

# *The Pastor's Bible Study*

An interactive study of the Gospel of John<sup>1</sup>

*Week 8 ~ Exploring John 5:1-47*

## **Personal Study Time:**

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(Use the following suggestions in your personal Bible study time this week to prepare for our class discussion next Saturday.)

**Day 1: Read John 5:1-47 through twice, then answer the following questions in your Gospel of John notebook.**

- What verse in the Bethesda story gives us a picture of how the man became sick in the first place? Compare this story with the other "healings" in the Gospel (4:46-54; 9:1-38; 11:1-44). Write out what you learn about the causes of sickness and death.
- Can you think of ways that people today try to be healed physically and spiritually apart from Christ? What roles do psychology and prayer respectively play in the process of healing from mental illnesses and the wounds of the past? Why do you think so few people today experience dramatic healings like the man at the pool did?

**Day 2: Reread John 5:1-47 and then answer the following questions in your Gospel of John notebook.**

- How did the Jews respond to the healing? What specific charges to they bring against Him? Why do you think that Jesus deliberately provoked them by doing this miracle on the Sabbath day instead of some other day?
- How would you respond to someone who felt that all sickness is a result of sin?

**Day 3: Reread John 5:1-47 and then answer the following questions in your Gospel of John notebook.**

- Describe the various ways that Jesus is equal with His Father, according to this chapter. List the terms that are used to describe the kind of relationship He and the Father have, and the actions that they carry out in common. Which of these terms are used also in the Prologue to the Gospel (1:1-18)?
- Jesus violated man-made structures on Sabbath-keeping to heal a man. The Pharisees were more concerned with petty rules than with the health and welfare of a human being. To what degree are your personal rules for living God-made or man-made? Do they help you to minister to people or do they often become stumbling blocks in the way of ministry?

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted and/or adapted from Jon Paulien and George R. Knight, *John: Jesus Gives Life to a New Generation*, The Abundant Life Bible Amplifier (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press, 1995).

**Day 4: Reread John 5:1-47 and then answer the following questions in your Gospel of John notebook.**

- Have someone, a friend or family member put himself or herself in Jesus' place and read 5:24-30 pompously as though the words of the passage were asserting things about him or her personally. How does such a reading make you feel about that person? Does the reading help you better understand why the Jews reacted so violently against Jesus?
- How can Christians learn to balance Christian joy and seriousness? How does John's concept of eschatology affect this balance? How can people maintain a sense that eternal life is a present reality in a world that is full of suffering and decay?

**Day 5: Read John 5:1-47 twice and then answer the following questions in your Gospel of John notebook.**

- Make a list of everything and everyone who offers a testimony in favor of Jesus in this chapter. Which of these witnesses does Jesus seem to consider the most important? Why do you think so?
- Describe some of the "witnesses" in your life who have helped you to know Jesus. To what degree is your perception of Jesus shaped by the attitudes of the believers that you know and admire? How would your life be different if you didn't know these people?

**Day 6: Reread John 4:43-54 and then answer the following questions in your Gospel of John notebook.**

- A major focus in this passage is on Jesus' response to the Jewish leaders' outrage over His healing a man on the Sabbath. In his response Jesus seems to be defending His right to give "life" on the Sabbath day. How do you spend your Sabbaths? Like Jesus are you spending some of your Sabbath each week giving "life" to others? Prayerfully consider how you might give "life" to someone this coming Sabbath.

