

Small Group Study Guide



March 15, 2020
My Father and I

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we thank you so much for John and his willingness to document the signs of Jesus and we thank you for preserving this ancient document for us. Father, Jesus made it clear that compassion for others takes priority over religious rules and laws. Forgive us for the times we use religion as an excuse to mistreat others and help us to get this right. Help us to love others as you love them. We pray this in the matchless and powerful name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES: John 5:1-21

5 After this there was a Jewish festival, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2 In Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate in the north city wall is a pool with the Aramaic name Bethesda. It had five covered porches, 3 and a crowd of people who were sick, blind, lame, and paralyzed sat there. 5 A certain man was there who had been sick for thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there, knowing that he had already been there a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?” 7 The sick man answered him, “Sir, I don’t have anyone who can put me in the water when it is stirred up. When I’m trying to get to it, someone else has gotten in ahead of me.” 8 Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” 9 Immediately the man was well, and he picked up his mat and walked. Now that day was the Sabbath. 10 The Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, “It’s the Sabbath; you aren’t allowed to carry your mat.” 11 He answered, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’” 12 They inquired, “Who is this man who said to you, ‘Pick it up and walk?’” 13 The man who had been cured didn’t know who it was, because Jesus had slipped away from the crowd gathered there. 14 Later Jesus found him in the temple and said, “See! You have been made well. Don’t sin anymore in case something worse happens to you.” 15 The man went and proclaimed to the Jewish leaders that Jesus was the man who had made him well. 16 As a result, the Jewish leaders were harassing Jesus, since he had done these things on the Sabbath. 17 Jesus replied, “My Father is still working, and I am working too.” 18 For this reason the Jewish leaders wanted even more to kill him—not only because he was doing away with the Sabbath but also because he called God his own Father, thereby making himself equal with God. 19 Jesus responded to the Jewish leaders, “I assure you

Scripture Passage Continued on following page

Scripture Passage Continued:

that the Son can't do anything by himself except what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise. 20 The Father loves the Son and shows him everything that he does. He will show him greater works than these so that you will marvel. 21 As the Father raises the dead and gives life, so too does the Son give life to whomever he wishes.

John 5:39-40

39 Examine the scriptures, since you think that in them you have eternal life. They also testify about me, 40 yet you don't want to come to me so that you can have life.

INTRODUCTION

Just outside of Jerusalem, Jesus performed a miracle that changed a man's life forever. For 38 years, this man was unable to walk. But when Jesus said, "Get up," the man was healed. However, it's what Jesus said next that made this miracle a clear sign of who Jesus really was. When your version of religion gets in the way of love, you have the wrong version. The person beside you must take priority over the potentially flawed religious view you have.

QUESTIONS

1. What is one law or cultural expectation that you wish was different?
2. Is there a time you can remember that someone went against the rules or the norm so that you could benefit?
3. **Read John 5:1–21 on page 1**, where the apostle John recounts the story of Jesus healing a paralyzed man.
 - What are some details about this story that would lead a reader to believe that this actually happened?
 - Before healing him, Jesus asks the man, "Do you want to get well?" Why do you think Jesus asked him that?
 - In verse 9, notice how quickly the author (John) pivots from the miraculous healing to the fact that this happened on the Sabbath. What does this say about the main reason John captured this story?
 - Verses 16–18 lay the groundwork for why religious leaders were at odds with Jesus. What do their comments tell you about their religious priorities?
4. **Read John 5:39–40**. Describe how the religious leaders may have felt hearing this.
5. Give an example of how your past version of Christianity got in the way of loving people God loves. Is your *current* version getting in the way?