

Hope Church November 20<sup>th</sup> 2025

John 5:1-15.

Habit #5: holistic wholeness.

We're working through a series about what it really means to follow Jesus – ROOTED CONNECTIONS.

We are busy with the GROW habits.

- Habit #4 – **Christlike identity.** Changing my heart – INTERNAL life.
- Habit #5 – **Christlike character.** Reshaping my actions – EXTERNAL life.
- Habit #6 – **holistic wholeness.** Integrating my entire being – a HOLISTIC life.

Habit #6: **holistic wholeness.**

Holistic wholeness means that **God designed every part** of you – *body and mind and soul* – to work together in harmony. God doesn't just care about your SPIRITUAL life, but also your PHYSICAL health and your EMOTIONAL well-being. All of us reflects who He made us to be.

You can open your Bibles at **JOHN 5**.

- The Gospel of John was WRITTEN for Jewish and non-Jewish people living throughout the **Greco-Roman world**. Not a specific small local church.

- It was meant both to call unbelievers to trust in Jesus and to **strengthen the faith those who already follow him.**

### Verses 1-5

Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. 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. Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years.

- John doesn't mention what feast Jesus attends. It was a major religious event. The city would have been busy.
- Jesus visited the Pool of Bethesda.
  - ⇒ The name **means 'House of Mercy.'**
  - ⇒ It was near the Sheep Gate – just *northeast of the Temple*.
  - ⇒ It was made up of **two large pools**. About the size of a football field.
- 2 000 years ago many people *assumed* that **disability was caused by sin**.
- Because of that belief, **people with disabilities** were often pushed to the margins of society. **People with disabilities** were often left out of everyday community life.

- That is why there were a *large crowd* of sick and disabled people lying around the pools of Bethesda. All of them hoping that the **water would be stirred** and that they **might be healed** and that they might be restored to everyday life.
- The man Jesus met had been paralyzed for 38 years. In a world where only about a *quarter of the people lived to the age of 26*. 38 years was a **real long lifetime of suffering**.

### Verses 6-7

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?” “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.”

- When Jesus asks, ‘*Do you want to get well?*’ John uses the Greek word **ὑγιὴς** (hoegiēs). It was a word used for full health and wholeness. Jesus is really asking, ‘*Do you want to be made whole again?*’ **Physically** whole! **Emotionally** whole! **Spiritually** whole!
- The man doesn’t really answer Jesus’ question. He gives an excuse and says he has no one to help him.

- The man totally misses what Jesus is *offering* him. He is still convinced that his **only chance at healing** is getting into the pool when the water starts moving. He is hoping that Jesus might finally *be the person who can help him get into it.*

#### Verses 8-9a

Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

- Jesus reveals his power by HEALING the man’s body **instantly and miraculously**.
- The man was not healed because he had great faith. Jesus simply saw his need and chose to heal him.
- But the man does not grasp the **deeper wholeness** Jesus offers. He misses the fact that Jesus wants to restore him completely.

#### Verses 9b-13

The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, 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.” But he replied, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’” So they asked him, “Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?” The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

- The Jewish leaders confront him. **Instead of rejoicing** that he can walk, they *focus on their strict Sabbath rules*. Even carrying a mat or being healed could be labeled as work. **Totally forbidden**.
- Even though the man *experienced a powerful miracle*, the HEALING **did not make him a follower of Jesus**.

#### Verses 14-15

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.” The man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well.

- Jesus finds the man later in the temple and invites him to a new way of life.
- Jesus REDIRECTS the **focus to his spiritual condition**.
- Jesus is showing him that **life is about far more than just having a body that works**. REAL WHOLENESS is deeper than physical health. It reaches into the heart and the soul. Its a restored relationship with God.
- Instead of responding with trust or loyalty, he BETRAYS Jesus and **reports Jesus to the religious leaders**.

Jesus reaches out to a man who has been stuck in his suffering for thirty-eight years.

Someone most people **would have written off** as a LOST CAUSE. But Jesus heals him in as far as he allows Him to heal him.

JOHN 5 reminds us that God's care is whole-person care.

- He wants to **heals** our bodies.
- He wants to reshape how we think and live.
- He wants to **breathe** new life into our souls.

That we can truly be restored and *renewed* and **remade**.

What does this mean for us to live a life of HOLISTIC WHOLENESS?

**God cares about you spiritually and physically and emotionally. Your body and mind and soul matters.**

- Life in the U.S. is very unhealthy.
  - ⇒ Recent estimates say that close to **46% of U.S. adults are obese**.
  - ⇒ Americans also have higher rates of diabetes and other chronic diseases than most other 1<sup>st</sup> world countries.

- ⇒ Americans **work about 1796 hours a year**. That is several hundred hours per year more than countries like *Germany and Norway*.
- ⇒ Most full-time workers put in weeks of 50+ hours. 50+ hours are linked with a higher risks of **stroke** and **heart disease** and **depression** and **anxiety**.
- ⇒ Around 60% of workers in the U.S. say they do not have a **clear line between their work responsibilities and their personal lives**.

  

- ⇒ In VAN BUREN COUNTY: **1 in 5 adults smoke**; **1 in 4 are physically inactive**; & **1 in 5 binge drink**.

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NIV**

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**1 Thessalonians 5:23 NIV**

- **Body** and **mind** and **soul** are not separate compartments of our lives. They are *deeply connected* and *constantly affecting* one another. They are all **INTERDEPENDENT**.
  - When one of them is off. When one of them is out of sync. It will be visible in the others. That is why you can be in great physical shape and still not be truly well, if your relationships are a mess and your thought life is unhealthy.
- Part of following Jesus is about discovering what it means **being whole**. Living in HOLISTIC WHOLENESS.
  - HOLISTIC WHOLENESS means letting God **restore His image in us**. That the way we live, gives the world a clearer picture of what He is like.
  - HOLISTIC WHOLENESS is about **learning to walk with God** as a whole person in the *middle of real limits and pressures and imperfections*.
  - Letting God keep **restoring and strengthening and integrating** our bodies and minds and souls.
    - ⇒ The JAPANESE have a practice called **kintsukuroi**. It means to repair with gold.
      - ⇒ It describes the art of mending broken pottery with **gold or silver lacquer**. The *restored piece* is considered **more beautiful** and **more valuable** because it has been broken.

⇒ The more we come to know God by looking at the life of Jesus, the more our **God-given ‘mirror image’ is restored.**

⇒ The HOLY SPIRIT takes the shattered pieces of our lives and lovingly puts it back together again.

- To follow Jesus is to discover that living a well-balanced life is not selfish, it's an **act of worship.**

- HOLISTIC WHOLENESS doesn't mean having a **perfect body or looking like a fitness model**. It doesn't mean living in the modern-day lie of body confidence.

⇒ But it does mean being honest with yourself. About what you need to work on. To be as active as your body and your health allows you to be.

- HOLISTIC WHOLENESS doesn't mean **never feeling stressed or anxious or overwhelmed**.

⇒ But it does mean taking care of yourself. To connect with a therapist or a mentor or a support group.

- HOLISTIC WHOLENESS doesn't mean having **every relationship in your life neatly resolved and conflict-free**.

- ⇒ But is does mean that are you constantly working at your relationships. Raising your self-awareness. Working on your emotional intelligence. Forgiving others.
- HOLISTIC WHOLENESS doesn't mean that you always have to be **spiritually 'on fire'** and **never wrestling with doubt or dryness or questions.**
  - ⇒ But is does mean that your faith is a priority. To keep on trucking. Keep on connecting and worship and pray even though your struggling.
- HOLISTIC WHOLENESS doesn't mean maintaining a **flawlessly balanced schedule** where nothing ever falls through the cracks.
  - ⇒ But it does mean taking control of your schedule. It is OK to miss a game or three of your kids and grandkids.
- HOLISTIC WHOLENESS doesn't mean **eating perfectly and sleeping perfectly** and hitting every health goal without setback or relapse.
  - ⇒ But is does mean that you are intentional in what you eat and how you sleep and pushing through.

A couple of years ago I discovered the **important principles of TRADE-OFFS.**

- TRADE-OFFS are unavoidable.

- Every time you **choose to do one thing**, you are also choosing not to do something else. Over time these choices shape the kind of story our lives are telling.
- EACH DECISION **quietly trades one possible future for another**.
- TRADE-OFFS means intentionally saying no to many good things so you can **say yes to the few things** God has truly called you to do.

Trading irreplaceable influence at home for a role someone else will eventually fill at work is a bad bargain.

**Andy Stanley**

- TRADE-OFFS are about **how you invest** your limited time and energy and relationships.
- HOLISTIC WHOLENESS means **deliberately reordering priorities**. Learning to find balance in everyday life.
  - ⇒ Working and resting.
  - ⇒ Worshiping and serving.
  - ⇒ Persevering and doing the best we can at our jobs without becoming slaves to our work.
- Instead of trying to do everything. To be everything for everyone.

- You learn to pour yourself into what **has the greatest eternal value**.
- Over time **Jesus reshapes** how we VIEW our time and our energy and our relationships.
- This leads to a life that becomes less frantic and **more faithful**. Less fragmented and **more whole**.

## Gameplan @Hope Church.

- Pastor Craig.
- Celebrate recovery groups in 2026 – Celebrate Recovery is a **Christ-centered ministry** that helps people work through 'hurts and habits and hang-ups' such as anxiety or family conflict or addiction or unhealthy coping. It's a **supportive small group** that creates a safe place for healing and lasting change.
- **Be-Side-You Ministry** – interview with Linda Vroegindewey.
  - ⇒ If our CARE ministry @Hope Church is working the way you dream it would, what do you want people to feel and experience?
  - ⇒ What made you want to get involved in the Be-Side-You Ministry?
  - ⇒ Who do we hope to help through this ministry, and what are some easy, practical ways that Hope Church care for them?
  - ⇒ If a person needs support, or wants to serve on the Be-Side-You Ministry team, what's the best way for them to reach out?

⇒ How can we be praying for this ministry as it gets started?

God cares deeply for your **physical and emotional and spiritual health**.

- He invites you to move from despair to hope.
- He invites you from **paralysis to movement**.
- He invites you from imbalance to wholeness.