

Questions God Asks Us

Chapter 8: Do you want to get well?



Welcome

- What question or insight from the last gathering have you continued to think about or wonder about (if any)? Have the readings or discussion changed how you connect with God or with others in any way?

Opening Question

- Share briefly about a time of transition in your life. What brought about the transition? What feelings did it bring up? What was helpful to you in this time?
- When you are feeling under the weather, do you think that you are easy or difficult to get along with? How do you respond to being ill?

Responsive Reading – Psalm 139

One: We gather in the name of Jesus as we seek to put on his mind, share his heart, and extend his hands in loving service. If there is any encouragement in Christ, any sharing in his Spirit...

All: *Make his joy complete by having the same love and living in full accord with one another.*

One: Jesus, remind us that you are already present with us in this gathering. May we be signs of your presence for one another.

All: *Amen.*

Bible Text

Read John 5: 1-3, 5-9

¹After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

²Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. ³In these lay many ill, blind, lame, and paralyzed people. ⁵One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. ⁶When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" ⁷The ill man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am making my way someone else steps down ahead of me." ⁸Jesus said to him, "Stand up, take your mat and walk." ⁹At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.

Now that day was a Sabbath.

Questions

1. What did you notice in the Bible reading or in the chapter? What spoke to you or surprised you? What resonated with you? What was a new idea?

Allow for a few minutes of silence as you gather your thoughts.

2. When you are “stuck” or struggling, is there someone you can talk with to share the things that are happening? Do you think of Jesus as someone to talk to? Is it easy or difficult to share your struggles with Jesus in prayer? How have your experiences with prayer or conversations with others rekindled hope within you?
3. What is your reaction to the way the man answered Jesus’ question? As the man describes all the reasons why he has not been healed, what feelings or beliefs do you hear in his response?
4. From your own life experience, can you relate to his outlook on his situation? Have you ever answered Jesus’ question in a similar way—and if so, what reasons have you given Jesus? What have been the obstacles to your own healing and experience of new possibilities?
5. Along with the healing presence of Jesus, what are some ways we can bring about healing?
6. If the man did want to be healed, how would his healing affect his life? What kind of changes would he have to make as a result of being healed?
7. Describe one experience of freedom/healing that God has brought into your life or your relationships over time. How did this gift of freedom come to you?
8. Where do you experience “paralysis” (or feeling “stuck”) at the moment? What do you sense Jesus saying to you about it?

What’s Next?

- At the end of the small group or between gatherings, spend some time in silent reflection using “Answering God’s Question” at the end of the chapter.
- Jesus transforms our spiritual lives, as he transformed the blind man’s sight and brought him wholeness. With the gift of healing, comes the opportunity to be a gift for others. Write down a few things that God might be calling you to do this week (it could be as small as making a phone call). Commit to doing at least one thing from your list. Think about what will keep you from doing that one thing and how you’ll work around it.

- It can be difficult to keep the routines that keep us whole and healthy, especially during the last three years. What practices or habits have been interrupted for you? How is your life different without those practices or habits? Think about a routine you'd like to recreate. What prevents you? What might energize you to start again? How is that routine energy producing for you?

Closing Prayer - *Share the date, location and reading for the next gathering.*

Lord Jesus, we long to be healed and made whole again. Yet, the fears and anxieties of this life keep us paralyzed in patterns of heartache and brokenness. Come Lord Jesus, mend us and heal us so that we may better serve you. Amen.

One: God is with you no matter what. Go, now, in God's presence and love to be the hands, heart and hopes of Christ for our world. Amen.

Thank you to Pastor Josh Allen from Brentwood Hills Church of Christ (Nashville, TN) for writing many of the questions and reflection prompts in this guide and for sharing permission to use them with the Incarnation community.

This outline is to be used alongside Questions God Asks Us by Trevor Hudson. Some of the questions and reflection prompts questions listed here also come from Questions God Asks Us.

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