**Pastor Tim’s Message Notes 3-27-2022
Set Free on a Sabbath**

Friends, we are at about the midpoint of this unique season of the year we callLent.In this time where we especially focus on remembering the suffering and resurrection of our Lord Jesus, Christians are invited to draw from this to strengthen our own walk with Christ.

There are many different practices, but one practice that I would like to speak about for a moment is the practice of Sabbath. While we are new covenant Christians we are not legally required to take a Sabbath each week, but I believe that practicing Sabbath is one way that we can draw near to Jesus.

As for me, I have sought to regularly practice Sabbath for several years. I do not seek to do it in a legalistic way. Typically, it is on Friday, but to be honest, at one point or another, it has been on each of the days of the week.

On my Sabbath I simply seek to take a pause from the things that I would typically call work – most of which I really do enjoy.

But for me, practicing Sabbath has been a blessing. It has been refreshing for my soul. It has been a good reminder to me that God is in control and that the world does not revolve around me. Things can wait. And God always comes through.

Perhaps you’ve experienced Sabbath as a blessing as well. Or maybe it’s not something you’ve thought about much. Again, we are not required to, but rather, we are invited to.

When Jesus walked among us, the Sabbath was a very big deal to the Jewish people. And rightly so, as it was meant to be one of God’s gifts to humanity.

But unfortunately, many of the religious leaders became so focused on how they understood Sabbath keeping, that they were offended at some of the things that Jesus did on the Sabbath.

One such example is in today’s story from Luke’s Gospel.

Please turn with me to Luke 13:10-17. Luke write the following:

**10On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, 11and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. 12When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, “Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.” 13Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God.**

**14Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue leader said to the people, “There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath.”**

**15The Lord answered him, “You hypocrites! Doesn’t each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? 16Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?”**

**17When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing.**

A couple of weeks ago, we took a look at Jesus blessing the children that were being brought to Him. You may recall that when the disciples tried to keep the families from bringing their children to Jesus, we are told that Jesus was indignant. Jesus was displeased. Jesus was very outraged by what His disciples were trying to do. And of course, Jesus corrects the disciples and then blesses these children.

Here today, we find the world indignant once again. But this indignant was for a very different reason. This time, it was the synagogue leader who was indignant. But it was not because children were being prohibited, but because Jesus healed on the Sabbath.

We are told from this passage that this happened when Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues. One would assume that Jesus had been invited into the synagogue as a type of guest preacher.

But then, in the midst of His teaching, Jesus spots this woman who is crippled. She is all bent over. She can’t stand up.

But Jesus calls her forward in front of everyone. And then Jesus says to her **“Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.”**

Clearly, this synagogue leader has a very different view of the Sabbath then Jesus. He saw healing someone has a form of work. He saw Jesus as a Sabbath-breaker.

And then, as we have been looking at the hands of Jesus over the last several weeks, we see Jesus putting His hand on her and immediately she straightens up and begins to praise God! What as awesome moment.

But the synagogue leader was not leading in the praises, let along praising at all. Instead, he is offended that Jesus would heal on the sabbath.

So the Sabbath leader grabs the mic from Jesus, so to speak, and he addresses the people. And says, “**There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath.”**

It is very sad actually. This synagogue leader has such a distorted understanding of the Sabbath that He misses the very point of the Sabbath.

Remember, the Sabbath is meant to restoration. It is meant for refreshment. What better day for Jesus to heal than the Sabbath, right?

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Jesus, in His words, does not back down. He calls out the synagogue leader as a hypocrite. As a play actor.

The Lord tells all present that being set free and restored on the Sabbath was perfectly fitting.

Additionally, Jesus makes it clear that Satan has bound this woman in her infirmity. Sometimes that happens. Certainly not every sickness and health struggle is because of Satan and his minions. That would give them too much credit.

But Jesus’ words make it clear that sometimes the enemy can afflict people, such as this woman.

But this story makes very clear that Satan is no match for Jesus. Jesus, as He speaks the word and as He places His hand on her, she is immediately made well.

Friends, as this story concludes, everyone in the synagogue is faced with a choice. Would they side with Jesus or with the synagogue leader? The choice was theirs.

Sisters and brothers, as we ponder this passage and its relevance for our lives today, what are the important things to take with us?

And I think that there are 2 things in particular to highlight.

**First, we are to have Jesus’ view of the Sabbath**. People can distort God’s teachings in lots of different ways. It happened with the synagogue leader. People can become legalistic in regards to the Sabbath and we are not to be. And we are not required to have a Sabbath.

But Jesus viewed the Sabbath as one of God’s gifts and a day to be focused on being restored and being strengthened and made more whole. Whether there is a dramatic physical healing that takes place or not, when we have Jesus’ view of the Sabbath we will celebrate restoration, both for ourselves as well as for others.

We will take time to rest and to remember that the world does not revolve around us. And we are to look to our Triune God to restore and refresh us.

One of my former pastors once told me something that he heard from Pastor Rick Warren, who is famous for the book *The Purpose Driven Life*. And the quote is this. **“We are human beings, not human doings.”**

Friends, practicing Sabbath is one way that we can focus on our being and on remembering that God is firmly on His throne and we can be still and slow down and enjoy Him.

**And second, this is one of the many passages that remind us that Jesus has total authority over Satan and his minions**. We live in a world where Satan and his minions are defeated but still dangerous foes.

But friends, in Jesus we have authority. Jesus set this woman free on the Sabbath.

And Jesus desires freedom in our lives as well. He wants us to give no place to the Devil. He wants us to understand that Christ lives in us and that we have authority over the works of the enemy as well, through Jesus.

Friends, Jesus is a great savior. He cares for all of humanity. He set this woman free on a Sabbath. And whether it is on a Sabbath or not, He desires to set all people free. And again, as we soon move toward passion week, we are reminded of the true cost of our freedom (freedom from the bondage of sin) that Jesus would offer us through His perfect sacrifice. Thanks be to God!

Let’s pray…

Resources:

[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)

<https://bibleask.org/what-were-some-of-the-man-made-laws-that-the-jewish-leaders-imposed-on-the-sabbath/>