

A CURIOUS QUESTION

(John 5:1-15)

CONTEXT

- Mercy Pool (1-2)
- Miracles (2-9)
- Messiah (13-15; Is 35:3-6)
- Man-made rules (9b-13)

The works of God start with the heart

- The heart is the source of our desires
- Our heart is a collection of good and evil desires
- God still calls to us through our good desires
- We must pay attention to our desires
- All our desires point to a Desire
- Our greatest Desire is a relationship with Jesus
- Since Jesus is our ultimate Desire, he alone can fulfill our desires

Jesus starts with the heart of a lame man (John 5:1-15)

- Revealing the importance of knowing what we WANT
- Revealing the importance of knowing what (who) we NEED

The Sacred Romance calls to us every moment of our lives. It whispers to us on the wind, invites us through the laughter of good friends, reaches out to us through the touch of someone we love. We've heard it in our favorite music, sensed it at the birth of our first child, been drawn to it while watching the shimmer of a sunset on the ocean. It is even present in times of great personal suffering—the illness of a child, the loss of a marriage, the death of a friend. Something calls to us through experiences like these and rouses an inconsolable longing deep within our heart, wakening in us a yearning for intimacy, beauty, and adventure. This longing is the most powerful part of any human personality. It fuels our search for meaning, for wholeness, for a sense of being truly alive. However we may describe this deep desire, it is the most important thing about us, our heart of hearts, the passion of our life. And the voice that calls to us in this place is none other than the voice of God. (John Eldredge, *The Sacred Romance*)

There is a desire within each of us, in the deep center of ourselves that we call our heart. We were born with it, it is never completely satisfied, and it never dies. We are often unaware of it, but it is always awake.... Our true identity, our reason for being is to be found in this desire. (Gerald May, *The Awakened Heart*)

In all of our hearts lies a longing for a Sacred Romance. It will not go away in spite of our efforts over the years to anesthetize or ignore its song, or attach it to a single person or endeavor. It is a Romance couched in mystery and set deeply within us. It cannot be categorized into propositional truths or fully known any more than studying the anatomy of a corpse would help us know the person who once inhabited it. (John Eldredge, *Desire*)

If you know what something is designed to do, then you know its purpose in life. A retriever loves the water; a lion loves the hunt; a hawk loves to soar. It's what they're made for. Desire reveals design, and design reveals destiny. In the case of human beings, our design is also revealed by our desires. (John Eldredge, *Wild at Heart*)

There is only One Being who can satisfy the last aching abyss of the human heart, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. (Oswald Chambers)

How long can we sustain desire against continual disappointment? Some hold out longer than others, but eventually, we all move to a place of resignation or cynicism or bitterness. As the years rolled on, this man, like all of us, began to lose any vital heart-connection to what he wanted.... The calluses had formed—not in the heart of Jesus, but over the man's heart. He had abandoned desire. Jesus took him back into the secret of his own heart. By asking him what he wanted, Jesus took the man back into his desire. (J. Eldredge, *Desire*)

When I no more can stir my soul to move,
And life is but the ashes of a fire;
When I can but remember that my heart
Once used to live and love, long, and aspire,
Oh, be thou then the first, the one thou art;
Be thou the calling, before all answering love,
And in me wake hope, fear, boundless desire.
(George MacDonald, *The Diary of an Old Soul*)