

John 5:1-18
March 16, 2025

Tips and Tricks:

The sermon notes are designed to be used as a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you have to use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through and others will be over in a few seconds.

1. Don't teach the lesson. The sermon was just preached. Just ask the questions and let everyone else talk.
2. Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!
3. Have fun. Don't forget to laugh and crack up. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of our ministry. Remember: We have to build a relational bridge strong enough to hold the truth!

Agenda for Group Time

1. Ice Breaker - Lighthearted ice breaker question (10 minutes)
2. Discussion - Bible study, sharing and application. (25 Minutes)
3. Prayer - Pray together (5 minutes)
4. Planning - Remember to talk about what's coming up.

Icebreaker: What was the thing that you always did as a kid when you got sick? Food you ate? Movies you watched?

Read John 5:1-18

1. The Healing

V2 — And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.

Question: Where did this happen? When did it happen? And to whom did it happen? What's one significant thing about each of those?

Discussion: Why is it that some translations include v4 and others exclude it?

Question: How does the paralytic answer Jesus' question in v6? How does Jesus undermine what he thinks will heal him?

Discussion: Have there ever been times in your life where you've set your confidence on something that turned out to be really foolish? How did God graciously undermine your confidence in that thing?

- I used to think college would fix my life. Then it became career. Then it became kids. Then promotions. Etc.
- I used to follow a certain writer/leader/thinker/podcaster/reporter religiously. Looking back, I realize how much hope I had placed in them.
- I used to orient my life around personality tests. I see how captivated my heart was to figuring my life out.

- I used to think that the right brands, right foods, and right lifestyle would crack the code for my life.
- I used to think that if I just had the right answers, right apologetics, right political opinions, went to the right church, and did the right things, then I'd have a lot better life.

2. The Problem

"And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath." (v9)

Question: What was the problem that the religious leaders had with this man?

"Thus says the LORD: Take care for the sake of your lives, and do not bear a burden on the Sabbath day or bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem. 22 And do not carry a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath or do any work, but keep the Sabbath day holy, as I commanded your fathers." (Jer. 17:21-22)

Question: How were the religious leaders misinterpreting the 4th commandment? What did the Lord in Jeremiah when He warned against "bearing a burden" on the Sabbath and how did it differ from this man carrying his mat?

Discussion: Are we typically more strict (pharisaical) or more uncaring (anti-law) when it comes to Sabbath keeping?

Discussion: How is the Sabbath a radically good gift?

3. The Work

"See v7. This is what comes naturally to us — a bunch of people who want their lives fixed at the "pool of mercy" but no one is interested in showing mercy others until they've been received it first. And then Jesus shows up."

Discussion: What are some ways that we can see that our society typically believes that mercy is better than ruthlessness? What are some ways that our society might favor

ruthlessness over mercy?

Discussion: It's very likely that this miracle happened at Purim when the people of Israel remembered God's salvation in Persia (see the book of Esther). Part of celebrating Purim was that the people of Israel were supposed to do acts of mercy to those who were poor and destitute. What are some ways that we can grow in becoming people of mercy?

Discussion: The meaning of this sign was to show Jesus' equality with God (v17-18). He is Lord of the Sabbath, He has power to heal, and He has the authority of God. How can this give us confidence in Jesus? What might this look like in practice for us as we go about our lives in community with one another and with unbelievers?