

That You May Believe

DISCUSSION GUIDE | June 14, 2026

BIG IDEA

Rules should never take priority over compassion.

Message title: *When Rules Miss The Point*

Scripture reading: John 5:1-18 NIV

When Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath, he exposed how easily people can defend religious rules and systems while missing God's heart for grace and compassion. This sign still invites us to trust the witness of those who saw him firsthand and to believe that God's work is not about protecting rules but about bringing life to people, even when that challenges what we expect him to do.

- 1. The religious leaders of Jesus' day had lots of rules about Sabbath behavior. Did you grow up with any rules about what you could not do on Sunday? What do you think those rules were intended to do? How did they make you feel?*
- 2. Why do you think that we, as religious people, so often gravitate toward rules when talking about what it means to follow Jesus? Is that always bad? When might rules help us follow Jesus?*
- 3. Compare yourself with the man Jesus heals. If you were asked about being healed, how might your answer be different than his was? Then, after you had been healed, how might you have responded differently than he did? How are your responses different from those of the man Jesus healed? Why?*
- 4. Bob said, "It's never right to accept a work of God's grace in our life (forgiveness of sin, blessings, healings, etc.) only to continue living life on our terms." Do you agree or disagree? Why?*
- 5. Interestingly, the healed man is not heard from again. We don't know what changes may have taken place in his life. But, what about you? What changes can you identify in your life because you have received God's grace?*

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

We need rules in life (think driving down the road) but rules can also keep us from living the life God intends for us to live. In healing the man beside the pool on the Sabbath, Jesus ignored the rules and offended the religious leaders. But, in doing so, Jesus made it clear that compassion is more important than rules. Ask yourself these questions: Does my life reflect rules or love? What do I need to change so that I can reflect God's love for others?