

June 18 Su Reading 169 — Luke 13:10-17 — Healing on the Sabbath

¹⁰ *And He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.* ¹¹ *And behold, there was a woman who for eighteen years had ^[fn]a sickness caused by a spirit, and she was bent double, and could not straighten up at all.* ¹² *But when Jesus saw her, He called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your sickness."* ¹³ *And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made erect again and [began] glorifying God.* ¹⁴ *But the synagogue official, indignant because Jesus healed on the Sabbath, answered and was saying to the crowd, "There are six days in which work should be done; so come during them and get healed, and not on the Sabbath day."* ¹⁵ *But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites, does not each of you on the Sabbath release his ox or his donkey from the stall and lead it away to water [it]?"* ¹⁶ *"And this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound for—behold—eighteen years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?"* ¹⁷ *And as He said this, all His opponents were being put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing over all the glorious things being done by Him.*

LSB Footnote

(13:11) Lit a spirit of sickness

Show and Tell — Jesus was making a point in this story. The context shows that “*He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath*” (v. 10). Apparently, while He was teaching, He saw this crippled woman in the crowd and “*called her over*” (NIV: “*called her forward*,” v. 12). Then “*He laid His hands on her*” (v. 13). They were “center stage” in this synagogue for a reason. It seems like Jesus not only wanted to heal her, but he also wanted to expose the hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders who insisted on obedience to their traditions which went far beyond the requirements of God’s Law. As expected, “*the synagogue official [was] indignant because Jesus healed on the Sabbath*” (v. 14). He was also rather cowardly in that, rather than rebuking Jesus for healing on the Sabbath, he challenged the crowd not to come to be healed on the Sabbath. Jesus then made him the center of attention, calling him and his fellow religious oppressors hypocrites (v. 15). They were careful to release their animal and lead it to water on the Sabbath, but they would not allow this woman to be released from her stall of suffering for 18 years. It was a “show and tell” event for Jesus not only to show his power, but also to expose religious hypocrisy. Let us be careful about imposing our own worship preferences on others.

Here is the first verse of an appropriate hymn that warns us about hypocrisy.

The Lord, the Judge, His churches warns:
Let hypocrites attend and fear,
Who place their hope in rites and forms,
But make not faith nor love their care.

— Isaac Watts (b. 1674)

June 19 M Reading 170 — John 9:1-7 — The Man Born Blind

¹ *As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.* ² *And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?"* ³ *Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but [this was] so that the works of God might be manifested in him.* ⁴ *We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.* ⁵ *While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."* ⁶ *When He had said this, He spat on the ground,*

made clay of the saliva, and rubbed the clay on his eyes,⁷ and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went away and washed, and came [back] seeing.

Why Suffer? — We will break down this story of the blind man's healing into three readings because it is both long and rich. The disciples reflected a common thought in their culture that illness and tragedy are results of personal sin. Sometimes it is, but not in this case. Since Jesus was God, He knew not only this man's history but also the Father's purpose. This man was allowed to live into adulthood without sight so that God could demonstrate His power and goodness. If that sounds unfair to you, remember that the Father allowed His own Son to suffer a beating and crucifixion so that He might provide the means of salvation for us and to show His power through Jesus' resurrection. God often uses suffering to bring glory to Himself by how it makes us grow spiritually. When my wife was dying with cancer, she told a friend, "I would not wish this on anyone, but I would not trade it for anything." She had grown very close to the Lord during her trial. Do you suffer from some kind of physical disability or other hardship? Then think of the suffering of the blind man and Jesus. How might God use your difficulty to bring glory to Him? When Jesus' disciples were beaten by the Sanhedrin for preaching about Jesus, they were "*rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for the Name*" (Acts 5:40).

Here is a song focused on the "Why?" of suffering that includes a 2-minute piece of a John Piper message.

[Though You Slay Me - Bing video](#)

Though You slay me, Yet I will praise You. Though You take from me, I will bless Your name. Though You ruin me, Still I will worship. Sing a song to the One who's all I need. — Shane Barnard & Shane Everett (2013)
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June 20 Tu Reading 171 — John 9:13-34 — He Is a Prophet

¹³ *They brought to the Pharisees the man who was formerly blind.* ¹⁴ *Now it was a Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.* ¹⁵ *So the Pharisees also were asking him again how he received his sight. And he said to them, "He applied clay to my eyes, and I washed, and I see."* ¹⁶ *So then some of the Pharisees were saying, "This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." But others were saying, "How can a sinful man do such ^[fn]signs?" And there was a division among them.* ¹⁷ *Therefore, they said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him, since He opened your eyes?" And he said, "He is a prophet."*

¹⁸ *Then, the Jews did not believe [it] of him that he was blind and had received sight, until they called the parents of the very one who had received his sight,* ¹⁹ *and questioned them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? Then how does he now see?"* ²⁰ *So his parents answered and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind;* ²¹ *but how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him; he is of age, he will speak for himself."* ²² *His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him to be ^[fn]Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.* ²³ *For this reason his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."*

²⁴ Therefore, a second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, "Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵ He then answered, "Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶ So they said to him, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" ²⁷ He answered them, "I told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to listen again? Do you want to become His disciples too?" ²⁸ And they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He is from." ³⁰ The man answered and said to them, "Well, here is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from, and He opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He listens to him. ³² [fn] Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, He could do nothing." ³⁴ They answered and said to him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?" So they put him out.

LSB Footnotes

(9:16) Or *attesting miracles*

(9:22) The Messiah

(9:32) Lit *From the age it was not heard*

Sinner or Prophet? — There is much confusion in this story about what people thought regarding the identity of Jesus. Ten times in these 22 verses, people are said to “*know*” or “*not know*” about Jesus. Likely most of the Pharisees thought, “*This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath*” (v. 16). It was their man-made Sabbath rules they were concerned about. Mixing dirt with spit was not work, nor was it dishonoring God’s purpose for the Sabbath, but they were looking for how they could accuse Jesus. They said, “*we know that this man is a sinner*” (v. 24). When they told the man, “*Give glory to God,*” they were admitting that a God-caused miracle had taken place, but they refused to believe that God had worked through Jesus. Although the man’s parents were afraid to go against the Jewish religious leaders, the formerly blind man was not. When asked for his opinion about Jesus, he responded boldly, “*He is a prophet*” (v. 17). Actually, He was far more than a prophet, but the man was at least convinced that God used Jesus to heal him. He didn’t pretend to know much about theology, but he understood something very important about his experience: “*...one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see*” (v. 25). In a spiritual sense, that can also be our testimony. We were spiritually blind before Jesus opened our eyes to truth. It is difficult for people to argue against your experience. Just tell them what Jesus has done to you!

Here are two very different renditions of this African-American song about telling others what we know:

[I Can Tell the World - YouTube](#)

[I Can Tell the World About This - YouTube](#)

I can tell the world about this: I can tell the nations I’ve been blessed. I’ll tell them that the Comforter has come. I’ll tell them that the victory is won, That He brought joy, joy, joy, to my soul.

³⁵ *Jesus heard that they had put him out, and after finding him, He said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"*

³⁶ *He answered and said, "Who is He, ^[fn]Lord, that I may believe in Him?"* ³⁷ *Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you."* ³⁸ *And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him.* ³⁹ *And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind."* ⁴⁰ *Some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, "Are we blind too?"* ⁴¹ *Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now [that] you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.*

LSB Footnote
(9:36) Or Sir

Finding Faith — The text doesn't tell us that the man had seen Jesus after he gained sight. We read earlier that when Jesus told him to go to the pool of Siloam, he "went away" to wash his eyes (v. 7). Blind people, however, would recognize the voice of someone who had talked to them earlier. It is significant that Jesus took the initiative to look for him later ("after finding him"—v. 35). He wanted to follow up on this man's spiritual condition and lead him to a greater understanding. Jesus' question to him was, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" (v. 35b). That seems like a rather vague question, but it carried a spiritual connection with Ezekiel and Daniel in the OT. The former blind man was very open, wanting to believe in this man who healed him, whoever He was. He asked, "Who is He ... that I may believe in Him?" (v. 37). When Jesus identified Himself, the man immediately said, "I believe" and worshiped Jesus (v. 38). A caring Savior reached out to a hungry soul to also open his spiritual eyes.

[Reach Out and Touch - YouTube](#)

Reach out and touch a soul that is hungry;
Reach out and touch a spirit in despair.
Reach out and touch a life torn and dirty,
A man who is lonely, if you care.

— Charles F. Brown (1971)

¹ *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber.* ² *But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep.* ³ *To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.* ⁴ *When he brings all his own out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.* ⁵ *A stranger they will never follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."* ⁶ *This figure of speech Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand what those things were which He had been saying to them.*

⁷ *So Jesus said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.* ⁸ *All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.* ⁹ *I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.* ¹⁰ *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and ^[fn]have [it] abundantly.*

¹¹ "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. ¹² He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees—and the wolf snatches and scatters them— ¹³ because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, ¹⁵ even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. ¹⁶ And I have other sheep, which are not from this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock [with] one shepherd. ¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one takes it away from Me, but from Myself, I lay it down. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to ^[fn]take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

LSB Footnotes

(10:10) Or *have abundance*

(10:18) Some mss *has taken*

The True Shepherd — We see three great pictures of Jesus in this well-known passage where we find His third and fourth "I am" statements in John's Gospel: "*I am the door of the sheep*" (v. 7) and "*I am the good shepherd*" (v. 11). The first picture is that of Jesus as the *known* shepherd. The first paragraph contrasts a true shepherd from a false one. The sheep know the difference and will only follow the true shepherd: "*the sheep follow him because they know his voice*" (v. 4). The relationship goes two ways; the sheep know the voice of the shepherd and the shepherd knows them: "*he calls his own sheep by name*" (v. 3). The second picture, in the next paragraph, shows Jesus as the *saving* shepherd. He pictured Himself as the door of the sheepfold, saying that "*if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved*" (v. 9). Jesus is the only way for someone to enter the sheepfold of His kingdom. The final paragraph presents the picture of Jesus as the *sacrificing* shepherd. Five times, Jesus speaks of laying down His life for the sheep, and it is done willingly and lovingly. He acts in contrast to the hired shepherd who "*is not concerned about the sheep*" (v. 13). Jesus knows us, saves us, and sacrifices for us.

[Jesus, Shepherd of the Sheep - YouTube](#)

Jesus, Shepherd of the sheep,
Who Your Father's flock does keep,
Safe we wake and safe we sleep,
Guarded still by You.

— Henry Cook (b. 1788)

June 23 F Reading 174 — John 10:19-42 — I Am the Son of God

¹⁹ A division occurred again among the Jews because of these words. ²⁰ And many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?" ²¹ Others were saying, "These are not the words of someone demon-possessed. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

²² At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem; ²³ it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the Portico of Solomon. ²⁴ The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, "How long ^[fn]will You keep us in suspense? If You are the ^[fn]Christ, tell us openly." ²⁵ Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these bear witness of Me. ²⁶ But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸ and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish—ever; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ ^[fn]My Father, who has given

[them] to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch [them] out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are ^[fn]one."

³¹ The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. ³² Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" ³³ The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself God." ³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, 'I SAID, YOU ARE GODS'? ³⁵ If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), ³⁶ do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? ³⁷ If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; ³⁸ but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and continue knowing that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." ³⁹ Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.

⁴⁰ And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there. ⁴¹ And many came to Him and were saying, "While John did no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true." ⁴² And many believed in Him there.

LSB Footnotes

(10:24) Lit do You lift up our soul

(10:24) Messiah

(10:29) One early ms What My Father has given Me is greater than all

(10:30) Or a unity, one essence

Works are Witnesses — The Pharisees wanted clear words from Jesus that said He was the Christ, the long-expected Messiah. Jesus said that He had told them, but they didn't believe what He said (v. 25). Throughout Jesus' ministry, He very sparingly made statements about being the Messiah, even warning His disciples not to share it with others. Why not? Perhaps part of it was that it would remove some of the need for faith. What Jesus did often encourage, however, was the fact that His works were witnesses that He was the Christ. He challenged these unbelieving leaders, "*believe the works, so that you may know ... that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father*" (v. 38). Only God could do the things that Jesus did frequently. Even today most unbelievers are more impacted by what we do than what we say. Yes, we should witness to them with our words, but how we act and react are often very effective in causing them to think that there is really something different about us — something good, and something desirable. Our works are witnesses, too.

This appropriate song may be sung to the tune of "Stand Up for Jesus."

To worship, work, and witness,
the Good News spread abroad,
We magnify Your mission,
Church of the living God;
The Father's new creation
through Jesus Christ His Son,
The Spirit has empowered
to do as Christ has done.

— Henry L. Lambdin (1969)

Meditation: There is an interesting witness to the truth of the Trinity here. When Jesus said, "*I and the Father are one*" (v. 30), He revealed two important ideas about God. First, since He claimed to be the Son of God, the statement, "*I and the Father*," suggests that there is complexity within the Godhead. Those are two Persons, showing the plurality of God. Second, the expression, "...are

one,” reveals the unity of God. When adding the Holy Spirit, there are three Persons but one Essence. One complex God.

June 24 Sa Reading 175 — Luke 13:22-30 — The Narrow Door

²² And He was passing through from one city and village to another, teaching, and proceeding on His way to Jerusalem. ²³ And someone said to Him, "Lord, are there [just] a few who are being saved?" And He said to them, ²⁴ "Strive to enter through the narrow door, for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. ²⁵ Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open up to us!' then He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know where you are from.' ²⁶ Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' ²⁷ And He will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you are from; DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU WORKERS OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.' ²⁸ In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being cast out. ²⁹ And they will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline [at the table] in the kingdom of God. ³⁰ And behold, [some] are last who will be first and [some] are first who will be last."

The Door of Decision — The basic question that brought on Jesus' long answer was, "Will few be saved?" The answer centered on the door to the kingdom of God. How does one enter that door? Jesus' answer was, "*Strive to enter through the narrow door*" (v. 24). It is a door of decision; do I really want to enter? To "*strive to enter*" not only shows effort and determination, but also its value and importance. It is worth striving for. The fact that it is a narrow door answers the basic question; relatively few will enter it. Many "*will not be able*" (v. 24), either because of their unwillingness to "*strive*" or that the opportunity has ended. That is the shutting of the door by the head of the house, representing Jesus. The third door connection is the knock of the procrastinators after the door was closed. The decision to strive was neglected and the decision to shut was final. It is not enough to be familiar with Jesus; the striving includes repentance and faith. We know that many Jews will be in heaven ("*Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God*"—v. 28), but also many Gentiles ("*they will come from east and west and from north and south*"—v. 29). Jesus invites and He warns: enter while you can. His door of mercy is open.

[Oh, the Mercy of God - YouTube](#)

Oh, the mercy of God, the glory of grace,
That You chose to redeem us.
To forgive and restore,
And You call us Your children, chosen in Him
To be holy and blameless to the glory of God,
To the praise of His glorious grace.
To the praise of His glory and power.
To Him be all glory, honor, and praise
Forever and ever and ever, amen.

— Geoff Bullock (1999)