



BYSTANDER

JOHN & THE RABBI FROM NAZARETH

Week 3: Carry On!

Just outside of Jerusalem, Jesus performed a miracle that changed a man's life forever. For 38 years, this man was unable to walk. But when Jesus said, "Get up," the man was healed. However, it's what Jesus said *next* that made this miracle a clear sign of who Jesus really was.

Discussion Questions

1. What is one law or cultural expectation that you wish was different?
2. Is there a time you can remember that someone went against the rules or the norm so that you could benefit?
3. **Read John 5:1–21**, where the apostle John recounts the story of Jesus healing a paralyzed man.
 - What are some details about this story that would lead a reader to believe that this actually happened?
 - Before healing him, Jesus asks the man, "Do you want to get well?" Why do you think Jesus asked him that?
 - In verse 9, notice how quickly the author (John) pivots from the miraculous healing to the fact that this happened on the Sabbath. What does this say about the main reason John captured this story?
 - Verses 16–18 lay the groundwork for why religious leaders were at odds with Jesus. What do their comments tell you about their religious priorities?
4. **Read John 5:39–40**. Describe how the religious leaders may have felt hearing this.
5. Give an example of how your past version of Christianity got in the way of loving people God loves. Is your *current* version getting in the way?
6. Is there a step you can take to make a particular person a bigger priority than a potentially flawed belief or tradition? Can this group help?

Changing Your Mind

When your version of religion gets in the way of love, you have the wrong version. The person beside you must take priority over the potentially flawed religious view you have.