

Points to Ponder

Everlasting Kingdom: Exile, Faithfulness, and the Book of Daniel

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John 5

Joel Miles

The focus of this study is on the story of Jesus' healing in John 5:1–15, but it is helpful to see this in light of John 5:16–47. In these verses we find that the religious leaders are now seeking to kill Jesus — not only because he was "breaking the Sabbath," but also because he was claiming to be God.

1. How does Jesus respond to their persecution of him?
2. Look specifically at verses 19, 31, and 36–47. In what way do these verses show that their problem was misplaced expectations of what Jesus should be like?
3. How do these verses show us that Jesus' actions truly reveal what God is like? Why is that significant for how we read this story about Jesus' healing?

Read John 5:1–6.

1. How does John's description show a narrowing that emphasizes Jesus' personal care for this one man? Why is it significant to know that in this act Jesus is revealing to us what God is like?
2. Do you ever feel like God is too big to be concerned with your personal and specific struggles? How does this text speak to that?
3. How does this text remind us that we are not just part of a category of people to be fixed, but someone who matters — whom God sees and offers to heal personally and specifically?
4. What does it mean to "get well"?

Read John 5:7–15.

1. Why is it important that after the man is healed, Jesus finds him in the Temple? What does that tell us about Jesus' work to make us "well"?
2. How does the call to "stop sinning" relate to Jesus' wholistic healing?
3. Do you want Jesus to heal you this completely?

The Sabbath was a day of rest instituted by God so that Israel would be a people who knew how to trust and rest in God, who was at work to save them and make this whole world new.

1. How does the religious leaders' frustration with Jesus healing on the Sabbath show that they had distorted the Sabbath?
2. The religious leaders had made the Sabbath into a day of observance for the sake of earning God's favor. Jesus was at work on that day, because it is a day for us to rest in God's work — who can make us well. Do you want Jesus to do that for you? What is hard for you about this?
3. How can this group encourage you to rest in Jesus? How can this group pray for you to embrace Jesus' healing touch?