



the Source

Let anyone who is thirsty come to me...

In today's scripture, Jesus is teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath, when He sees a woman so *twisted and bent over with arthritis that she couldn't even look up*. Jesus immediately calls to her and lays hands on her and suddenly after eighteen years of being crippled, she stands *straight and tall, giving glory to God*. In reaction to this healing, the synagogue official indignantly addresses the crowd telling them *not* to come to the synagogue for healing on the Sabbath.

What kind of a person sees a miraculous healing and reacts in anger because Jesus healed on the Sabbath? Well, one who cares more about rules than about people, for sure. How do we let our lives get so far away from compassion to think that being right is more important than being in relationship? I guess the official thought he was defending God, but he is quickly reprimanded by Jesus who points out the man's hypocrisy. Jesus says that each Sabbath the official unties his donkey from its stall and leads it out for water, so why shouldn't He *untie this daughter of Abraham and lead her from the stall where Satan has had her tied these eighteen years?* Jesus shames the man for his pettiness and the people cheer Him on.

**Consider
the Source
Luke 13:10-17**

My takeaway from this scripture is that compassion should take precedence over man-made rules. We are not placed on this earth to be God's defenders. We are placed on this earth to love one another and show compassion to everyone, especially the last, the least and the lost. As we examine our lives in face of this miracle story, let us be the ones transformed here and let us choose compassion over defensiveness: Welcome warmly a newcomer who might have sat in what you thought was your pew, seize a chance to show generosity to the man begging on the street corner, let go of your prejudice against a gay or lesbian couple and welcome them into our congregation with love as Christ would.

We all have opportunities daily to share the love of Christ; this is our Great Commission! Help us, Father in Heaven, to recognize our own hypocrisy and instead, love as You have taught us to love!

— Paula Holmes, First Church member

A Family Affair

Think about the word *commitment*. It's a big word with an important meaning. When you commit to something, it means you agree to do something. Every day, we make commitments and follow through with them. We commit to sports practice, completing homework, or helping with chores. What does commitment mean to you? We are committed to the relationships in our lives: with our family, our friends, and with God.

Spring break is often a time to step back from some of our commitments and spend time with our families. Did you take a trip or spend time with friends? Perhaps you stayed home and enjoyed not running errands.

Read Matthew 22:36-38. God is constantly with us during our busy times, sad times, and joyful times. God never takes a break from us. As a family, think of five times this past week when you felt God's presence.

It isn't always easy to keep all our commitments. Choosing to walk with God every day helps our relationship with Him grow stronger. Whether we are saying our bedtime prayers, blessing our meal, or praying for safe traveling, God is listening and He is always there.

Pray together: Dear Lord, please help us choose to put you in the center of our lives, no matter how busy, or not so busy, we are. We want to grow a steadfast commitment to you every day. Amen.

— Tammy Parks, Elementary Coordinator

Monday: Luke 13:10-13

While teaching at the synagogue on the Sabbath, Jesus heals a crippled woman he sees there.

- How can we better have the eyes of Christ to see those in need around us?
- In what area of my life do I need Jesus to unbound me from sin?

Tuesday: Luke 13:14

The synagogue official responds negatively to the healing, degrading the people for coming to the synagogue for healing on the Sabbath.

- What is my own response to Jesus' healing grace?
- How can I better offer praise to God for His gift of freeing grace?
- Am I letting the petty details of legalism or perfectionism blind me to God's miracles?
- Are there areas of my life where my concern with being perfect or following rules overshadows my understanding of God's love and compassion for the broken?
- Am I taking scripture out of context to uphold my own personal prejudices?

Wednesday: Luke 13:15-16

Jesus reprimands the synagogue leader and defends His action.

- Am I in need of Christ's reprimand to convict me of hypocrisy in my life?
- Have we as a church become too obsessed over rules and conformity, causing us to overlook those in need of compassion?

Thursday: Luke 13:17

Jesus' opponents are humiliated, but the people are delighted with wonder at His healing power.

- Do I stand in wonder and awe as I watch Jesus work in people's lives or do I use man-made rules to negate His healing compassion?
- How can I better see the suffering and lost with the eyes of Christ and leave the judgment to God?
- Will I look around with Jesus' eyes to spot those bound and bent over and offer a healing hand?

Friday: Matthew 7:1-5

Jesus offers advice to us about judging others.

- What is Jesus saying to us here about a critical spirit?
- How can we better maintain a spirit of compassion?