

DELIGHTED WITH JESUS

Luke 13:10-17 Text vs. 17 *"The people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing."* Our lesson this morning has Jesus teaching in a synagogue in Galilee, a building where Jews met to worship. As He was teaching, He noticed a woman whose body was quite bent over. Luke tells us she had been like that for 18 years! Jesus called her over to Him, put His hands on her and said, *"Woman, you are free from your infirmity."* Immediately, she straightened up and began praising the Lord! When the leader of the synagogue saw that, he became angry. He began to criticize the people saying, *"There are six days for work. So, come and be healed on those days. Not on the Sabbath!"* He said that *"because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath."*, and because the seventh day was set aside by God for Israel to rest. Not for work! Work was prohibited on the Sabbath. That religious leader was more interested in religious form, than he was in a hurting person. And Jesus said to all the religious leaders who were there, *"You hypocrites! Don't each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox, or donkey from the stall, and lead it out to give it water? Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?"* (Luke 13: 14-17) He was speaking about how God felt concerning sickness. He was showing God's desire for healing. He had spoken a command of faith. Laid His hands on her. And she was healed! On the Sabbath! Immediately, she gave God her praise! . . . Now, how many of you have friends who for years have carried a burden so heavy it was, as if it had bent them over. This woman's burden had her physically bent over. She could be like you, or someone you know. Or have known. Every day someone struggles with a burden! And instead of things getting better, things get worse! When Jesus performed miracles, it wasn't to excite, or thrill people. He sincerely cared about people! His miracles were always to bring glory to God, regardless of what day of the week it was! He wanted to meet the needs of people, every day. He wanted them to have a touch of Heaven, every day. And His miracles always brought people face-to-face with God, every day! And He made three important statements about this woman: First, she was a *"daughter of Abraham."* She was of the *"seed"* of Abraham, by which she had a covenant with God. A covenant that provided for her healing. And that's true today! God provides healing for those who believe in, and who follow Him. The God of Creation is the same God who said, *"If you listen carefully to the LORD your God, and do what is right in His eyes, if you pay attention to His commands, and keep all His decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you."* (Exodus 15:26) Listen! God has not changed! He will never change! His Word will never change! He is eternal. His Word is eternal. And His healing power is eternal. When Jesus said that woman was *"Satan bound"* He meant her ailment was not caused by God. It was caused by Satan! God didn't send an infirmity upon her to try and make her more holy, or to teach her something. The Bible calls it a *"spirit of infirmity"*. Jesus referred to it as a *"bondage."* Being a slave. Like when you're restrained, or tied up by something. And in Luke 9:56, Jesus said, *"For the Son of man did not come to destroy your lives, but to save them."* To free you from the bondage of sin! Jesus said she *"ought to be loosed"*. She should be free from her bondage. She ought to be healed. Even on the Sabbath Day! It was more important for this woman to be free from her infirmity, than it was for her to be bound to the religious ideas of what one could, or could not do on a holy day. And a lot of people allow religious tradition to do just that! Make them blind to God's mercy and grace. They allow Satan to rob them of God's power in their lives. God was working to bring healing, and wholeness, and salvation to that woman. And on that Sabbath day, Jesus healed her! Jesus did not heal on the Sabbath because the rabbis had turned the day God had ordained to be a day of rest into a day of incredible burden. Jesus healed on the Sabbath even though those who demanded certain behavior of others failed to live by it themselves. He despised insincerity at its very core! A man with a withered hand was healed on the Sabbath. Jesus made Peter's mother-in-law's fever go away on the Sabbath. The principle was clear. God keeps His creation going, even on the Sabbath! God's care doesn't take a day off! And since Jesus shared the divine character of God, He was permitted to heal on the Sabbath. Luke 6:8-11 tells how Jesus clashed with the religious leaders over many things: religious traditions, His eating with sinners, spiritual authority, and much more. But here, on this Sabbath day, those religious leaders analyzed Jesus' actions very carefully. The *Ten Commandments* prohibited work on the Sabbath. It was a holy day. It was to be set apart. (Exodus 20:8 – 11) And what amounted to "work" to them? In the years after the Temple was rebuilt following the Exile, (515 BC – AD 70) scribes and rabbis studied and interpreted every detail of Scripture. They wanted to determine, what kinds of work could be allowed on the Sabbath and still be within the Law? Scholars debated what was a *"burden"*? According to the Law, no burdens were to be carried on that day. Even sowing seeds, plowing, reaping, bundling sheaves, threshing, sifting, kneading, baking, cooking. There were thirty-nine categories of Sabbath work! Breaking the Sabbath was a serious matter! In Exodus 31:14-15, God's law demanded *death* for those who ignored it! But their interpretation of the Law emphasized *external* obedience to the Law, rather than having an *attitude of devotion* before God. You had to obey their interpretation of the Law, instead of expressing your love for God. They didn't want anyone breaking the Law by mistake. The rabbis and scribes were so strict they accused Jesus' disciples of breaking the Sabbath just because they picked some grain and ate it as they walked through a field on the Sabbath. (Luke 6:1 – 2) And they interpreted Jesus' healings on the Sabbath as "work". Therefore, it was prohibited! His response to them was, *"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the*

Sabbath. The Son of Man is Lord, even of the Sabbath". That enraged the religious teachers. It exposed their hypocrisy. (Mark 2:24-28) God had given the Law to inspire the Jews to love Him, and to love others. (Mark 12:30 – 31) God never banned doing good on the Sabbath. Yet, the Pharisees acted as if God had created people just so He would have someone to keep the Sabbath. Jesus made it very clear. God gave the Sabbath as a gift to the people He had created! (Mark 2:27) For the Pharisees, the *Ten Commandments* gave restrictions punishable by death! For Jesus, the *Ten Commandments* provided freedom that led to life. He said He didn't come to destroy the Law. But to fill it up. So, what does all this mean? It means, God cares about people. He cares about you! He's still in the "*healing business*." By His grace and power, He still ministers to those who suffer from the cruelties of the devil. He loves people. His love and care and healing and deliverance is for all. His power is given where people trust Him and have faith in His Word of promise. A woman had been bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors. She had spent all the money she had, yet, instead of getting better, she grew worse. She reached out and touched the hem of Jesus' garment as He was walking by her. She touched Him physically, with her hand. But she touched Him spiritually, with her faith "*and He said unto her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you whole; go in peace and be healed of your disease.'*" (Mark 5: 25-34) See, if you trust God for a physical need in your body, then read Mark 9:23 where "*Jesus said, 'Everything is possible for one who believes.'*" Do you believe that? There's a 2015 Christian film named *Do You Believe?* It's about a pastor who became so shaken by the visible faith of a street corner preacher he was reminded that true belief always requires action. It started a journey for him. You see, true belief touches in ways only God can arrange. And that's the way it should be with your life. *If you are touching lives, then you are in touch with God!* No matter what day of the week it is, every journey in life is unique. No two are alike! And when you're in touch with God, and you discover His power is within you, nothing's going to keep you from offering the best you have to this world! There's a song I remember singing as a young boy growing up in church. I've never forgotten it. And I've tried to live it. "*Give of your best to the Master, Give Him first place in your heart; Give Him first place in your service; Consecrate every part. Give, and to you will be given; God His beloved Son gave; Gratefully seeking to serve Him, Give Him the best that you have.*" You have a whole week every day of your life to serve Jesus. Fifty-two weeks a year. What are you doing with them? Maybe it's time for you to be like that pastor who became so shaken by the visible faith of a street corner preacher he was reminded that true belief always requires action. So, why don't you let go, and let God have His way in your life. Regardless of what day of the week it is! AMEN