

IT'S NO PROBLEM IF IT'S GODS PROBLEM
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Why are we often so reluctant to turn to God for the help that deep down, we know only he can give to us? There is an incident related in scripture from the life of Christ rich in instruction to those who need a Savior. Let us look closely at this portion of the Word of God, the source of Truth itself.

Lu 13:10-13 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

There are a number of things worth considering here. The first is the woman had a need and everyone else knew it. Her problem was highly visible. Most of ours are not, because we keep them hidden behind masks. Yet, this woman did not let her problem alienate her from her God. She came to the synagogue. Crippled by her problems, she still came to glorify and worship God.

When Jesus saw her, He called to her. There were undoubtedly many in the crowd with needs, but she was the one to whom Jesus spoke. What captured his attention? When we are longer as we were created, do our infirmities and problems disturb our Creator? Did He notice her because her very presence there was a sacrifice compared to those who came with ease? Did He speak to her because He knew she had reached the point in her despair where she would respond to His call?

The woman herself also knew she had a problem. She could not even lift herself. Her problem was beyond her ability to solve on her own. What has us in need of strength? What has us unhealthy, sick, and struggling mentally, physically, or spiritually? It doesn't really matter what the problem is, but it does matter to whom we turn for help when we find ourselves in trouble.

She also still had a choice. She had the option to come to God or refuse when Jesus called to her. What changes would have occurred in her life had she just refused to come to Him? There would probably have been none. We have no idea if or how many times had she seen Jesus before this. Nor do we know what made the difference this time, if there were previous occasions. We only know when He told her to come, she obeyed.

Some call on God and He responds to the need. God calls on others and they respond to Him. Examples include Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David and Paul. Either way, the goal is to come into close proximity to God. It is only in the presence of God that His healing touch will affect us. When we have no strength within ourselves, it is time to admit our weakness, at least, if we want change. Salvation cannot be found in the self help section.

When God moved on her problem, when He touched her, immediately she was made straight. When God touched her, she was restored to God's original design for her. She was "loosed" from her infirmities. She had been held captive; her freedom had been limited by the problem in her life, her potential had been thwarted. We all need to be loosed from problems preventing us from being what God designed us to be.

Lucky for us, a primary reasons God came to Earth was to "set the captive free." In the fourth chapter of Luke, we read Jesus came to preach deliverance to the captive and set at liberty, those who are bruised. What an accurate description of most of us.

How does God set captives free? In John 18:40, we read about Barabbas, a man who had been sentenced to be crucified at the same time Jesus was being tried. There was a custom at the time of the Passover, that the governor could pardon one convicted criminal. He asked the crowd if they wanted him to pardon Jesus, thinking they would ask to have this famous teacher and miracle worker released. Instead they asked for Barabbas to be released and Jesus to be crucified. This criminal, scheduled to pay for his past, was loosed, or set free, because a replacement was found in Jesus Christ. In Barabbas' case, Jesus loosed the captive by taking his place.

In our case, Jesus looses us from the consequences of our mistakes by taking our place. The scriptures tell us the wages of sin is death. They tell us all have sinned, except for One who was tempted in all things as we are, yet sinned not. The Word tells us it is appointed unto every man to die. But only one could die and pay for sin that was not his own, because all the rest of us pay for our own sin. So the Lamb of God came to be crucified to atone for our guilt. He paid for our sins by taking our place and dying in our stead. He made it possible, if we will accept the blood shed for the remission of our sin, for us to be loosed. We can be set free to glorify God for the gift we have been given, for the problems we have left behind, and for the restoration of God's design for our life.

When that happens, be sure to be thankful. That is the last thing we glean from this incident. The woman glorified God afterward. She was not foolish enough to steal credit from God. When we call on God, and He supernaturally changes our life, contrary to Mr. Sinatra, we did not do it our way. We did it God's way. That makes it a good time to glorify our Savior.