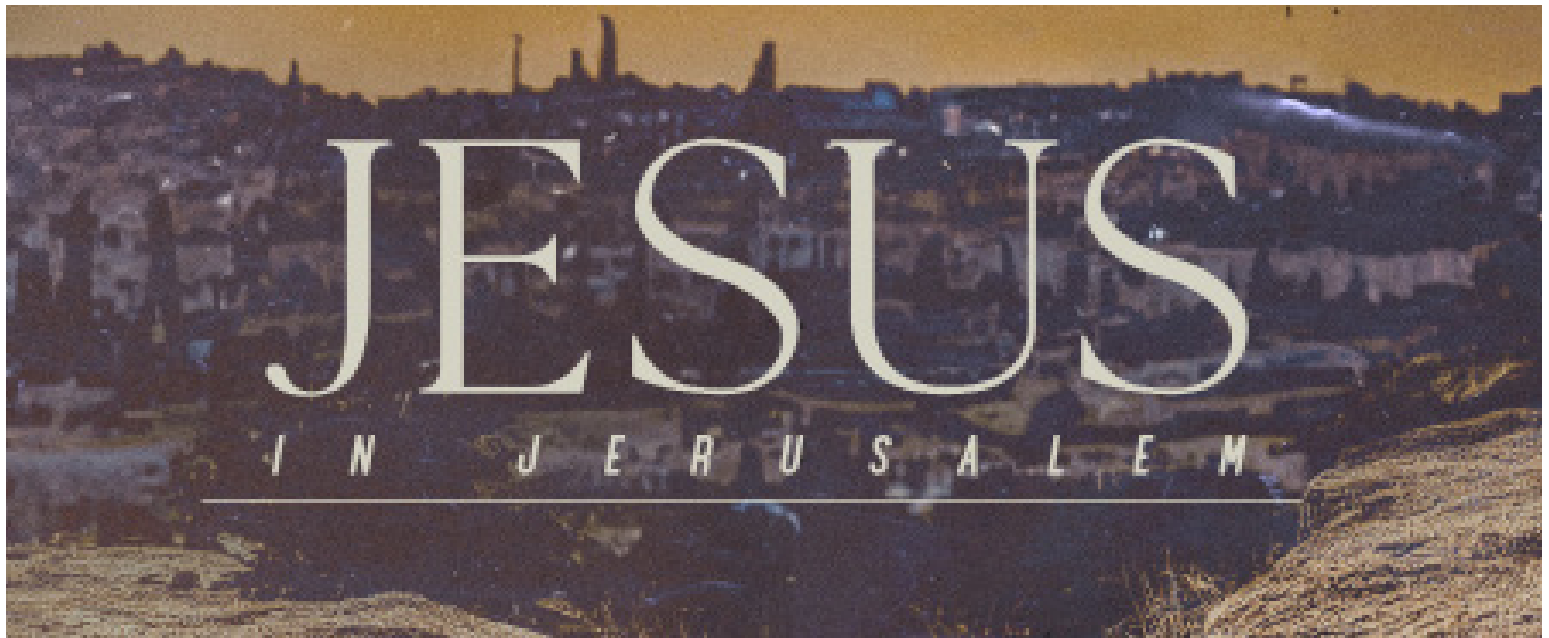




DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Always Working

John 5

1. Read: John 5:1-9 Sometime later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. ² Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. ³ Here, a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. ⁵ One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?” ⁷ “Sir,” the invalid replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.” ⁸ Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” ⁹ At once, the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. The day on which this took place was a Sabbath. What stands out to you from this Bible passage?

What do you think God might be saying to you from this passage in your current season of life?

2. Jesus tells this paralyzed man, “**Get up, pick up your mat and walk.**” Jesus intentionally asked him to do something impossible. And as God’s power met his obedience, an amazing miracle happened. This is a pattern that we see in scripture as well as in our lives. When God’s power meets our obedience, great things happen. Can you think of an example from your life or someone you know that something great happened when God’s power met their obedience?

What do you think would’ve happened in this story if the man had not attempted to pick up his mat and walk?

What do you think of the relationship between our obedience and a demonstration of God’s power? How might this affect a situation in your life currently?

3. The miracle we witness in John chapter 5 happened on a Sabbath day. The Pharisees were all about obeying the law and were infuriated by Jesus commanding this man to carry his mat on the Sabbath. To defend His action, Jesus tells the Pharisees, **John 5:17** ⁵**But Jesus replied, “My Father is always working, and so am I.”** ¹⁸**So the Jewish leaders tried all the harder to find a way to kill Him. For He not only broke the Sabbath, He called God His Father, thereby making Himself equal with God.** What is your reaction to verses 17 and 18? What does it mean to you that “God is always working?”

In the sermon, I said, “God is at work calling us, healing us, and transforming us, so that we might join Him in transforming the world.” Do you agree? What is an area of your life where you need healing or are longing to be transformed by the power of God?

John 14:12 & Matthew 5:14-16 tell us that much of His work on earth is through us, even indicating that we will do greater works than Jesus. What do you think about these statements?

Where, right now, is God calling you to join Him in His work?

4. In the protracted discussion with the Pharisees, Jesus eventually says, **John 5:24-25** **“Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.”** ²⁵ **Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.”** What are you drawn to in this scripture?

Taking this thought one step further, the apostle Paul says, **Colossians 2:13-14** **“You were dead because of your sins ... Then God made you alive with Christ, for He forgave all our sins. ¹⁴ He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross.”** How should it affect how someone thinks, feels, and lives once they understand that they have been fully forgiven and have crossed over from death to life? How does it affect you?

5. In verse 25, Jesus says, **“the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.”** But then, speaking directly to the Pharisees in verse 37, Jesus says, **“You have never heard His voice...”** He goes on to say **John 5:39-40** **“You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, ⁴⁰yet you refuse to come to me to have life.”** Obviously, in most cases, diligently studying the scriptures is good, but in this case, it’s an indictment of the Pharisees. What do you think about **John 5:39-40**?

Do you think it’s possible in our modern context for someone to be guilty of the accusation Jesus makes in these verses? How so?