

Sermon Outline

“LIFE IN HIS NAME”:
THE PURSUIT OF WHOLENESS AND THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

SAVED TO SIN NO MORE

JOHN 5:10-17

I. Joy (Jn 5:1-9)

- A. After more than thirty years, the man who could not walk walks.
- B. Jesus healed him with a simple command: “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.”

II. Controversy (Jn 5:10-13)

- A. As it happens, the man was healed on a Sabbath.
- B. The Law of Moses prohibits people from carrying loads/burdens on the Sabbath.
 - Jeremiah 17:21: “Thus says the LORD: Take care for the sake of your lives, and do not bear a burden on the Sabbath day or bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem.”
- C. The question that arises when we seek to apply those words: “What exactly constitutes a burden? How heavy must something be in order to be “a burden”?”
- D. By Jesus’ day, rabbinic Judaism had officially outlined thirty-nine (39!) categories of things that were forbidden on the Sabbath (Burge, *John*, 174). The transportation of loads from one domain to another fell under these prohibitions.
- E. Thus, carrying a bed from one place to another violated the rabbinic rules.
- F. “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’” (v 10).
- G. The man points people to Jesus: ““The man who healed me, that man said to me, ‘Take up your bed, and walk’”” (v 11).
- H. The Jews were suspicious: ““Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take up your bed and walk?’”” (v 12)

- I. The man couldn't give an answer because "Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place" (v 13).
- J. In all, an interesting situation.
 - 1. Of all the days that Jesus could have done his healing, he chose a Sabbath (knowing full well what people would think)!
 - 2. In the other Gospels, the Jewish leaders got angry at Jesus, because he healed on the Sabbath (Mt 12:9-14; Lk 6:6-11).
 - 3. Since the scholars saw miraculous healings to be a kind of work, they concluded that Jesus was breaking the Sabbath.
 - 4. On this Sabbath, Jesus not only healed. He asked a man to carry a load, i.e., his mattress.

III. "Sin No More..." (Jn 5:14)

- A. Jesus finds the man at the temple. Perhaps the man had gone there to offer thanks to the Lord.
- B. Jesus said to him: "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you" (v 14).
- C. "Sin no more" is the commandment that attends every blessing that we receive from God.
 - To "Sin no more" is to live in an uninterrupted state of holiness and obedience to God's commandments.
 - Leviticus 19:2: "Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy."
 - Matthew 5:48: "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."
- D. Since perfection is only realized when we see Christ face to face, "Sin no more" may make us anxious.
- E. John Calvin believes that the Lord is *not* saying that the man (or anyone) will now be completely free from sin.
 - 1. The fact that the Lord exhorts the man to "Sin no more" suggests that "this man's soul was not yet fully cleansed from all sins." (*The Gospel According to St. John 1-10*, 123)
 - 2. When the Lord says "Sin no more," he is speaking in comparison with the man's previous life. The Lord Jesus is exhorting the man (and us too) to live a life of renewed obedience to God.

- F. Why is it important that we hear the Lord saying these words to the man?
 1. Because the Lord had just asked the man to carry his mattress on the Sabbath—an act the Jewish legal scholars considered a criminal sin.
 2. The Lord Jesus is making clear that he is not light on sin!
 - a. He doesn't want us to sin.
 - b. He wants us to live in perfection.
 - c. He wants us to know that God will judge sin.

IV. “...That Nothing Worse May Happen to You” (Jn 5:14)

- A. What troubles us is the reason the Lord gives to the man for why he should refrain from sinning: It's so “that nothing worse may happen to you” (v 14).
- B. These words might suggest that this particular man became a paraplegic due to some sin in his life.
- C. But it is also speaking in general:
 1. If we have received such great blessing from God, we should return wholeheartedly to God and not live a life of rebellion.
 2. Returning to a lifestyle of sin could invite even worse chastisement from God (Calvin, *The Gospel According to St. John 1-10*, 122).

V. Grace Disciplines!

- A. God's super-abounding grace is not incompatible with God's discipline.
 1. The fact that God is no longer angry at us is not incompatible with the fact that God still chastises his own beloved children.
 2. The fact that God is no longer angry at us is compatible with the fact that God can still be displeased with how we behave in the world.
- B. When believers choose to remain in stubborn patterns of sin, don't put it past Abba Father to discipline us.
- C. God's discipline does not remove his love for us. Rather, it flows out of his love.

Proverbs 3:11-12: “My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline or be weary of his reproof, ¹² for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.”

 1. Misapplications of this verse:
 - a. Being the “moral policeman” of your fellow Christians.

b. Thinking that the only or main way God shows his love is through rebuke and discipline. (What kinds of Christians would that produce?)

2. Qualifications aside, if God likes you, he'll reprove and discipline you.

VI. What's Worse than Being a Paraplegic?

A. But we cannot help but still be troubled. What troubles us is the fact that the Lord Jesus' threat is very open ended. *What could be worse than being a paraplegic?*

- Cancer?
- Leukemia?
- Ebola?
- Financial loss?
- Physical death?
- Eternal death?

— “Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you” (v 14) covers a host of things! It refers ultimately to final judgment and hell.

B. The Lord's words here are not meant to comfort us, but to get us to repent and turn to him.

C. Jesus is a teacher of the Law.

—By these words, Jesus demonstrates that he is a faithful interpreter, disciple, and teacher of the Law, contrary to what his critics think of him.

VII. Eternal Security in Jesus Alone

A. How can desperate sinners be saved? What is the only way that you and I can be assured that nothing worse will happen to us?

B. The good news is that these are not the Lord's final words to us. Remember that the threats of the Law are given for a purpose—to lead us to Jesus himself.

- John 5:24: “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.”
- John 5:39-40: “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, ⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.”
- John 10:28: “I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”
- John 11:25-26: “Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die [which is a fate far worse than being

an invalid], yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

VIII. Passing from Death into Eternal Life

The One who warns us of coming judgment, a fate infinitely worse than being a paraplegic, is the only One who can give us eternal and indestructible life. Those who turn to Jesus for salvation will be saved and not come into judgment. Behind the Lord’s warning is a call to believe in him for our salvation lest our sins destroy us. Everyone who believes in Jesus Christ the Son of God will not come into judgment, but pass from death to eternal life (5:24).

Questions for Reflection

1. Was there anything in particular about today’s sermon that blessed and encouraged you?
2. Was there anything that you disagree with or found difficult to accept?
3. How did the Jews view the man’s carrying his bed on the Sabbath? Why?
4. What does Prov 3:11-12 teach us about the relationship between God’s love and God’s discipline?
5. What is worse than being a paraplegic? How can we be saved from worst fates than being physically disabled?
6. According to Jesus, how do we pass “from death to life” (5:24)?