



John 5:1-18 Small Group Questions

- Have someone read John 5:1-18. How is this story similar to other healing stories in the gospels? How is it different?
- Wesley said that one important aspect of this story is the *compassion* of Jesus. Where do you see Jesus' compassion in this story?
 - John paints the scene: there is a pool, around which is a crowd of people with various maladies and disabilities. What do you think this scene looked like? What do you think it sounded like? How do you think that people in the city treated this part of town?
 - Jesus did not *have* to go to this pool, but He does anyway. Wesley said that Jesus "in His compassion always moves towards need, not comfort. He moves towards the brokenhearted, not the self-righteous." Why do you think this is? Why is Jesus drawn to need?
 - How have you seen Jesus meet you in your brokenness?
 - What is self-righteousness? How can it be an impediment to our relationship with Jesus?
 - Wesley further noted that Jesus pursues this man; this man in no way pursues Jesus. Jesus initiates the relationship with this man, and He initiates the relationship with all of us, too. Why does the Bible so consistently teach that God has to be the one to

initiate? Why are we incapable of initiating our relationship with Him?

- Obedience is not our natural state; disobedience is. Disobedience comes easier to us than obedience. When have you experienced this to be true? Why is obedience to God harder than disobedience?
- In verse 6, Jesus asks the man if he wants to be healed. Why do you think He asks such an obvious question? What does this question tell us about Jesus? How do you think the man felt when Jesus asked him this question?
- If you stopped at the end of verse 6, what would you expect the man to say? What does He actually say in verse 7?
 - Why do you think this man doesn't shout an immediate, "yes!"?
 - How does this man seem to misunderstand Jesus in this moment?
 - Wesley said that this man sees Jesus as a collaborator: He is willing to allow Jesus to help him, but only on his own terms. How might we be prone to the same thinking?
 - When are we tempted to treat Jesus as a collaborator, instead of a Savior?
 - What's so wrong with viewing Jesus as a collaborator? How does this misunderstand Jesus' identity?
 - Another way of describing this man's view of Jesus, Wesley said, is as a means to an end. Jesus is a means to this man's healing, and that's the extent to which Jesus matters to Him.
 - Where are areas where you see either others or yourself treating Jesus as a means to an end?
 - How might our prayer life reveal when we treat Jesus as a means to an end? In contrast, what does a prayer life that treats Jesus as an end in Himself look like?

- Besides the compassion of Jesus, this passage shows the controversy of Jesus. Why is this healing controversial? Why are the pharisees upset?
 - In verse 13, the man does not know who Jesus is, so he can't tell the pharisees who healed him. But in verse 15, he does know, and he tells them. How do you interpret these actions? Is he giving up the man who just healed him? If so, why would he do this?
- In verse 14, Jesus finds the man and issues a stern warning. What do you think this verse means?
 - Wesley said that whatever else we might say about it, Jesus has come not only to bring the man a physical healing, but a spiritual one. By the end of the story, do you think this man accepts the spiritual healing?
 - In verse 17, Jesus says that "My Father is working until now, and I am working." Wesley said that this passage ultimately shows that Jesus' work facilitates our rest. How would you define true rest? What does true rest feel like?
 - Where is your "resting" place? In other words, where is a place where you feel totally at rest?
 - How is the rest that Jesus provides similar or different to the rest you feel at these places?
 - How is the rest that Jesus provides related to the spiritual healing He has come to bring us?
 - In a busy city like Washington, DC, how can we practice experiencing the rest that Jesus offers?