

John 5:1-18

CG Discussion Guide// Week of January 22, 2023

INTRODUCTION

- Icebreaker: What is a musical genre that you enjoy, but you're a bit embarrassed to share to others?
- Take some time to pray for one another's needs and requests (refer to Prayer Guide as needed)
- Harbor Network sister church to pray for: Calvary Church, Madison, IN (Pastor: Mike Hamby)
- Choose discussion questions, prayer guide, or abide time questions depending on your group's needs

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What are some things that stick out to you about the context of the paralytic and the story at large?
- Why do you think Jesus asked the man in v. 6, "Do you want to be healed?"
- How would you describe the character of the healed man?
- The religious leaders censure the healed man and Jesus for "working" during the Sabbath. What was their "work"? Do you remember reading anything in the OT that would prohibit what the man and Jesus did? What was the point of the Sabbath? (see Exodus 23:12, Mark 2:23-28)
- What do you make of Jesus' warning to the healed man in V. 14? What implication does Jesus make about the man's former condition and his spiritual state? Is that always the case for everyone?
- What is so controversial about Jesus ministering during the Sabbath? What was Jesus' defense and what does His defense say about who He is? (v. 17-18)
 - Is Jesus contradicting God's law of work and rest? What is Jesus doing here? Remember Mark 2:23-28 and the purpose of the Sabbath. Also check Hebrews 4:1-10

Addendum: If your CG asks about v. 4, such as why it is relegated to the footnotes in most modern translations, here's a concise explanation from New Testament scholar, Dr. William Mounce:

"This is the basic question of the Greek text, and the technical name for it is "text criticism." (I am going to stick with the Greek Testament, not the Hebrew.) Here is the basic reconstruction.

1. The writers wrote their gospels and epistles and sent them to their churches.

2. These documents were copied so they could be shared. In the process of copying, changes were introduced. (By the way, this is not academic conjecture; we have these different manuscripts and can see the differences for themselves.) Some changes were accidental but others appeared to be intentional, but not always for nefarious reasons. It is often to add an explanation, or substitute an easier word to understand, or to harmonize the gospels etc. In John 5:4, most believe that a scribe (the person doing the copying) thought it was puzzling why the man would lie there for 38 years. Perhaps he knew a tradition that said the angel periodically came down to stir up the waters and the first person in was healed, and so he added in the verse. (Others would argue that for some reason the verse was dropped off.)

3. As time progressed (and as we can tell from archaeology), biblical manuscripts were collected in five different geographical areas. Since the center of the church was in Rome, this area had the greatest number of copies.

4. Erasmus (1500's) created a Greek text based on two manuscripts from the 12th century (Matthew through Jude) and another 12th century manuscript for all but the last 6 verses of Revelation. He went from the Latin back into Greek to get those last 6. His work became the basis of the King James translation.

5. 150 years ago we started digging up new manuscripts that were in fact much older (by centuries). They came from a different geographical area than the majority of the texts we currently had, and they were different in places. For example, they did not have John 5:4. And so the science of textual criticism was born, which is the science of determining which of the different "readings" is most likely original. The general preference is to see scribes as adding verses, not removing them. For that reason, and others, most feel that John 5:4 was added after the fact; there is no good reason why it would have been omitted. But God in his sovereign love made sure that the differences among the manuscripts would not hinder our faith. About 5% of the Greek text is in question. No major doctrine is brought into question by 5%. You can trust your Bible!" (Source URL: <https://www.billmounce.com/monday-with-mounce/where-did-v-4-go-john-5-4>)

Abide Time: John 5:1-18

- What realities are you facing this week? What is occupying your thoughts? How do you feel?

- Read the passage and let God speak to you in you reality through his Word. Write down your reflections as God shepherds you:
 - What does the text say is true about God and his character?

 - What does it say about the world around you?

- How do your reflections above speak to your reality?

- What did you experience in your heart and soul as God spoke to you and your reality?

- What did you experience in your body, given your reflections and what you experienced in your heart and soul?

- How is God inviting you to live differently?

- What does all of what you shared above say about God and his relationship with you?

WEEKLY PRAYER GUIDE

The Bible promises that anything we ask for in Jesus' name – that is according to His will – shall be granted to us (John 14:13-14). In view of this great promise, the prayer requests are all grounded in Scripture. When we pray Scripture, we can be certain that we are praying according to God's will.

That does not mean God will grant our requests in our preferred time or according to our frail wisdom; but it does mean that we can pray confidently knowing that God delights to answer these requests, for they are His words.

Use the accompanying Scripture verses to shape and inform your prayers.

PRAY FOR YOURSELF & YOUR FAMILY:

- That your daily life will bring honor to the name of Jesus – (2 Thess. 1:11-12)
- That you will cast all of your anxieties on God – (1 Peter 5:6-7)
- That you will consider your trials as an opportunity for joy – (James 1:2-4)

PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH:

- That the power of Christ will rest on our church and ministries [Worship Gathering, Community Groups, Men/Women, Youth, Children, etc.] – (2 Cor. 12:9-10)
- That God will give us the wisdom and faith that we desperately need to continue in faithful mission – (James 1:5-8)
- That God will make us fruitful in ministry – (John 15:1-2) – and bold in witness – (Eph. 6:18-20)

PRAY FOR OUR CITY:

- That God will give wisdom to our government (local, state, and national) that we may lead peaceful, godly lives – (1 Timothy 2:1-2)
- That the Lord will continue to provide open doors of gospel ministry in IU and the Bloomington community – (1 Corinthians 16:9)
- That the work of God will be displayed in the lives of the members of our sister churches – (John 9:3)

PRAY FOR OUR WORLD:

- That the persecuted church will find fellowship with Jesus as they share in his sufferings – (Philippians 3:10-11)
- That the Lord of the harvest will send out more workers to unreached people groups because they have been gripped by Paul's missionary logic in Romans 10:13-17 – (Matthew 9:37-38)
- That Christ will return bringing the fullness of salvation with him – (Revelation 22:20)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Jan. 24: Restore Groups Kickoff
- Feb. 1: Redeemer Women
- Feb. 4: Membership Class
- Feb. 4: Redeemer-at-Martinsville Potluck
- Feb. 22: Ash Wednesday
- Feb. 26: Child + Family Dedication

Reminder: All events are listed in the Events tab in our Redeemer app. You can RSVP for specific events by going to the Events tab, clicking on an event, and following the link to register.