

DAY ONE

1. What thoughts from the commentary or spiritual reflection from Lesson 4 were most meaningful and helpful to you?

Read John 5:1-9

2a. Having cured the royal official's son in Cana, Jesus traveled up to Jerusalem from Galilee for a festival. By the "Sheep Gate" (possibly a gate to the Temple where animals for sacrifice were brought in) was a pool called Bethesda (verses 1-2). Who was lying in the five porticoes around the pool according to verse 3?

b. Describe the person mentioned in verse 5 and comment on his situation.

NOTE: There is no verse 4 in most Bibles today. That verse, which refers to an angel stirring the pool to heal the person who first stepped into the moving water, appears to have been added at a later time.

3. Bethesda is thought to mean "the place of flowing water". References to water occur often in John's gospel. Complete the following passages and indicate what the water in each may symbolize:

John 3:5 Jesus said that no one can enter the kingdom without

John 4:13-14 Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I shall give

4a. Jesus saw the man lying by the pool and knew that he had been ill for a long time. What did He ask in verse 6?

b. Briefly summarize the sick man's answer from verse 7.

5a. What did Jesus say to the man and what resulted (verse 8 and first part of verse 9)?

b. According to the last sentence in verse 9, what was special about the day on which the man was healed?

THINK: This is the third sign or miracle of Jesus recorded in the Gospel of John. Can you remember the previous two?

6. **CONNECTION:** After 38 years, the sick man had little hope of ever being healed, yet Jesus healed him instantly. Just as Jesus healed the man in today's lesson, He can minister to us in our daily needs and also in our times of deepest suffering. Jesus does not want to let a problem or hardship paralyze us or cause us to lose hope. Is there an on-going situation in your life or the life of someone you know that *seems* hopeless because it just doesn't go away? Share with your group how God's healing power has helped or could help in this situation, just as He helped the paralytic.

Read Romans 5:3-5 and record verse 5. Reflecting on these verses, write a prayer of thanksgiving for the hope you have in Christ.

DAY TWO

Read John 5:10-18

7a. As today's lesson begins, the Jewish authorities addressed the paralytic who was healed at the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem. In verses 10-11, of what did they accuse him and what was his response?

b. The third commandment required the Jews to keep holy the Sabbath. Over the centuries rules regarding the Sabbath multiplied (Exodus 20:8-10). Read the following verse and comment on whether the man did or did not break the Sabbath by carrying his mat.

Jeremiah 17: 21-22

8. In verse 12 the Jews asked the former paralytic for the name of the person who had told him to take up his mat and walk. Why couldn't he answer them (verse 13)?

9a. Jesus later found the man whom He had healed and told him “Do not sin any more”. From the end of verse 14, give Jesus’ reason and what you think this means.

b. What did the man do next, according to verse 15, and why might he have done this?

10a. The Jews began to persecute Jesus because He “broke” their Sabbath laws (verse 16). Record Jesus’ answer to their accusation from verse 17.

NOTE: The great doctor of the Church, St. Thomas Aquinas explained Jesus’ answer saying that although God rested from creation on the Sabbath, God does not rest from “conserving creatures in existence,” and therefore is at work every day. When Jesus cured the man on the Sabbath He was imitating His Father in caring for His creatures.

b. Jesus’ response made the Jews even more determined to kill Him. Other than breaking the Sabbath, why did they want to kill Him (end of verse 18)?

11. CONNECTION: The Jewish leaders witnessed the healing of the paralytic on the Sabbath, but they focused on how Jesus’ actions violated the multitude of Sabbath regulations that had been defined over the centuries. They focused on the letter of the law instead of the miracle. Jesus chose to practice the spirit of the law, which is love, versus the letter of the law. Jesus wanted to teach His followers to never ignore an opportunity to help another, even on the Sabbath. Recall a recent time when Jesus called you to “do good” by applying the law of love, mercy and compassion. Record some details to share with your group.

Read and record Sirach 2:11 and write a prayer thanking God for His compassion and mercy (and be specific about an instance for which you are especially grateful).

DAY THREE

Read John 5:19-24

NOTE: Jesus began this discourse to prove to the Jewish leaders of Jerusalem that He had the “right” to heal on the Sabbath, and that by declaring Himself the Son of God He was not blaspheming. His teaching revealed Him as the perfect, obedient Son, and that His life, His words, and His deeds all came rightly and divinely from the Father.

12. In yesterday's lesson we learned that the authorities were already trying to kill Jesus because they believed He had broken the Sabbath and claimed equality with God.

To begin His defense Jesus described the relationship between a father and a son. In your own words, summarize his explanation from verse 19.

13. Jesus continued His description of the bond between Father and Son, stating that a loving father shows his son everything that he does and that God will show His Son even greater works. What is the result of these greater works (end of verse 20)?

14a. In verse 21 what did Jesus say that He as the Son of God can do just as His Father does?

b. Why is it important that He spoke of this?

15a. The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son (verse 22). For what reason has the Father done this (first sentence of verse 23)?

b. "Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him" (verse 23). What does that say about the nature of their relationship?

16a. From the beginning of verse 24, what did Jesus say happens to whoever hears His word and believes in the One who sent Him?

b. As recipients of eternal life, what has already happened to those persons according to the end of verse 24?

17. CONNECTION: Today's lesson begins a discourse by Jesus not only about the relationship between the divine Father and Son but also how we are to obtain eternal life, a gift available right here, right now, as well as in the future. "Whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life" are words we live by. Where do you hear His word and how can you be assured that you are in a state of Grace?

God gave us the sacraments to assure us that He is with us in "the now" and providing us with His grace. Read and record Ephesians 2:21-22 and thank God for the assurance of eternal life.

DAY FOUR

Read John 5:25-30

18a. In today's lesson Jesus continued to speak on how believers will pass from death to eternal life, saying "the hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live". For what reason would Jesus begin both verses 24 and 25 with "Amen, Amen?"

b. The Father is the source of all life. How did Jesus explain His connection to the Father in verse 26?

19. Again in verse 27, Jesus stated that He was given the authority to judge by the Father. Why was He given this authority?

20a. Complete verses 28 and 29 which describe the outcome of the last judgment:

Because the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs

those who have done good deeds

but those who have done wicked deeds

b. Look up the word eschatology and select a definition that fits with this discussion.

21. Jesus' words are consistent with predictions concerning end times found in the Old Testament. Read and record Daniel 12:2 and consider its similarity to John 5: 28 and 29.

22. In your own words, summarize verse 30 which describes the unity of Jesus and God the Father.

23. CONNECTION: Today's verses continue to describe Jesus' relationship with His Father, His sovereignty over life and death, and His role as the ultimate judge of the living and the dead. He has told us that He will judge us not only on our belief in Him but on the choices we make every day; to do good or evil; to follow our own will or the will of God. Each day, we witness people making these choices, sometimes with wonderful outcomes; sometimes with disastrous results. Relate some details from a recent news story or from your own life about a choice either for or against God and the apparent resultant outcome.

Read and record Romans 5:1-2 and write a short prayer today asking God to give you the strength to make the right choices in life.

DAY FIVE

Read John 5:31-38

24. In verse 31 Jesus repeated a principle found in the Old Testament: the testimony of one person is not sufficient as proof of a fact in a legal proceeding. There must be at least two witnesses. Read and record from one of the following verses a phrase that reflects this concept:

Deuteronomy 19:15

1 Timothy 5:19

25a. To show that He had more than one witness, Jesus stated that “there is another who testifies on my behalf, and I know that the testimony he gives on my behalf is true” (verse 32). This verse refers to the Father. Who was the next witness Jesus cited (verse 33)?

b. Jesus, as the Son of God, did not need human testimony, but provided the testimony of John the Baptist so that Israel might believe and be saved (verse 34). Why do you think He chose John the Baptist?

26a. How is John the Baptist described in verse 35?

b. How did Jesus compare His testimony to John the Baptist’s in the first part of verse 36?

27a. What or who else is the second witness testifying that the Father sent Jesus (verse 36)?

b. Who is the third witness to Jesus as the Son of God (verse 37)?

28a. The Jewish authorities did not believe in “the one whom he has sent”. What were the reasons Jesus gave for this?

end of verse 37: Because they had never

beginning of verse 38: Because you do not have His word

b. What do you think it means to not have the Father's word remaining in you (verse 38)?

29. CONNECTION: In today's scripture verses, Jesus referred to John the Baptist as "a burning and shining lamp" pointing others to Jesus. We, too, know individuals that have been "shining lamps" lighting up the truth against the background of a dark world. These individuals help us to see Jesus a little clearer. The living Word of God shines through them. Recall someone from the past week who, through his/her words or actions, has helped you see Jesus a little clearer or brighter. What did they say or do?

Read and record 2 Corinthians 4:6 and let these thoughts lead you into prayer.

DAY SIX

Read John 5:39-47

30a. In today's lesson Jesus continued His defense against the accusations of the Jewish authorities that He broke the Sabbath and blasphemed. What did Jesus say they were searching for in the scriptures (first part of verse 39)?

b. At the end of verse 39, Jesus' pointed out His fourth witness: the scriptures. What did He say the Jews were missing?

31a. Jesus then stated the sad reason the Jewish people rejected the testimony of the witnesses He had provided. Record verse 40.

b. What are some reasons they would NOT want to accept Jesus as the Son of God?

32. Jesus went on to say that He did not need human praise. What did He see in them that would explain their rejection of Him (verse 42)?

33a. In this discourse Jesus turned the tables and became the accuser rather than the accused. Complete the following phrases from verse 43:

I came in the name of the Father

Yet, if another comes in his own name

b. How would you characterize a person who “comes in his own name”?

34a. Jesus went on to speak of the vanity of human praise, and how it separates us from the only true praise – that of God (verse 44). In verses 45-47 Jesus brought Moses in as His final witness in this “trial.” The Jewish leaders prided themselves on following their ancestor, Moses. What was ironic about Jesus’ statement in verse 46?

b. What is Jesus’ last question to the Jews in verse 47?

35. CONNECTION: The Jewish leaders in Jesus’ time knew the Commandments handed down to them as well as the messianic prophecies of the Old Testament but failed to recognize the Messiah Who stood in front of them. In stubbornly clinging to their mistaken concept of a messiah, they refused to let Jesus change their lives. Even though we believe in Jesus as our Savior, we sometimes cling to our own ideas and fail to recognize His will and what it requires in our lives. What is one change you feel God has asked of you recently and what difficulties have you faced? Give some details to share with your group.

Read and record 2 John 1:6 and ask God for the grace to hear and obey His Word.

Read Lesson 5 John 5:1-47 in the *Meditation and Commentary on the Gospel of John* by Rev. Alfred McBride, O. Praem. The Cornerstone Catholic Scripture Study acknowledges that scripture quotations in this study are from the New American Bible, Revised Edition (NABRE) © 2010, 1991, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. All Rights Reserved. Used by permission.

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