

## DEVOTIONAL GUIDE | Jan 2-6

### DAY ONE | Understand Their Story

Read John 5:1-15, and then focus on verses 1-9a

The setting:

- What place names are mentioned in this text?
- How is the pool described? How many people were near the pool, and what do we learn about them?
- What time markers are mentioned in this text? (eg. specific events / specific days)

The conflict (or rising action):

- Who does John focus our attention on? What does John tell us about this one individual?
- What does Jesus ask him, which sets the story in motion?
- How does the *sick man* respond?
  - *What do you make of his answer / attitude? What sort of person does it seem that John is portraying him to be?*<sup>1</sup>
- What happens next?

*You know the situations which are currently plaguing you. If Jesus asked you, “Do you want to be healed”, what would you say? Are you willing to accept help from Jesus or are you looking for a cure through some other means? Pray that the Holy Spirit would reveal if you are ignoring or resisting Jesus’ offer of healing.*

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### DAY TWO | Understand Their Story

Read John 5:1-15 and then focus on verses 9b -15

The climax and resolution:

- What charge do the Jews bring against the *man who had been healed*?
- How did *the man* learn who had healed him?
- How does *the man who had been healed* shift the charges off himself?

What issue is identified as *the man’s* primary problem in each section of this text?

- John 5:1-9a
- John 5:9b-13
- John 5:14-15

*Pray today in reflection and confession. Is your primary ‘problem’ illness, lawbreaking, or personal sin?*

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<sup>1</sup> If you’re not sure based on today’s reading, hopefully you’ll have an answer to this question by the end of the week!

## DAY THREE | Connect to His Story

This is the first of many clashes in John's gospel between Jesus and the Jewish leaders about the Sabbath.

- Read John 5:1-15 again. What rule is the *man who had been healed* accused of breaking?
- Read Exodus 20:8-11.
  - What should people NOT do on the Sabbath?
    - Do you think the instruction parallels what the *man who has been healed* was doing? Why or why not?
  - Who is the Sabbath for?
  - Why should Israel observe Sabbath?
- Read Jeremiah 17:19-27, and Nehemiah 13:15-22.
  - What is forbidden on the Sabbath in these texts?
    - Do you think these instructions parallel what the *man who has been healed* was doing? Why or why not?
- Read John 7:23.
  - How does Jesus point out the Jewish leaders' own inconsistencies? What did they allow on the Sabbath?

*Pray today in adoration! The Lord knows that we need to rest from our work. How are you doing with that?*

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## DAY FOUR | Connect to His Story

On the first day, we asked what you thought about the *sick man's* attitude towards Jesus. John clarifies how we should think about him by recording a parallel story later in the gospel.

- Read John 9:1-6, 13-15, 24-38
  - How is the man in John 9 different from the man in John 5?

*Pray today in supplication. Ask Jesus to help you to glorify and defend him to those who might question you.*

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## DAY FIVE | Apply to your Story

Read John 5:1-15, and remind yourself of *the man's* three different problems (we identified these on Day 2).

- When Jesus commands him to “sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you,” do you think Jesus is suggesting that he was an invalid for 38 years because he sinned?
  - If you're not sure, look at the John 9 story again. What is asked and answered in John 9:1-3?
- Now that he is healed, what ‘worse’ things may happen to him?
  - Read ahead in the story to find out. What does Jesus warn in John 5:25-29?

*People can be healed or “saved from circumstances” by Jesus and not saved. If they don't repent of sin, turn to him and follow, they will ultimately face ‘worse things’ than their illness or difficult circumstances. If you are not a Christian, throw yourself on Jesus' mercy and ask him to save you. If you are a Christian, pray for people you know who aren't. Ask the Lord to reveal to them their primary problem.*

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