

## Son of God, Lord of the Sabbath (*Part 2*)

*John 5:11-18*

**Thought for the Day:** The day is soon coming when we will be at rest in the presence of the Lord, but until that day, we should be actively working for God's glory and the advancement of His kingdom. Our Father is working, and so should we be working!

Jesus deliberately performed the miracle of John 5:1-10 to challenge the man-made religious regulations of Judaism that had taken precedent over the love, grace, mercy, and compassion of God in the lives of people. The Jewish religious leaders loved their man-made laws more than they loved people! Service in the name of Jesus Christ is worship just as much as singing in church.

Man-made religion is an *illusion* of the spiritual life that Jesus came to give us through faith in Him as the Savior of our soul and the Lord of our life. Religion is a poor substitute for relationship!

### **10 So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed."**

- What constitutes work? Over time, the religious leaders had formulated a detailed list with thirty-nine categories and hundreds of rules of what constituted work and what did not. They had added thousands of rules to the guidelines of God's Word!
- But they had come to the point where they had lost sight of the Lord's purpose and intention for the Sabbath.
- They were driven by legalism rather than love and, as is so often the case, legalism had resulted in pride, self-righteousness, and cold-hearted, hypocritical judgmentalism.
- Legalism is defined as a strict, literal, or excessive conformity to the law or to a religious or moral code. (*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*)
- If you are here today, or serving in some capacity in the church, out of a sense of duty, obligation, or compulsion, you are probably operating out of legalism rather than love and gratitude for God's grace and mercy to you.
- "A man who hadn't walked for thirty-eight years was healed, but the Pharisees were more concerned about their petty rules than the life and health of a human being. It is easy to get so caught up in our man-made structures and rules that we forget the people involved. Are our guidelines for living God-made or man-made? Are they helping people, or have they become needless stumbling blocks?" (*The Life Application Commentary Series*)

### **11 But he answered them, "The man who healed me, that man said to me, 'Take up your bed, and walk.'" 12 They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk?'" 13 Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place.**

- According to the Mosaic Law, the penalty for violating the Sabbath was death; I think it is safe to say that this man wanted to shift the focus from himself to Jesus!
- "This incident marks one of the great turning points in the public ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Because He performed this miracle on the Sabbath, He stirred up the anger

and hatred of the Jewish leaders. They began to pursue Him and to seek His life."  
(MacDonald, p. 1448)

**14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you."**

- "This statement leads to the conclusion that the man's sickness was in some way caused by sin... One of the results of sin is suffering, but not all suffering is the result of personal sin."
- When confronted with illness or difficulties, we do need to prayerfully consider that God may be disciplining us. (Psalm 32:1-5; 51:8; 1 Corinthians 11:28-32; Hebrews 12:3-11)
- "In this case, Jesus sought out the healed man to warn him that though he was healed physically, his thirty-eight years as an invalid would be nothing compared to something worse — that is, eternity in hell. The man needed to stop sinning and come to salvation in Christ. He had been lame, but now he could walk. This was a great miracle. But he needed an even greater miracle — to have his sins forgiven. The man was delighted to be physically healed, but he had to turn from his sins and seek God's forgiveness to be spiritually healed."  
"It seems clear that the man's sickness had originally come to him as a result of some sin in his life. This is not true of all sickness. Many times illness in a person's life has no direct connection with any sin he has committed." (MacDonald, p. 1448)
- It should be our goal to not sin. "Go and sin no more!" The idea that "a little sin is okay" is not okay! (1 John 2:1-6)

**15 The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. 16 And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath.**

- "Here is a terrible exposure of the wicked heart of man. The Savior had come and performed a great act of healing and these Jews were infuriated. They resented the fact that the miracle took place on the Sabbath. They were cold-blooded religionists, more interested in ceremonial observances than they were in the blessing and welfare of their fellow men...." (MacDonald, p. 1448)

**17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working."**

- The Sabbath restrictions did not apply to God; He was not required to rest on every seventh day. Therefore, Jesus says, they do not apply to Me!
- This is actually a twofold claim to deity on Jesus' part: 1) He claims that God is His Father; and 2) He claims that the Sabbath restrictions do not apply to Himself.
- "Having finished the work of creation in six days, God had rested on the seventh day. This was the Sabbath. However, when sin entered the world, God's rest was disturbed. He would now work ceaselessly to bring men and women back into fellowship with Himself. He would provide a means of redemption. He would send out the gospel message to every generation. Thus, from the time of Adam's fall up to the present time, God has been working ceaselessly, and He is still working. The same was true of the Lord Jesus. He was engaged in His Father's business, and His love and grace could not be confined to only six days of the week." (MacDonald, p. 1448)

**18 This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.**