

## Week 7 Discussion Questions

**Text:** John 5:1-29

Icebreaker: Do you practice taking a sabbath? What does it look like for you?

1. Read this week's passage. What stands out from the text or sermon?
2. List the characters in the story and what you learn about them.
  - A man who has been an invalid for 38 years--it describes him as unable to go down into the pool alone/without help, which indicates he may be paralyzed or crippled in some way.
  - Jesus—comes to Jerusalem and immediately seeks out the weak, sick, forgotten. Jesus offers healing physically and spiritually.
  - Jews—upset that Jesus is healing on the Sabbath, breaking Jewish Law and claiming to be God.
3. Why does Jesus ask the man if He wants to be healed?

By asking the man if he wants to be healed, Jesus is able to show the man an alternative to his expectations for healing. The man's explanation of what keeps him from healing implies a response of "of course he wants to be healed," he just doesn't have anyone to help him. He might expect that Jesus is offering to help him, which he does, just not in the way that was expected.
4. Water has been a consistent element within the narrative of John until now. How does what you've learned the past few weeks about the significance of water in these stories change or enhance your understanding of this passage?

Water has symbolized both "life" and "purification." This man is waiting at the pool waiting for the opportunity to be healed and given a "new life." Similarly to the wine of Cana, John's baptism, and Jacob's well, Jesus reveals how he offers something better than what we expect in every way.
5. This man has lived 38 years with a debilitating condition and he is at this pool because he believes it is what will bring him salvation. When you have experienced something debilitating (Physically? Mentally? Emotionally? Issues with family, friends, work?) that kept you from living life as you pictured it, where did you turn for relief?

Use this as a time to be open and vulnerable, sharing our stories of seeking fulfillment in places apart from Christ.
6. Last week, the woman at the well's response to Jesus was to tell everyone about Him. In what way is the response of the man who was healed different?

The man does not go off to tell everyone he knows, but instead turns Jesus into the Jews. While many came to Jesus to believe because of the woman's testimony, the Jews persecuted Jesus because the man tells them about Jesus.

7. Is it possible to receive help from Jesus and still miss Jesus Himself?

This might be a sobering question for each of us to face. Do I come before Jesus for the help He can bring me on my endeavors toward something else or do I want Jesus for Himself?

8. Read Exodus 31:12-18. Jesus would have known that His and the man who was healed actions would be prohibited on the Sabbath, yet He heals the man anyway. Why is it lawful for Jesus to do so and what does He reveal about Himself when He does?

Jesus healing on the Sabbath is meant to reveal his equality with God, because only God can heal and work on the Sabbath. Jesus is the one who brings true rest and healing that is symbolized in observance of the Sabbath.

9. What aspect of Christ's character revealed in this passage did you need to be reminded of this week?