



Where You Put Your Focus Is Where You've Placed Your Faith

2024-10-14 • HUNTER JONES

John 5:1

FOR THE LEADER

These questions help you run the conversation. They are not your study. Get into the passage yourself first, because your group needs what God taught you, not just a list of questions. These also lean on Sunday's message, so a few will not land for anyone who missed it. Watch it before you lead.

WHAT THE MESSAGE WAS ABOUT

A man had been lying by the pool of Bethesda for thirty-eight years, staring at water that could not heal him. Then the Living Water himself walked up and asked: do you want to get well? The man asked Jesus to carry him into the pool. Hunter Jones called that asking the answer for the smaller thing. He drew three focus shifts out of the story: the Healer over the healing, the lawmaker over the law, and the eternal over the temporal. The religious leaders proved the second point. They watched a man who had begged for decades walk past carrying his mat, and all they saw was a Sabbath violation.

To get started

- What have you been focused on so long that you might miss the answer when it arrives?

Looking back at the message

The three shifts are the structure. Name all three before you dig into any of them.

- 1 The man asked Jesus, the Living Water, to carry him into stagnant pool water. Where have you asked God for the smaller thing?
- 2 The religious leaders were so focused on the broken rule that they missed the lawmaker standing in front of them. How does that still happen to religious people today?
- 3 Hunter described a rope stretching out of the room and around the world into eternity, with our eighty years as the first few inches in his hand. What does that picture do to your priorities? OPTIONAL

Looking at the passage

Read John 5:1-16. Verse 14 is the part that feels like it ruins the story, and it is the point.

- 4 Read John 5:1-9. What is the man focused on, and what does he actually ask Jesus for?
- 5 Read verses 10-13. A man who begged for thirty-eight years is walking. What do the religious leaders notice instead?
- 6 Read verse 14. Jesus finds the man later and brings up sin. Why follow up a physical healing with a warning about the soul?
- 7 Read Hebrews 12:1-2. Where are we told to fix our eyes, and what reason does the passage give? OPTIONAL

Bringing it home

He ended with a next-step question. Do not let the group leave without one.

- 8 Hunter said God cares about your situation but cares far more about your soul. Where you are right now, is that comforting or hard to hear?
- 9 Be honest: are you currently more interested in what God can fix than in God himself?
- 10 Hunter named three possible next steps: giving for the first time, joining a small group, or signing up to serve. Which one is yours?
- 11 Where has an unanswered prayer left you frustrated with God? OPTIONAL

The group together

The man had nobody to help him into the pool. That is a group's job.

- 12 The man at the pool said nobody would help him. Who around you needs someone right now, and could it be you?
- 13 What is the difference between caring about someone's situation and caring about them?
- 14 What would this group have to change to invest more in the eternal than the immediate?

BEFORE YOU FINISH

Where is your focus right now, and what would it take to move it to Jesus himself?

You might pray about

- For those waiting a long time on something that has not come
- For eyes on the Healer rather than only the healing
- For a next step that costs something