

**Lighthouse Bible Church**

**December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

**John 5: 9 – 18**

**Healing on the Sabbath #2** *Scripture Reading Mark 3: 1 - 6*

### **Stand – Read – Pray**

We are looking at John Chapter 5 Verses 9 - 18 as we continue to see what unfolds in the life of this man who had an infirmity 18 years that Jesus healed instantly with just a word.

You remember that this man was waiting by the pool of Bethesda because the tradition and superstition said that if the water was stirring, by an angel, and you were the first one to go into the water, you would be healed from whatever disease you had.

The only problem was, that this man could never get into the water first, as he told Jesus, because someone would always go in ahead of him. So Jesus tells this man with an infirmity of 38 years who is unable to hardly move, ‘rise, take up your bed and walk’.

This man did not know who Jesus was, this man had no faith in Jesus, this man did not have any belief system that warranted him being chosen above any other of the multitude of sick, lame, blind and paralyzed people there.

As we saw last time, it is always the sovereign choosing of God to heal whom He wills. Look ahead to Verse 21 for a minute. **For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He WILL.** It is always His sovereign choice.

We also saw the spiritual parallel to this in the sovereign choosing of God of whom He wills to save from their sin to eternal life. Remember what **Ephesians 1: 4** says **just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having PREDESTINED us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the GOOD PLEASURE of His WILL.**

Then we saw that after that miraculous healing, the man took up his bed and walked away and Jesus walked away because as Verse 13 says **there was a multitude in that place.** And we noted two things about that: One, this healing was done on the Sabbath day and Two, this man was carrying his bed when he left and that is where we want to pick it up this morning in Verse 10.

**Verse 10: The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, ‘it is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed’.**

What is this all about? Well, first of all the Sabbath means rest and the Sabbath day of rest for the Jews was from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday. Some people today believe that Sunday is the Sabbath, but that is not biblically correct. We worship on Sunday because Christ rose on Sunday, the first day of the week, according to **Luke 24: 1 – 2** says.

By the way, the Sabbath day is the only one of the 10 commandments that is not repeated in the New Testament, because it is no longer binding on us today. We, as born again believers, have entered into Christ’s Sabbath rest as **Hebrews 4** tells us and every day is a Sabbath day for us.

But back in the time of Christ when this incident is taking place with the infirm man, the Sabbath was a big deal and violating it was a big deal.

The Old Testament made it very clear that you were not to work on the Sabbath day, according to **Exodus 20: 8 – 10** and you were not to carry a burden on the Sabbath day, according to **Jeremiah 17: 21**.

The problem was, that the religious leaders, the Rabbis, the Pharisees and Saducees, began to define what work was and was not and what carrying a burden was and was not until it was reduced to a long list of do's and don'ts, that instead of being a day of rest, became more of a burden than the other six days.

These lists of rules became the legalistic standard, the traditions of men, the regulations to follow, more than the Word of God, and that is what angered Jesus so much and that is why He was not afraid to violate their traditions on the Sabbath day, to point them to the sin in their own hearts and the hypocritical religious worship on the outside, through these rules, to cover it up.

If you lived during that time, this is some of the burden that would have been laid on you in order to keep the Sabbath day.

You couldn't go more than 3000 feet from your home. But, if you placed some food within that 3000 feet then you could go, from that food, another 3000 feet because that became an extension of your house.

You could tie a rope from your house to an adjoining building or street and then that is considered part of your property and you could go 3000 feet from there.

There were some items that you could not pick up in a public place and put back down in a public place but you could pick it up in a private place and put it in a public place. *From public to private = death by stoning-Barclay*

You could not carry anything that weighed more than a dried fig, unless it was a corn stalk and if it weighed half as much as a dried fig, you could carry it twice.

You could not eat anything larger than an olive, and if you took a bite of the olive and didn't like it, you could only eat half of another good olive.

You could not throw an object in the air with one hand and catch it with the other hand. If you were reaching for some food and the Sabbath overtook you, you must drop the food, or you would be carrying a burden on the Sabbath and be in violation.

You couldn't take a bath on the Sabbath for fear of the water spilling out of the tub onto the floor which would be considered work because the floor was washed.

Women, as I told you before, were not allowed to look into a mirror on the Sabbath day for fear of plucking out a grey hair.

Well, you get the idea of the foolishness of the Sabbath's laws, but to the religious leaders that was the essence of religion, the essence of pleasing God. And then Christ comes along and violates many of their oral and written Sabbath traditions and regulations to expose the hypocrisy of such legalism and meet them at the point of their sin so they can either receive him or reject Him. *You today*

That is why we see in Verse 10 the Jews saying to this man **it is not lawful for you to carry your bed**. He was carrying something that weighed more than a dried fig, not to mention that he was probably more than 3000 feet from his home. So the man answers them in Verse 11

**Verse 11: He who made me well said to me 'take up your bed and walk'.**

He says 'the only reason I am doing this is because I was just made well and the one that healed me told me to take up my bed and walk'. Now, not only is this man in violation of the Sabbath but the Jews are told that someone else violated the Sabbath because they healed him on that day.

**Verses 12 – 13 then they ask him, ‘who is the Man who said to you, ‘take up your bed and walk’? but the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place.**

They wanted to know who this man was that had the audacity to heal someone on the Sabbath day. I don't know how much they knew about this man that had been healed or how much he told them, but they are so legalistic that they miss out on what should have been a joyous celebration because of this miraculous healing.

That passage that was read earlier from **Mark 3: 1 – 6** turn back there. See also **Mark 2: 27 – 28**

**Verse 14 afterward, Jesus found him in the temple and said to him ‘see, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.’**

This man, after he was healed, at some point went into the temple. Maybe to thank God, maybe to pray or to worship. It was a place that he had not been able to go into on his own for 38 years.

He is in there amongst the huge crowd of people that were always in their to worship and pray and Jesus **found him**. Out of all the people, Jesus knows exactly where he is and goes right up to him and says something profound.

He says **see, you have been made well, sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you**. What Jesus said to this man was that his illness was a direct result of his sin. And by the way, the Greek construction of the sentence means that it was an ongoing sin, not something that happened 38 years ago.

This is a truth that is sometimes hard for us to understand and accept. Somebody suffering some type of illness because they have sinned; Yes! Then the next question would be; is all illness and disease a result of sin, and the answer is no? But to the Jew of that time, they were taught that the answer was yes.

Listen to what one commentator and historian says about this: “to the Jew sin and suffering were inextricably connected. If a man suffered, necessarily he had sinned, nor could he ever be cured until his sin was forgiven. The Rabbis said ‘the sick arises not from sickness until his sins be forgiven’. The man might argue that he had sinned and been forgiven and had, so to speak, got away with it; and he might go on to argue that, since he had found someone who could release him from the consequences of sin, he could very well go on sinning and escaping. There were those in the church who used their liberty as an excuse for the flesh (*Galatians 5: 13*). There were those who sinned in the confidence that grace would abound (*Romans 6: 1 – 18*) There have always been those who have used the love and the forgiveness and the grace of God as an excuse to sin. But we have only to think what God’s forgiveness cost, we have only to look at the Cross of Calvary, to know that we must ever hate sin because every sin breaks again the heart of God”. *W. Barclay page 183-84 commentary John.*

Is all illness and suffering a result of sin? No! Although Job’s 3 friends tried to convince him that he was suffering because of sin, remember. We know that some suffering is a result of what God allows Satan to do, right? Just like with Job in **Job 1 & 2.**

We know that some suffering is a result of the fact that we live in a fallen world and experience the effects of the curse every day. Everything from colds and flu to accidents to victims of crimes and victims of natural disasters. There are a myriad of reasons why people suffer, not just because they have sinned.

Some people suffer for the glory of God. In **John 9: 1 – 3** Read. So some people suffer so that God can be glorified in the healing and God can be glorified through the suffering. People like **Joni Erikson Tata** who is a quadriplegic and glorifies God through her life.

But for this man, Jesus says **sin no more lest a worse thing come upon you**. The truth of scripture is that God does sometimes discipline our sin and rebellion and disobedience with suffering and even death.

Think about what Paul said to the church at Corinth in **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11: 29 – 30** when he approached the Lord's table. **For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself not discerning the Lord's body. FOR THIS REASON**, because you haven't examined yourself and been honest with yourself, because you are partaking in an unworthy manner, **MANY are weak and sick among you and many died.**

So for Jesus to say these words to this man would have been very sobering to him, I'm sure. If this man was a believer at this point, which I think he was, then the words **lest a worse thing come upon you** would have been quite a vivid reminder that God deals with sin in the life of a believer as much as He does in the life of an unbeliever, and He does, right? **Hebrews 12: 6** says **whom the Lord loves He** (what) **chastens, disciplines.**

Notice that Jesus says **you have been made well**. If his sin was the cause for his illness and suffering and he was made well, then the reason for his illness and suffering must have been removed, right. One writer said "the fact that he was well indicated that something had happened to the sin that made him sick. It had been forgiven. He couldn't have been well if that sin had been held against him and the sin...if his disease was the punishment for sin, could only be removed if the sin was forgiven. *MacArthur GTY John 5notes*. So verse 15 says

**Verse 15: the man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.**

This man did what the woman at the well did, he went and told them exactly who it was that had healed him. I want you to notice something; the Jewish religious leaders had asked him the question “who is the man who said to you take up your bed and walk”. His answer to them is **it was Jesus that** not told me to pick up my bed and walk but **who healed me**. He placed the emphasis on where it belonged, on the healing and not on the unlawfulness of carrying his bed and walking.

But they could care less about any miracle healing or anything else if it violated their man made laws and traditions and ceremonies and liturgy and legalistic rules. As a matter of fact, it angered them that someone would do something like this, and keep doing things like that, on the Sabbath day. Like one writer says, ‘He stepped on their ecclesiastical toes’. Look at Verse 16

**Verse 16: for this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus and sought to kill Him because He had done these things on the Sabbath.**

For this reason, for the foolish reason of violating one of their man made traditions and laws **on the Sabbath**, they **sought to kill Him**. That is how steeped they were in their RELIGIOUS practices that they could not see that Jesus was doing good and having mercy on someone in need.

That is why Jesus asked the question in **Mark 3: 4** ‘**is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill**. The obvious answer is yes, it is lawful, it is not only lawful, but it is right and just to do those things. That is because the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath as Jesus said in **Mark 2: 27**.

Notice what Jesus says to them in Verse 17 that really riles them up.



**Verse 17: but Jesus answered them ‘My Father has been working until now and I have been working.**

In that statement, Jesus was saying 2 things. One, it is ok to work the works of grace and mercy and helps and good works for those in need because that is what God does, every day of every week. God rested from His work of creation but He never rested from showing His grace and mercy.

And Two, and more importantly, He was saying that He was equal with God by identifying God as **My Father** and if My Father is working and I am **working** then I am one with the Father. Do you think they got it? Look at Verse 18

**Verse 18: Therefore, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was HIS Father, making Himself equal with God.**

The Jews did get it and it caused them to want to kill Him all the more. They knew that He was telling them that He was equal with God and they got it, and they didn't like it. To them it was blasphemy worthy of death, but to those who believe, it is the truth of scripture.

By the way, even Jesus' worst enemies acknowledged that He claimed to be God either in His actions or words or both and they never denied that, they just hated Him for it. He never denied it when they told Him that either.

In **John 10: 30 – 33** Jesus says **I and the Father are one and the Jews took up stones to kill Him. And He asks them for what good work do you stone Me and they said ‘for a good work we don't stone You, but for blasphemy and because You, being a man, make Yourself God.** Because that is who He is.

So why is it that people **today** deny the deity of Christ? Do you believe this? You can only be saved when you believe the Christ of the Bible.