

The Gospel of John

The Gospel of John

Lesson #48
The Journey
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The Gospel of John

Israel was in an awful spiritual state and a key component of their backsliding was their obsession with keeping rules – not God’s rules, but their own! So, Jesus draws them out to show their sad condition. They had become experts at keeping traditions instead of God’s commands. They had achieved worldly success doing religious things and he was not going to let them go unchallenged. What was once true religion had become a corrupt, false religion.

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The Gospel of John

- John 5:14 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 is not the only time Jesus did a post miracle visit to one he healed – both times seem to be a spiritual check-up.
- Both the man here, and the man in John 9 are revisited by Jesus – the man in John 9 affirms faith in him, but not this one in our text today.

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The Gospel of John

- Jesus says, "Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you." (perhaps Jesus was hinting at the reason for the man's immobility)
- That is a sobering thought – what could be worse than being incapacitated for 38 years and having to beg and depend on others?
- The answer – lots of things evidenced by Jesus' own words when he said, "Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you."

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The Gospel of John

Jesus raises the issue that some sicknesses are the direct result of sin. When we are ill it is always for one of these reasons –

- We live in a sinful world where everything deteriorates.
 - We are reaping what we've sown.
 - We are being chastened by the Lord.
 - We are suffering for God's glory.

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"Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you." When we realize what Jesus is asking is impossible on its face, we should dig a bit to see what Jesus means by, "sin no more".

So, what was Jesus asking of the man?

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Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

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Holy and blameless are two separate and distinct things that tie nicely into sanctification. When we believe in Christ, we receive his righteousness (made holy) and when we obey Christ, we are blameless.

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John 13:9 Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" 10 Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean."

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• John 5:15 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. 17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working." 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.

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- What can we say about a man who had been incapacitated for 38 years, and then after being healed by Jesus has no appreciation for his Healer?
- I mentioned 2 weeks ago the astounding qualities of all Jesus' healings – instantaneous and complete without surgeries, without therapies, and without medications.
- At his word, sometimes just at his will - people were healed so that it would be known Jesus was none other than God, himself.

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Question – if Jesus could heal as he did, then why not heal everyone of everything and let them live on forever as promised?

Answer – because what good would it be to have perfect health for eternity if all many would do with their healthy body would be to perfect their sin?

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Genesis 3:22 Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever—" 23 therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. 24 He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

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If you recall in the temptation, Satan says they will be "like God" if they eat – so the 1st couple took the bait thinking perhaps that to be like God would provide the ultimate experience of pleasure. But what they found was their happiness was not based in being "like God" so much as it was being "with God".

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- The man healed at the pool of Bethesda is such an enigma – who would "rat out" the one who gave your life back to you!
- Nonetheless he does – he is a foreshadow of Judas Iscariot who had every reason to be loyal to Jesus, but for reasons known only to him, he wasn't.
- Never underestimate the power of sin that works in all of us – even leading to decisions that hurt others and ourselves as well.

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- Neither this man nor Judas were served well by betraying Jesus – they proved their hard heartedness through their actions.
- In both cases these betrayals led to their ultimate damnation, and we pass over such realities lightly.
- How many times have you thought about what Judas is doing today?

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The man at the pool, Judas Iscariot, and billions of others are but mere smudges on the pages of eternity because they rejected the call of God through the Son of God. Their names are anathema to us, and though they seem to not exist, they do exist in an eternal state of darkness, lostness, and their names are synonymous with shame.

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The next 31 verses belong to Jesus – he is speaking in response to these now public charges that he is guilty of breaking the Sabbath and that he is claiming to be God. His defense against such charges is instructive.

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- The charges against Jesus were interesting – the Jews think they have a winning hand by saying he claims to be God.
- And in fact, regarding the accusation that he is claiming to be God, Jesus’ words are non-falsifiable.
- This is to say there is no evidence that can be offered to prove their claim wrong.

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- And it gets better, for not only was he claiming to be God - he was God!
- “My Father is working until now, and I am working.”
- When he said this, it was not wasted at all on the Jews as they knew to claim God was his Father was to claim to have the same nature as the Father had.

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- Throughout history many have claimed to be God, but all but one proved to be frauds – normally we would consider these frauds to be insane.
- But Jesus could not be dismissed as insane because he raised the dead, healed the sick, cast out demons, forgave sin, and produced irrefutable evidences of his claim.
- Do we realize how guilty these witnesses are of the one damning sin there is; unbelief. In the wake of such a mountain evidence their unbelief is unforgivable.

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The generation who witnessed the ministry of Jesus are perhaps the guiltiest of all people of all time. Remember how angry he was with the people in Galilee when he said, “unless you people see miracles, signs, and wonders you won’t believe”? In like fashion to see all “the Jews” had seen and not believe would be even worse. It is one thing to crave signs, and then believe, but even worse to see signs and refuse to believe.

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- At this point the charges against Jesus are that he is a blasphemer claiming to be God who also breaks their sabbath rules.
- To be honest, he is guilty of both, and that would make him a blasphemer were it not for the fact that he can back up his claims to be God.
- On claiming to be God – guilty! On breaking the sabbath rules of the Jews – guilty!

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“I and the Father are one.”

Jesus of Nazareth

“Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”

Jesus of Nazareth

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- John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I am working.”
- Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

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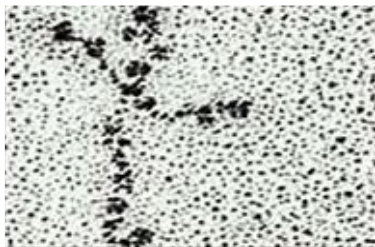
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- Job 34:14 “If He should determine to do so, if He should gather to Himself His spirit and His breath, 15 all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust.”
- Hebrews 1:1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. 3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

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