

**John 5:1–15**

**On Facing New Opportunities**

**We wake up each day never quite knowing what opportunities await us.**

**We can only determine whether we will be open to the *New Opportunities* God brings our way.**

**What unforeseen, *Opportunities from God* have you experienced this past week?**

**Jesus' question to the man is simple: "Do you desire to become whole?"**

*A. The Man's Situation, 1-5*

- A. Pool of Bethesda
- B. Surrounded by others discarded by the community
- C. Unable to participate in the Temple rituals

*B. Jesus' invitation, 6-9*

- A. Pool of Bethesda
- B. A type of help the man wasn't seeking
- C. He now enjoys the opportunity to participate in the Temple rituals

*C. The Community's Response, 10-16*

- A. You "should" already know what you can't do: i.e. carry your sleeping pallet today
- B. Who told you it was appropriate to carry your pallet?
- C. "We can't have people disrupting our established practices!"

**Jesus' question for us today is equally as simple: "Do you desire to become whole?"**

*A. What is Your Personal Situation?*

- A. Are you an "insider" or an "outsider?" Are you "the one speaking down to those recently healed" or "the one seeking help"?

B. Where are you turning for help to resolve your despair?

*B. What is the Community's response?*

A. What expectations about our congregational life do the words of Jesus challenge?

B. Where is the focus of attention for this congregation?

A. *New Opportunities* OR

B. Continuing to emphasize long held practices

◆ Church conflict often arises when we confuse ministry principles and practices. **Practices**, or how we do ministry often changes. **Principles**, or why we do ministry doesn't. If our "**why**" isn't certain, then our "**how**" will always be conflicted.

◆ If biblical, theological, and doctrinal truths aren't the foundational **principles** for all church ministries, then protecting current **practices** often takes precedence.

◆ "Guarding ministry **principles** is biblical, but guarding ministry **practices** is often preferential."

◆ David Manner, 2/14/2022

*C. What should the testimony for individuals from this Community sound like?*

A. Jesus is the guy who made me whole (11, 15)

*D. What might lead individuals or this Community to remain broken?*

A. 6, 11-12 - We fail to remind each other that God is in the business of making us **whole**

B. 8, 14 - We forget that in order to become **whole** we must follow God's instructions to us

**To be whole means individuals are "fully functioning" as part of God's People. (Next Screen)**

**To be whole means God's People are "fully functioning".**

**The Triune God is at work to bring broken individuals (and Congregations) into wholeness.**

**How can we get out of the way so that God can work in others as well as in ourselves?**

## **Benediction**

God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us.

Glory to God in the church!

Glory to God in the Messiah, in Jesus!

Glory down all the generations!

Glory through all millennia! Oh, yes! (Eph 3:20-21, The Message)