

How to Use Sermon Resources

- **READ AHEAD TOGETHER** - MCG's should use the Devotional at the end of this resource as a reading plan for the week leading up to your meeting.
- **SIT UNDER THE WORD** - This resource is filled with scripture references. Read them aloud, together before you answer any questions.
- **APPLY TRUTH** - The goal is deep discussion and application, not necessarily to complete this resource. Don't squash a good discussion. If you get into something important along the way that's fine.

Small Group Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer [2 mins]

Use the Overview [5 mins]

- Cover any key points for people who missed parts or all of the sermon

Scripture Deep Dive [30-40 mins]

- Opening Question
- Read the scripture for each question then ask the question. Some have multiple scriptures.

Close in Prayer

- In this extended prayer time, ask others to pray as they feel led, pray in a circle, pray over one another, pray to your left, or pray for someone specific. Whatever seems best.

Split Time (if applicable)

- Men with men, women with women
- Share in a circle. "What's one thing you want to celebrate? What do you need prayer and accountability for?"
- After everyone shares, pray in a circle for the person to your left/right.

SERMON OVERVIEW

“Questions Jesus Asked: Do You Want To Be Healed?” - John 5:1-18

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores Jesus's question to the disabled man at the Pool of Bethesda: "Do you want to be healed?" Through examining this encounter from three vantage points—Jesus, the disabled man, and the crowd—the message reveals profound truths about human worth as image-bearers of God, the hopelessness of our spiritual condition apart from Christ, and how to respond when God doesn't provide the physical miracles we seek. The sermon emphasizes that our worth is determined by our Creator, our potential through the Holy Spirit, and the price Christ paid for us. It challenges believers to see themselves as God sees them, recognize where they've placed their hope, and trust God's heart even when they can't trace His hand.

Key Points:

- Archaeological evidence from 1876 confirms the historical reliability of the Pool of Bethesda, strengthening faith in Scripture's accuracy
- Jesus approaching the disabled man demonstrates that God sees worth in every person as an image-bearer, contrary to worldly religions that focus on the spiritually elite
- Our worth is determined by three factors: who created us (God), our potential (through the Holy Spirit), and what someone is willing to pay for us (Christ's life)
- The disabled man's hopeless and helpless condition mirrors our spiritual state apart from Christ—we cannot save ourselves
- Jesus asked "Do you want to be healed?" because healing would change everything: the man's community, daily agenda, and identity
- The gospel call extends to three groups: those needing salvation, those called to share the gospel urgently, and those struggling with unanswered prayers

Scripture Reference:

- John 5:1-18
- Psalm 22:1-5 (David's cry to God and declaration of trust)

Stories:

- The 2008 movie "Vantage Point" illustrating how the same event looks different from different perspectives
- The 1876 archaeological discovery of the Pool of Bethesda confirming biblical accuracy after centuries of skepticism
- Personal anecdote about collecting baseball cards and the father's question about worth: "Who's paying you?"
- Black Friday shopping experience diving into a pile for a \$5 food processor, illustrating the desperation people at the pool would have felt
- Pastoral experiences of people asking "Why doesn't God do something for me?" after suffering loss
- The unhelpful comment "God needed another angel in heaven" that people say to grieving families

Scripture Deep Dive

Opening Question

Share a time when you realized that something you'd been trusting to "fix" your life (a job, relationship, achievement, habit, etc.) could not actually deliver what you hoped it would. Looking back, what did that reveal about where your hope was really placed?

Point 1 – Jesus' vantage point: Do I see myself the way God sees me?

Key idea: Jesus intentionally approaches a marginalized, "stepped-over" man, showing his worth as an image bearer of God.

1. John 5:6; Luke 15:1–2 – Read also 1 Corinthians 1:26–29.

Identify the kinds of people Jesus is drawn to in these texts and the kinds of people the religious leaders overlook or despise. Then, using 1 Corinthians 1:26–29, explain why God might deliberately choose to work through the weak and "foolish" rather than the strong and "wise."

Point 2 – The disabled man's vantage point: In what have I placed my hope?

Key idea: The man's hope is in the pool; his real condition is hopeless and helpless—just like our spiritual condition apart from Christ.

2. John 5:7–9 – Read also Ephesians 2:1–9.

Using Ephesians 2:1–9, identify at least two ways the man's situation by the pool illustrates our spiritual condition before salvation and at least two ways Jesus' command and instant healing picture the way God saves us in Christ.

Point 3 – The religious leaders' reaction: Am I more focused on rules or God's heart?

Key idea: The leaders care more about Sabbath rules than about a man restored after 38 years.

3. John 5:9–12 – Read also Exodus 20:8–11 and Mark 2:27–28.

Compare Exodus 20:8–11 with what the Jews say in John 5:10. Identify one way they have gone beyond the original command. Then, using Mark 2:27–28, explain what they have misunderstood about the purpose of the Sabbath.

4. John 5:10–16 – Read also Micah 6:6–8 and Matthew 23:23–24.

In light of Micah 6:6–8 and Matthew 23:23–24 identify one specific way the priorities of the religious leaders conflict with what God says truly matters, and explain how that conflict shows up in this scene.

Point 4 – Jesus’ identity and authority: Do I accept who Jesus says He is?

Key idea: Jesus claims divine status; that’s why the opposition intensifies.

5. John 5:17–18 – Read also Philippians 2:5–7 and Colossians 1:15–17.

Based on these passages, list at least three specific claims about Jesus’ identity or role that equate Him with God. Then explain why the Jews’ desire to kill Him in John 5:18 is a logical (even if wrong) response to what Jesus is claiming.

Point 5 – The crowd’s vantage point: What if my physical miracle never comes?

Key idea: Many at Bethesda are not healed that day; eternal healing is greater than temporary relief.

6. John 5:14 – Read also 2 Corinthians 4:16–18 and Romans 8:18–25.

From these passages, identify what “something worse” Jesus warns about and contrast it with the “eternal weight of glory” Paul describes. Then explain how this contrast should shape the way a believer thinks about ongoing suffering or an unanswered request for physical healing.

Point 6 – Our response: How do I bring my helplessness and frustration to God?

Key idea: We are helpless apart from Christ, and we can bring our confusion honestly to God while trusting His heart.

7. Psalm 22:1–5 – Read also Mark 15:34 and 1 Peter 5:6–7.

Identify at least two honest complaints David (and later Jesus) brings to God in Psalm 22:1–2. Then, using vv. 3–5 and 1 Peter 5:6–7, explain how lament can include both raw honesty and deep trust at the same time.

8. Ephesians 2:12–13 – Read also Romans 5:6–8.

Compare Paul’s description of our former state (“having no hope and without God”) with the sermon’s description of the man as “hopeless and helpless.” Then, using these verses, identify at least two concrete truths a believer can cling to when they feel “stepped over” or forgotten by God.

5 Day Devotional

Day 1 – Seen by Jesus

Reading: John 5:1–5, Psalm 139:1–2

Devotional: By the pool of Bethesda lay “a large number” of suffering people, but John draws our eyes to one man who had been disabled for 38 years. From a human perspective, he was just part of the crowd—overlooked, maybe forgotten—but Jesus saw him. The Savior walked into a mass of needs and locked in on one hurting person with intentionality and compassion. In a world where we can feel like one more face in the crowd, this passage reminds us that Jesus’ gaze is personal, not generic. You are not invisible to Him; your story, your pain, and your waiting are all fully known.

Reflection / Prayer: Ask Jesus to help you believe that He truly sees you. Pray: “Lord, help me to trust that I am not overlooked by you, even when I feel forgotten by others. Show me today that you know my story.”

Day 2 – “Do You Want to Be Healed?”

Reading: John 5:6–9, Mark 10:51

Devotional: Jesus’ question—“Do you want to get well?”—sounds obvious, but it goes deep. Healing changes everything: identity, routines, relationships, and responsibilities. Some of us cling to familiar brokenness because it feels safer than unknown wholeness. The man’s answer reveals years of disappointment and helplessness, but Jesus bypasses the superstition of the pool and speaks a powerful, simple command: “Get up... and walk.” Real healing begins when we stop explaining all the reasons things can’t change and start responding to Jesus’ voice.

Reflection / Prayer: Ask yourself honestly: In what area of my life is Jesus asking, “Do you really want to be healed, or are you comfortable as you are?” Pray: “Lord, show me where I’m resisting your healing and give me the courage to obey your voice, even when change feels costly.”

Day 3 – True Worth and Real Hope

Reading: John 5:10–13, 1 Peter 1:18–19

Devotional: The religious leaders see a rule violation, not a miracle; they see a carried mat, but miss a resurrected life. Legalism always misreads worth—measuring people by performance instead of by God’s image and Christ’s sacrifice. The man had long tied his hope to a pool that could never truly save him, but healing came from a Person, not a place. In the same way, our value is not in what we’ve done, how “together” we look, or where we’ve managed to crawl spiritually. Our worth is grounded in who created us and what Jesus paid to redeem us.

Reflection / Prayer: Where have you been measuring your worth by success, morality, or religious performance instead of Christ’s love and sacrifice? Pray: “Jesus, help me root my identity in your finished work, not in my achievements or failures. Let your cross define my value.”

Day 4 – Something Worse Than Suffering

Reading: John 5:14–16, Matthew 10:28

Devotional: Jesus finds the healed man in the temple and says, “See, you are well. Do not sin anymore, so that something worse doesn’t happen to you.” He’s not promising a pain-free life; He’s pointing beyond physical suffering to the far greater danger of a life (and eternity) separated from God. There is something worse than 38 years of disability: walking strongly and confidently into judgment without Christ. Jesus cares about our earthly pain, but He refuses to treat symptoms while ignoring the disease of sin. His ultimate kindness is not just making us more comfortable here, but rescuing us for forever.

Reflection / Prayer: Ask: Am I more focused on God fixing my circumstances than on Him dealing with my sin and shaping my heart? Pray: “Lord, thank you that you care about my pain, but care even more about my soul. Help me repent where I need to and treasure eternal realities above temporary comfort.”

Day 5 – When God’s Ways Don’t Make Sense

Reading: John 5:17–18, Romans 8:28

Devotional: Jesus’ defense for healing on the Sabbath is staggering: “My Father is still working, and I am working also.” He claims equality with God and a right to do what only God can do—even when it collides with human expectations and traditions. Many sick people remained unhealed at that pool; Jesus did not explain Himself to them, yet He was not absent or uncaring. Likewise, we often sit with unanswered questions: “Why not my miracle? Why not now?” This passage invites us to trust that even when we cannot trace His hand, God’s heart and purposes remain good and active.

Reflection / Prayer: Bring one confusing, painful situation honestly before God. Pray: “Father, I don’t understand why you have allowed this, but I choose to trust that you are still working. Strengthen my faith to rest in your character when I cannot see your plan.”