John 5

ENGAGE FELLOWSHIP

"Every day my Father is at work, and I will be too!" (John 5:17)

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Never alone…That is the message from Genesis through Revelation. God, the triune God, is never alone. When Jesus came to earth he was sent by the Father. As Jesus walked the earth, he only did what he saw and heard from heaven. His leaving was so the Holy Spirit could come. Like a beloved son whose passion is to work alongside his dad, Jesus' work on earth was the perfect reflection of all that the Father did and would do. There is a joy in Jesus' words, "I am at work too!"

And so it should be in the church. Many in the church try to do what is the task of the Holy Spirit instead of doing what they are uniquely called to do. This begs the question, what is God asking you to do?

Imagine a work site where plumbers, electricians and carpenter are all at work. Each of them has a specific assigned task. As a result, what was an empty construction site becomes exactly what the architect designed.

The Father is the divine architect of His Kingdom here on earth. Jesus is the Construction Supervisor and the Holy Spirit is the power source. Ephesians 4:8 says "He gave gifts to his people." Everyone has a job to do and that job is a delight to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Meditate on Ephesians 1:18-19 and be encouraged! You are called to the same thing the Father is doing in Heaven. I pray that the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power.

The goal of every calling is to do what Jesus did, which is to come alongside others at their own point of need. As Jesus removed the aloneness of the man at the pool of Bethesda, every ministry the church is to do results in the same. Whether it is evangelism, practical support, caring for widows and orphans, church planting or preaching, every task is meant to remove the terrible curse of separation that sin birthed in the Garden.

Here's what to do. In very simple words, write down what God has called you to do. Ask the question, "What am I equipped to do?"

Then with your small group or partner, pray and ask the Father to empower you to do what He has uniquely designed you to do. Pray like this:

"Father, thank you that you have uniquely designed me to work in Your Kingdom. Free me from seeking to do what you've called others to do. I accept Your calling to _____. Now sent your Holy Spirit to open my eyes so that I can see Your purposes and fulfill my calling in Your church."

John 5

MY JOURNAL

ENCOUNTER JESUS

"When Jesus saw him lying there, he knew that the man had been crippled for a long time. So Jesus said to him, 'Do you truly long to be healed?'" (John 5:6)

Imagine… A place where healing waters were stirred by grace but limited by man's ability to be first in line…A place where deliverance had gained a reputation but only for the fastest, not the neediest or the most downtrodden?

That is where you find Jesus. See Him standing, observing, talking, listening. He is asking the Father, "What do you want me to do?"

There is a man lying near the pool. He is a nobody in a beautiful place marred by the worst that life can offer. Jesus stands over him. "Excuse me, sir, but do you truly long to be healed?" There is no demand, only as honest of a question that could be asked. "Do you want the impossible…Do you want the improbable…Do you want what you have asked God for every day…Are you ready to have your life changed?"

The man doesn't answer the question, at least not directly. In fact, his response is that healing is impossible. Not improbable or unlikely. Impossible. For some, even though they are lying ever day in a beautiful place, their only identity is the sin and sickness they have come to know.

Take a moment to encounter Jesus beside your own troubled waters. Hear Him ask the question, "What do you want Me to do?" Tell Him now and He promises to take it before the Father!

He is not bound by what you believe about yourself. He is not waiting for you to get the right answer to the question. He knows you do not have the strength or even the belief. In fact, that's the very reason He is asking the question. **He stirs the waters of the soul.** He troubles the heart and mind so that His miracle of transformation can take root and thrive.

Next, move towards the place you desire to be. Jesus told the man, "Get up!" Now speak up with gratitude that demonstrates faith.
Pray like this….

"Jesus, thank you that You hear me! I yield to Your grace and lean into Your mercy. I receive by faith the promise and power of Your Holy Spirit. You have met me beside these troubled waters and now I give you praise."

The lesson? Jesus is at His best when you are at your worst. So welcome to the springs of living water, which will empower your victorious living. His name is Jesus.

John 5

EXPERIENCE SCRIPTURE

"I speak to you timeless truth. The Son is not able to do anything from himself or through my own initiative. I only do the works that I see the Father doing, for the Son does the same works as his Father." (John 5:19)

MY JOURNAL

Imagine that you are one of the twelve disciples. You have left everything to follow Jesus, entrusting your life and future to this carpenter from Nazareth. Your hopes are riding on an unclear vision of His plans for a "kingdom." It is becoming increasingly clear that the Jewish leaders are not big fans of His. In fact, they are trying to kill Him, and maybe you too!

Now imagine your reaction as you hear Jesus say: "the Son can do nothing of Himself." Are you surprised by this declaration of humble dependence? Surely this One whom you are following has some kind of plan, right? Doesn't He enjoy some sense of security about the future? Are you a bit shocked when you hear Him say, in essence, "I just wait around for the Father to show Me what to do"?

Jesus' words, startling though they may be, provide the blueprint for our lives. We are called to express humility through complete dependence upon God and His Word. Faithful, maturing disciples who walk intimately with the Spirit are able to declare, as Christ did, "I can of Myself do nothing" (John 5:30).

Too often the bible is read like a newspaper that describes everything that is going on while the reader remains unengaged, satisfied to have the information without ever experiencing the flesh and blood of engagement.

The man at the pool of Bethesda heard the word, engaged the command and experienced the love of God when he took the chance to stand and walk. Had he not acted on the Word he would not have experienced the healing power of God.

How do you need to experience the written word today? What step is the Father encouraging you to take? Pray like this:

"*Father, as I read Your word I recognize that You always meet Your children exactly where they are…You have come to me, Father, and now I come to You! Today, I want to experience Your grace by…* (Sharing your word, walking away from sin, practicing the fruit of your Spirit, etc.")

As you read His Word each day, ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you. **Write down** what you sense He is telling you. **Pray and thank** the Holy Spirit that He goes with you and before you. Trust that our adequacy is in Him and His Word. Now go and live each day experiencing the Father's love through His Word.

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