

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

Jesus asked the disciples of John, “Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them?” (Matt 9:15). I praise you today for your Son, the bridegroom of the church! He loved me and gave himself up for me, that he might sanctify me, having cleansed me by the washing of the word, so that he might present me to himself in splendor, without spot or blemish (Eph 5:25–27). Praise the Lord!

Today in Your Word

Today you told me about Jesus’ third sign, the healing of a sick man at the pool of Bethesda. The man’s sickness was the result of his sin, for Jesus later told him, “Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you” (John 5:14). This teaches me that one of the ways you discipline me for sin is with sickness and physical infirmity. I need to take sin as seriously as you do; otherwise I may end up like the man at the pool. What encourages me about the story is that Jesus healed the man in spite of his sin. This shows me that you are merciful and compassionate, not willing that any should perish. Jesus also dealt with the man’s sin (“Sin no more...”), the root cause of his sickness. This teaches me that you never leave me in my sin. You forgive and restore, and then you enable me to live a holy life. I should take Jesus’ words to heart and do my best through your grace to “sin no more” each day! I was fascinated by Jesus’ response to the Pharisees’ accusation that his disciples were breaking the Sabbath by plucking grain (they considered this to be ‘reaping’). Jesus began by giving an example of how David violated the law and yet was blameless. This showed that the law could be superseded by something greater which took precedence. In David’s case, it was a matter of life and death, for he and his men needed their strength to escape from Saul (cf. 1 Sam 21). Jesus then gave an example of how the priests violated the Sabbath and yet were blameless. Again, the law was superseded by something greater which took precedence. In the priests’ case, it was a matter of duty, for they were required to offer daily sacrifices in service of the temple (cf. Num 28:9–10). If temple service took precedence over Sabbath law, then service to Jesus took even greater precedence, for “something greater than the temple is here” (Matt 12:6). Moreover, if the priests who served the temple were innocent, how much more the disciples who served the one greater than the temple. Jesus wanted the Pharisees to understand that the law was made for man, not man for the law, and there were times when the law rightly stepped aside to make room for something greater. In the disciples’ case, it was a matter of hunger, for they were busy in the service of the Messiah, the Lord of both the law and the Sabbath.

Reflection

Jesus said, “the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise” (John 5:19). Is this the testimony of my life?

Request

Father, help me to say with Jesus, “I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me” (John 5:30).

Thanksgiving

Thank you for bearing witness that Jesus is your Son, the only begotten of the Father. I gladly receive him as my Lord and Savior, and I testify to others that he is the Son of God (cf. John 5:31–37).

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[From Death to Life](#)” – Ulysses Phillips.

Meditation Verse: John 5:24.