

Small Group Discussion Guide

Series: The Book of John Passage: John 5: 1-16 – Twisting by the Pool

Opening Prayer:

Start with a brief prayer asking for guidance and openness as you reflect on the passage and how it applies to your lives.

Introduction to the Passage:

- Briefly read John 5:1-16 aloud. (You can either have one person read the passage or take turns.)
 - Set the stage: This story is about a man who has been invalid for 38 years and is waiting by the pool for healing. Jesus approaches him and asks, “Do you want to be whole?” This question holds more significance than just a desire for physical healing.
-

Discussion Questions:

1. The Dance of Life

- Question: The speaker talks about how we often settle into a rhythm of life where we push down things we don’t want to deal with. How do you relate to this idea of "the dance"? Are there areas in your life where you've just settled into a routine to avoid dealing with certain things?
- Follow-up: How might this tendency affect your spiritual and emotional health?

2. The Healing Process

- Question: When Jesus asks the man if he wants to be whole, the man responds with an excuse—"I can't get to the pool." Why do you think he didn't just say "yes"? What does this tell us about the man's mindset and limitations?
- Follow-up: In what ways do we sometimes offer excuses when God asks us to step out in faith or take responsibility for our healing and growth?

3. Healing vs. Wholeness

- Question: The Greek word used for "well" (Greek: hagioi) refers to wholeness, not just physical healing. What do you think it means to be "whole" in the context of this passage?
- Follow-up: How is "wholeness" different from just healing? What are some examples of areas in your life where you might be seeking healing but need a deeper sense of wholeness (spiritually, emotionally, relationally)?

4. Obedience and Wholeness

- Question: The man responds in obedience to Jesus, getting up and walking. What role does obedience play in the process of becoming whole? Why is it often difficult to obey Jesus in areas of our lives where healing and transformation are needed?
- Follow-up: Have you ever experienced resistance or fear when God called you to act in obedience, even when it was something you knew would lead to greater wholeness?

5. The Importance of Spiritual Wholeness

- Question: After healing the man, Jesus finds him again and warns him to "stop sinning or something worse will happen to you." What do you think Jesus meant by this? How does this emphasize the need for spiritual wholeness alongside physical healing?
- Follow-up: How can focusing only on physical or external issues prevent us from addressing the deeper spiritual needs in our lives?

6. Living Out Wholeness in Everyday Life

- Question: The speaker shared a personal story about a mission trip, where stepping into obedience led to spiritual growth and meaningful experiences. How do we sometimes waste opportunities by sitting by the "pool," unwilling to step into what God is calling us to do?
- Follow-up: What are some practical ways we can step into obedience and pursue wholeness in our everyday lives?

Reflection:

Take a moment for each person to reflect on the following:

- Personal Challenge: "Do you want to be whole?" In what areas of your life do you need to experience God's wholeness and healing, not just physical restoration, but spiritual and emotional renewal?
- Obedience: Are there areas where God is calling you to act in obedience in order to experience wholeness? What steps can you take this week to begin this process?

Closing Prayer:

Conclude the discussion with a prayer:

- Ask God for the courage to step into obedience.
- Pray for healing and wholeness in your lives, both physically and spiritually.

- Ask God to show you areas where you need to stop making excuses and start embracing His calling for transformation.
-

Optional Activity:

If time allows, consider the group doing a reflective exercise such as journaling or a prayer walk (as mentioned in the story) where each member prays individually, asking God where He wants to bring wholeness into their lives.