew that Jesus was the one who put clay on his eyes and sent him to the Pool of Siloam before he received his sight. The blind man "saw" better than the man who was lame.
- The former blind man was led to the Pharisees. They asked him how he received his sight. When he was asked what he thought about Jesus, he said that he was a prophet. Later he implied that he wanted to be a disciple of Jesus. He tried to set the Pharisees straight that a sinner could not open the eyes of a man born blind. Someone who could open the eyes of a man born blind must be from God. He must be a worshiper of God and do his will. For that he was cast out. The man stood up for Jesus at his own personal risk.
- Jesus found the former blind man when he heard that the Pharisees had cast him out. When Jesus revealed that he was the Son of Man, the man said, "I believe" and he worshiped Jesus.
- My take on the former blind man is that he "saw" better than a lot of people with full physical sight. He gives every indication to me that he is one of God's elect. He stood up for Jesus in the face of hostile religious leaders. He believed in Jesus. He worshiped Jesus. In John 9:39 Jesus revealed the lesson to be learned. The blind man was judged by men as a sinner. Jesus gave him sight. The Pharisees claimed to be righteous but Jesus said they were still in their sin. They were blind.

Greek manuscripts written before 500 AD which do not include John 5:4 (p66, p75, x̄, B, C, D, T, W):

- Papyrus 66 is believed to be from about 200 AD. It was discovered in the 1950s.  
[https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA\\_P66\\_Bodmer?filter=1](https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA_P66_Bodmer?filter=1)
- Papyrus 75 is believed to be from the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century. It was discovered in the 1950s.  
[https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA\\_P75?filter=1](https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA_P75?filter=1)
- Codex Vaticanus (B 03) is believed to be from the 4<sup>th</sup> century. It was in the Vatican Library in 1475.  
[https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.1209](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1209)
- Codex Sinaiticus (x̄ 01) believed to be from the 4<sup>th</sup> Century. It was discovered in 1844.  
[https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA\\_01?filter=1](https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA_01?filter=1)
- Ephraemi Rescriptus (C 04) is believed to be from the 5<sup>th</sup> century. It's existence was known in the 1600s.  
[https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA\\_04?filter=1](https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA_04?filter=1)
- Codex Bezae (D 05) is believed to be from the 5<sup>th</sup> century. It's existence was known in the 1500s.  
[https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA\\_05?filter=1](https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA_05?filter=1)
- Codex Borgianus (T 29) is believed to be from the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Pieces were discovered at different times. It was known in the 1700s.
- Codex Washingtonianus (W 32) is believed to be from the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century. It was not publicly known until the early 1900s. [https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA\\_032?filter=1](https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA_032?filter=1)

Greek manuscripts written before 500 AD which do include John 5:4 (A):

- Codex Alexandrinus (A 02) is believed to be from the 5<sup>th</sup> century. It's existence was known in the 1600s.  
[https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA\\_02?filter=1](https://manuscripts.csntm.org/manuscript/Group/GA_02?filter=1)

Matthew Henry (1662–1714)

Matthew Henry's comments about the healing pool are all based on believing that verse 5:4 was part of the original text of the Gospel of John. Some of the earliest manuscripts which did not contain verse 4 were not discovered until the 1900s. I don't fault Matthew Henry for that. I would find fault with a modern commentator if they included verse 4.

"The place where this cure was wrought: at the pool of Bethesda, which had a miraculous healing virtue in it"

"Expositors generally agree that the virtue this pool had was supernatural."

"It was a type of the Messiah, who is the fountain opened; and was intended to raise people's expectations of him who is the Sun of righteousness, that arises with healing under his wings."

Matthew Henry wrote almost 1,000 words about the healing power of the pool.

*My note: the idea of an angel stirring water and then only the first person in the water being healed is very works oriented. Jesus' healing of the lame man was full of grace. Jesus was full of grace and truth (Jn 1:14). The pool, as Henry described it, sounds more like a type of righteousness by works. Matthew Henry believed 5:4 to be God's inerrant Word and so he could only understand the unusual healing power of the pool as God's provision for healing and enlightenment.*

“for Christ is willing to heal, if we be but willing to be healed”

Rise, take up your pallet and walk: “it is expressed as a command to him to bestir himself. He must rise and walk, that is, attempt to do it, and in the essay he should receive strength to do it. ... But, if he had not attempted to help himself, he had not been cured, and he must have borne the blame; yet it does not therefore follow that, when he did rise and walk, it was by his own strength; no, it was by the power of Christ, and he must have all the glory.”

*My note: the text says that he gave the command “and at once the man was healed”. It goes on to say “and he took up his pallet and walked”. The text says that the sequence was 1. Jesus commanded, 2. the man was healed, 3. the man (rose) and took up his pallet and walked. There is nothing about the man’s willingness to make an effort between the command and the healing according to the Gospel of John. I will be interested to see how Henry explains how Lazarus attempted to rise from the dead before Jesus resurrected him.*

“He took up his bed and walked, and did not care who blamed him or threatened him for it. The proof of our spiritual cure is our rising and walking. Hath Christ healed our spiritual diseases? Let us go whithersoever he sends us, and take up whatever he is pleased to lay upon us, and walk before him.”

“The misery believers are made whole from, warns us to sin no more, having felt the smart of sin. This is the voice of every providence, Go, and sin no more. Christ saw it necessary to give this caution”.

*My note: I believe that Henry assumed that the physical healing was also a spiritual healing. I don’t see the evidence of that in the text. Can Jesus heal someone physically without healing them spiritually? Why can’t he? He can do as he wills. I am sure that many people are healed who do not believe in Jesus Christ. Did the extreme nature of the illness require a spiritual healing? Did the fact that it was a sign require a spiritual healing? As John 9 teaches, some healings are so that the works of God might be made manifest. Giving sight to a man born blind backed up the statements that Jesus made in 8:12 and 9:5 that he is the light of the world.*

John Calvin (1509-1564)

“But about the time of Christ's coming, as they were deprived of the Prophets and their condition was very wretched, and as various temptations pressed upon them on every hand, they needed this extraordinary aid, that they might not think that God had entirely left them, and thus might be discouraged and fall away.”

“I have no doubt that God intended to remind them by these signs that the time of redemption was approaching, and that Christ, the Author of salvation, was already at hand, that the minds of all might be the better aroused.”

*My note: Since Jesus had already been revealed to Israel, why did the healing of the pool continue since Jesus had already healed many, many people?*

“But in this manner, by depriving us of our own senses, the Lord accustoms us to the obedience of faith. We too eagerly follow what pleases our reason, though contrary to the word of God; and, therefore, in order to render us more obedient to him, he often presents to us those things which contradict our reason.”

*My note: It seems that Calvin was working hard to make sense of verse 4 which he would have had in his texts without any indication that the earliest texts did not include verse 4. Most of the earliest texts had not yet been discovered, although two of them had been discovered before his time. He may not have had access to them, especially the one in the Vatican.*

“The defense is, that he who had been cured replies that he does nothing but by the command of him who had power and authority to command; for, though he did not yet know who Christ was, yet he was convinced that he had been sent by God, because he had received a proof of his divine power, and learns from it that Christ is endued with authority, so that it must be his duty to obey him.”

*My note: What is the evidence that this man did not do anything apart from Christ's command? Yes, he took up his pallet and walked. If I follow Christ in one command should it be assumed that I always follow Christ in every command? I wish! It also seems hard to take that this man was a model of obedience to Christ when he did not even bother to find out Jesus' name. Would Calvin call that blind obedience?*

“And hence we learn that the cure of this man cannot be ascribed to his faith, since, even after having been cured, he does not acknowledge his Physician; and yet, when he was ordered, he carried his bed, which appears to have been done by the guidance of faith. For my own part, as I do not deny that there was in him some secret movement of faith, so I say that it is clear from what follows, that he had no solid doctrine or clear light on which he could rely.”

*My note: So, someone can have faith in Christ without knowing his name. I think someone should know Jesus' name before believing in him. Do you believe in this unknown person for your salvation? That doesn't seem right.*

“This admonition teaches us also, that all the evils which we endure ought to be imputed to our sins; for the afflictions of men are not accidental, but are so many stripes for our chastisement. ... He does not take pleasure in our sufferings, and therefore does not treat us more harshly than he has been offended by our sins.”

*My note: What about John 9? Jesus did not impute the man's blindness to his sins or his parents' sins.*

“Nothing was farther from his intention than to make Christ an object of their hatred, and nothing was farther from his expectation than that they would rage so furiously against Christ. His intention, therefore, was pious; for he wished to render to his Physician the honor which was justly due to him.”

*My note: How did Calvin know the man's motives? If what Calvin said was true, this man had not only been lame but his capacity for rational thought must have been greatly lacking. What would make the man think from his first encounter with the Jewish leaders that they wanted to praise the man who told him to “break the Sabbath”?*

*My intention is not to personally criticize Matthew Henry and John Calvin. They wrote great commentaries that have blessed many people over the years. My intention is for all of us to be like the Bereans. We must search the scriptures to see if these things are so (Acts 17:10-11). It is also an exhortation that we not only make use of the knowledge of those from past centuries but that we also make use of the research done in the recent past. That includes discovery of Greek manuscripts which are close to the time of the writing of the originals. The first point in Cornerstone's statement of what we believe is that “the Bible in its original language and text is the Word of God, inerrant.” We do not believe that any one English translation is inerrant. English was not the original language of the Bible. Recent Biblical archaeology is also helpful. In Daniel, we saw that before 1853, people cast doubt on the Bible because there was no record of king Belshazzar outside of Daniel. Some commentators tried to force known historic figures to be Belshazzar. Then in 1853 and afterwards, some clay cylinders were discovered with the name of Belshazzar and his father, king Nabonidus. The Bible was once again shown to be true and the naysayers wrong. Archaeology has also corrected some on the Pool of Bethesda. Many thought it was a five sided pool because it had five porticoes. Archaeology discovered that it was a rectangular pool. The fifth portico was in the middle of the pool and separated the upper and lower pools. Archaeology once again proved the Bible to be true and clarified the meaning and structure of the five porticoes.*