

For so many people in this world, they will one day realize that God offered them something so wonderful, but they missed it, and it will be tragic.

**WHILE JESUS OFFERS AND GIVES COMPLETE HEALING, IT IS EASY TO MISS IT.**

I'd like to point out 3 tragic realities that I see in this text.

**Tragic Reality #1** - A focus on rule keeping in order to be right with God will cause a person to miss out on being made well by God. **5:10-13**

These Jews completely missed the opportunity to be made well by Jesus because they were trying to follow rules in order to earn their way to God.

V. 10 - God had given the Sabbath to Israel as a day of rest, celebration, and worship of God. The intention was to rest from work and focus on the Lord. The Jews took the Sabbath law to a level beyond what God intended. They were convinced they needed to add more rules to the Sabbath day regulations in order to be sure they weren't working on the Sabbath. One of those extra man-made rules was found in the Mishnah, which said that you could not move your bedding on the Sabbath. This regulation did not come from God, but from man.

V. 11 - I like the man's response to this accusation. He says, "there was a guy who healed me. He told me to carry my bedding. I am just doing what He told me to because He healed me. I am going to listen to Him." Peter had to say something similar at one point. The Jews were telling him and John not to preach about Jesus. Peter said, "we must obey God rather than men."

V.12 - You would think the Jews would say, "wait, healed? What was wrong?" Then the guy could have gone on to talk about this wonderful man who healed him after 38 years of sickness. Instead, they completely ignored the comment about the healing and were only focused on the Sabbath regulations.

V. 13 - This man didn't really know who it was. He must have been so overwhelmed by the fact that he was walking that he missed seeing Jesus walk away in the crowd. This man was healed, but he couldn't tell others about the man who healed him.

When I say "to be right with God," I am talking about being declared by God to be righteous. To be declared righteous by God means that a person is no longer considered by God a filthy sinner but is now considered by God to have perfectly met the standard of God's righteousness. When I say "made well," I am talking about being saved unto eternal life by God.

A strict adherence to rules is not the way to be saved. The religious leaders (Jews) missed the fact that it is Jesus who freely makes people well. They missed that because they were too focused on their own works and religious rule keeping. They thought they were saved because of their rule keeping. But they weren't.

**Tragic Reality #2** - Sin in the life of a person already made well by Jesus can cause consequences worse than 38 years of paralyzed sickness. **5:14**

V. 14 - Whatever his intentions were, we learn that he made his way into the temple. While in the temple, John writes that Jesus went and found him. Jesus tracked him down and assured him that he was made well.

Jesus healed this man physically, but I also believe this man was healed spiritually. Jesus was not on a mission to only provide physical healing for this man. That is why Jesus talked so much in this gospel about eternal life (3:16). Jesus gives people eternal life, never tasting death, living eternally even though they physically die (11:25). Notice the instruction Jesus gave to this man. Jesus came to tell him that if he goes on toward a sinful lifestyle that something worse than 38 years of sickness could happen to him. In fact, this man could've died. Jesus says, "you're made well, don't run back to your sin."

What does Jesus offer those who already have eternal life? He offers abundant life (John 10:10). God is not just in the business of calling unbelievers to salvation. He is also in the business of bringing saved people to victory over sin and seeing the abundant life He offers. Confess your sin to God (1 John 1:9). Confess your sin to others who are here to help you (James 5:16). Ask godly people to pray for you to find victory (James 5:16). Sit under the weight of the teaching of God's Word so that you learn what pleases Him (Ephesians 5:10). Move forward for the glory of God. You won't become sinless, but there is great joy in sinning less.

**Tragic Reality #3** - To assume that Jesus is anything less than God Himself is the same assumption that the Jews made who desired to kill Jesus. **5:15-18**

V. 15 - Some people think that this man was trying to throw Jesus under the bus by turning Him into the authorities. I don't think that. I think this man was trying to get the people who were questioning him to have the opportunity to listen and learn from Jesus.

V. 16 - They were still so hung up on the fact that Jesus did this on the Sabbath. They thought surely if Jesus was a man of God He wouldn't have stooped to the level of healing a man on God's chosen day of rest.

V. 17 - The response Jesus gives about this Sabbath issue is a serious claim of Jesus, and I don't want us to miss it. He says, "my Father is working until now, and I am working." Essentially, here is what He says, "I am the Son of God (v.18). I am God the Son (1:1). My Father is God (v.18). Not your Father, not our Father, but my Father is God. My Father is always at work in this world. God holds the world together. If God stopped working, the world would fall apart. God works to bring children into the world on the Sabbath. God works to save people on the Sabbath. God heals on the Sabbath. God healed this man on the Sabbath, because I healed him on the Sabbath. God is working, and I am His instrument. He sent me into this world to do His work. The work I do is the work of God."

V. 18 - The Jews wanted to see Him dead. They had made up their mind that Jesus could not have been The Eternal God. They knew that a claim to be the Son of God was a claim to be equal with God. On that point, they were right. But here is where they were wrong. They couldn't believe that the man who just healed on the Sabbath day was equal with God. We need to realize that the Jews killed Jesus not because Jesus was a man who made Himself out to be God (10:33). The Jews killed Jesus because He is God, and they refused to believe it. They refused to believe Him. They rejected the truth, rejected Jesus, and in so doing, they rejected God (Zech. 12:1,10).

1) They thought that Jesus couldn't be God because He was breaking the Sabbath. They thought He deserved to die because of that. The truth was, Jesus didn't break God's Sabbath. He broke their Sabbath. The Jews had made up extra rules, and Jesus was not okay with that. 2) They thought Jesus was a blasphemous man. They thought Jesus was a mere man claiming to be God. They thought He deserved to die because of that. The truth was, Jesus is no mere man. He is God.

The Jews made a wrong assumption about Jesus. And the result was tragedy. Is Jesus less than God even though He claimed equality with God? Or is He actually God? The way you answer that question matters. If you say that He is not equal with God, that puts you in the same category as those who killed Him.

Jesus, the God-man, offers complete healing. He offered Himself as the substitute to take the wrath of God that we deserve. He offers eternal life for those who would trust in Him. He offers abundant life for those who have trusted Him. He is God who offers to make all of us well, and yet, for many, He slips right by and they miss Him and His offer. Don't let Jesus slip by you.

Three thoughts of application:

- 1) Following a set of rules won't get you to heaven, faith in Jesus will (Galatians 3:21-22).
- 2) Sin will rob you of an abundant life (John 10:10; 1 John 1:6).
- 3) Study to know the truth of Jesus. A wrong conclusion is a tragic conclusion. (John 8:24).