

CALVARY CHAPEL COSTA MESA

– COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE –

Jesus Encounters Series “Jesus & The Helpless Man” – John 5:1-24

FELLOWSHIP

When I first arrived in Chicago one of the first things any new resident would do is visit Michigan Avenue and the lake front. Known as the “Magnificent Mile,” it is a mixture of history, magnificent buildings like John Hancock, Tribune Towers, and Wrigley buildings, beaches and posh shopping. The only thing I didn’t realize was that the walk down Chicago Avenue from Moody to the lake was five blocks laced with poverty and homelessness. Up and down the sidewalk were scores of homeless men in various states of health, age and filth. Walking down the north side of the avenue one passes the entrance to the Lawson House YMCA. Built in 1930, it was 23 stories and contained 583 rooms to help transition men off the streets. Between its age and the clients, it was quite a hard place visually and odor wise. Needless to say I was overwhelmed. How could this many people be in such a bad state, especially since they were just a stone’s throw from one of the wealthiest places in the United States. As a freshman and full of passion to save every last one, I had to learn what kinds of ministries were already engaged and the scope of the issue. It gave me some context to the struggle I had always had with Jesus words, “For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always.” (Mt. 26:11) This maybe was similar to the scene at the pool at Bethesda. Under the shadow of the beauty of the temple in Jerusalem were the multitudes of the hurting. Jesus, though loving them all, had a divine appointment with just one who would see his physical and spiritual life healed.

READ & DISCUSS

This chapter in John continues the stories of Jesus’ encounters with those seeking. The first sought out Christ, the second was interrupted from life’s disappointments, and now one is rescued from his paralysis. After thirty-eight years it’s hard to believe one could still be holding on to hope. Imagine his surprise to hear, “Do you want to be made well?” Read as a group John 5:1-24 and discuss the questions below.

John 5:14-15 *“But afterward Jesus found him the Temple and told him, “Now you are well; stop sinning, or something even worse may happened to you.” Then the man went and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had healed him.”*

- The dialogue between Jesus and the helpless man is a bit confusing since we don’t hear an explicit answer from the man regarding whether he wanted to be healed. What do we learn about Jesus’ and God’s character in light of Him taking action without an exact response? What kinds of situations could this patience be applicable in our ministry to others? Who stuck by you as you transitioned from rebuffing to surrendering your will to Jesus?
- The keeping of the Sabbath historically was tied to the solidarity the Jews had with God. They had suffered for years because of ignoring it. The religious leaders had therefore become a police state regarding its enforcement. Why did Jesus confront their views on it? Why don’t we keep the Sabbath today in the church? What principle of the Sabbath would still be worth keeping? How could this honor God?
- Jesus’ visit to Jerusalem was during a festival, perhaps Passover. This last Saturday was the Beachside Summer Festival down at the HB Pier. There are always a mixture of different kinds of people at the pier. Some show their spiritual need outwardly more than others. Were you able to visit and participate in any of the outreach? What were some of the stories you encountered? What has God called you individually to do in order to help people? What are some of the needs in your community and what can your group do together to help?

PRAY Consider this week praying and laying hands on one another for spiritual gifts, compassion, boldness and vision for how we can be on mission in our communities.

