

The Power of Grace Part 2

You Are Never Forgotten | Jordan Biel | 04.11.2021

What do I want them to know? Jesus'

What do I want them to feel? Repentant for their sin. Thankful for Jesus.

What do I want them to do? Submit their lives to Jesus and trust HIM for resurrection power over death.

I want to begin where we left off last week. We said that since Jesus tore the veil in two - removing the separation from us, sinful man and HOLY God, we can now have friendship with God!

[Heb 7:19 says that because Jesus tore the veil, uniting man with God “A better hope is introduced through which we draw near to God. You can have friendship with God! That is The power of grace!](#)

That's God's power on display! That's God's grace on display! That's the *power* of grace!

Today and the next 3 weeks, we're going to take a look at some moments when Jesus was incredibly kind and gracious. In these stories of Jesus engaging with people we'll find ourselves.

Today's Big Take-away” **The power of grace is that you are never forgotten.**

SCENE SET UP

Jesus was 30 years old and had just been in the desert for 40 days being tempted and tested by the devil. He overcame every test with the help of Father God and he exited the desert then entered the temple. Once He was there, He went up to the podium and read the prophecy from Isaiah “The spirit of the lord is upon me; He has anointed me to release those in bondage and set the captive free...”

He then said “today, this prophecy is fulfilled in your hearing!”

In this powerful moment, some wanted to kill him. Others were confused.

Others celebrated as they sensed the presence of God powerfully in the room.

They tried to kill Him but He escaped.

Then He began His ministry. Right away we read about the healings.

If you got my Email Newsletter this month, in it I shared about the power of Jesus being baptized by His cousin John and the demonstration that God put on in that moment.

The Holy Spirit came down in the form of a dove and it was a picture of the Holy Spirit coming down UPON us.

Check out that email to dive deeper on that topic.

So Jesus is baptized, He enters ministry after this declaration in the Temple making quite a hint that He is the Messiah. Turn to Luke 4.

LK 4:38-41 And He arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. ³⁹ And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.

⁴⁰ Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. ⁴¹ And demons also came out of many, crying, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

It says "He healed laid his hands on every one of them and healed them!" Church, there were people being brought to him on stretchers, some of them carried. Some of them blind. Some of them mute. Some of them deaf. Some of them with lacerations. JESUS healed them ALL!

JESUS still heals and I want you to know that!
It doesn't matter what you're facing JESUS can handle it.
Your problem isn't too big for Jesus!

Did you notice in that last verse... Demons know who Jesus is.
It's not enough to know who Jesus is. The goal isn't to know that Jesus IS the Son of God. The Goal is to know and love Jesus.

The power of grace is that Jesus will engage the demon possessed, totally out of control person. He sees them just like He sees you and me - totally loved by the Father, a child of God.

Jesus often would see these people whom the town would describe as "out of their mind" and He'd simply look at the them with those powerful healing eyes, and they'd be healed!

Instantly the mental torment and fear - paranoia and mental torture is GONE!

I've seen this first hand! There have been 3 times here at Rock of Grace and about twice in people's homes where I've seen people set free from demonic possession or oppression. It's amazing. To see someone set FREE and back in their right mind - thankful to Jesus for His power to heal - it's astounding!

Later that day the Bible tells us that Jesus recruited Peter and John and some disciples.

He began going town to town preaching about the Kingdom of God. Let's pick up at LK 5:12

LK 5:12-16 While Jesus was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." ¹³ And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him.

¹⁴ And he charged him to tell no one, but "go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as Moses commanded, for a proof to them." ¹⁵ But now even more the report about him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear him and to be healed of their infirmities. ¹⁶ But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray.

What you need to understand is that lepers were NOT to be touched. In that culture and time period, leprosy was often a cause of death. It was contagious and if you touched someone with leprosy ...

There was even a law that required someone who had leprosy to shout UNCLEAN as they entered the marketplace! Can you imagine the humiliation? They had to shout "unclean!" To let everyone know that they were contagious because it wasn't like 99% of them would recover just fine if you got leprosy. No.

If you got leprosy, your nerves die off - first with your fingers and toes - then gangrene sets in - then your hand and feet simple dies requires being amputated and if left alone, would even fall off the body.

But JESUS does not STOP at the sight of sickness!

JESUS touches the leper. Jesus can handle your problem!

Did you hear me say that Jesus *touches* the leper!

You may not like that. (Pause)

Probably because you don't see yourself as a leper. If you're a leper, that's good news *to you*.

If you don't see yourself as a leperous sinner that Jesus healed and forgave you will have a hard time with this idea of Jesus touches contagious people. JESUS has the power over sickness and disease.

Again you won't like that idea of Jesus touching a leper if you don't see yourself as a leper. The LEPER is GLAD that JESUS will touch and heal him.

WE ARE THE LEPER THAT JESUS HAS HEALED

We are just like that leper.

Our sin had made us unable to sense the destruction that was taking place. We didn't even realize that we were being desensitized to the problem.

You see so many people don't have an accurate understanding of God. They don't realize how holy, how perfect, how righteous He is. Therefore they don't see their own sin and shortcoming of that perfection. That's why we spent about 15 min there last week discussing the tabernacle and how it shows us our need to be purified before we enter the holy presence of God.

What's remarkable though about God's grace is that He has made His holy presence available to us - all of us - sinful, broken, mankind. The power of grace is that you are not forgotten!

He touches the leper who is SICK and contagious! Jesus isn't too busy for you.

Jesus isn't worried about His convenience being disturbed. He wants to ensure they know and feel God's love!

The power of grace is that YOU are never forgotten.

We as His followers, can take on this same approach and be more open to "touching the leper" and meeting people right where they're at.

Does anyone remember when we talked about the tabernacle of Moses last week? I put pictures on the screen of the tabernacle where God would manifest His power and presence.

One of the things we talk about often here at Rock of Grace is this powerful idea that we, us humans, are now the temple of God!
We are the tabernacle where God meets man.

God's presence is in YOU and is available to every broken, hurting person that comes across your path! The power of grace is that God turns your life into a tabernacle - a meeting place for God to meet man and reconcile!

If I could put this in a question form to make it a bit more applicable ...

Who is it that you are reaching out to? Who is hurting that you are befriending - touching - having a meal with?"

Maybe someone you work with is in facing a difficulty right now. Maybe they need a healing in their body. Do you know about it?

Maybe they're really worried about something. Do you know about it? Jesus knows about it. He wants to show the power of His grace through you.

What if God put YOU in their life for this moment? What if you can serve like a priest and introduce them to God. The Bible says that we now are kings and priests and that we help others find access to God by helping them find Jesus and find salvation in Him.

Danielle told me again about a patient at the Hospital she's been able to pray for and speak encouraging words to. He was giving her quite a hard time and Danielle just spoke some truth and love to him and gave him a picture of a different future saying something to the effect of "Your life can be different. You can be the change." I believe God put that young man in that hospital - to be Danielle's patient maybe JUST for that moment.

Who's in front of you? If you're SO thankful that YOU were a leper that was healed, then you will see them as a person that JESUS can heal!

OR is Sunday's just a church thing. OR is JESUS at the center of your life!? Is He REALLY the Healer! Do you REALLY believe He is who He says He is.

Turn to Mark 5:21

Here, we find a story that has become very meaningful to me and Danielle. It's the story of the woman with the issue of blood

Mark 5:21-34 - The Desperate Woman

²¹ And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea. ²² Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet ²³ and implored him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live." ²⁴ And he went with him.

And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. ²⁵ And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, ²⁶ and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. ²⁷ She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment.

²⁸ For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well." ²⁹ And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. ³⁰ And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?"

³¹ And his disciples said to him, “You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, ‘Who touched me?’ ” ³² And he looked around to see who had done it. ³³ But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. ³⁴ And he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.”

The power of grace is that YOU are never forgotten.

This woman was not forgotten.

Jesus was on His way to heal Jairus’ daughter.

Jesus had not forgotten about Jairus daughter and He hasn’t forgotten you either.

He’s on His way there to heal her and He get’s interrupted by a desperate woman

(PICTURE UP - if Sam drew it in time, use her picture)

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I love that Jesus calls her “Daughter”

Do you think that’s on accident? No. Jesus calls her daughter because maybe her family had likely rejected her associating her sickness with her sin - as many did in that day.

Jesus calls her Daughter.

God calls you “Daughter” “Son”

God’s love for you is so much greater than you could ever understand. He sees you for who you really are - His child. He sees your true identity, not only the pain or problems that you feel define you.

Your background, no matter how dark or shameful it is, is no match for Jesus.

Don’t let your past define you!

Don’t let your pain define you!

Don’t let your fear, that you will always be the way you are now, define you!

JESUS has not forgotten you. JESUS can heal you today - body, mind & soul!

The power of grace is that you are not forgotten.

God makes His holy presence available not just in you but through you.

Remember what we said about 10 minutes ago - that YOU are a tabernacle - a place where people can meet God.

That’s the power of grace! He enables YOU to be His vessel, His carrier of love to other people.

You are the temple! You are the place where people can meet God!

1 Corinthians 3:16 (ESV): Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?

Jars of Clay Passage

2 Cor 4:4-7

“...the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. ⁷ But we have this treasure (God's glory) in jars of clay(our bodies), to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

We have the power to heal people. We have the power to see their mind set free from torment. We have JESUS. DO you believe that? Do YOU have Jesus?

STORY OF THE BRONZE SNAKE IN OT HERE

FIRST COVENANT PICTURES OF GRACE

Remember, the tabernacle was a design for HOW to worship a King. Why would Acacia Wood be used?

It doesn't easily rot. Symbol: Purity and resistance to decay. Resurrection / Immortality

Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole in the middle of the Israelite camp (Num. 21). God had told Moses to do this so the Israelites bitten by serpents could express their faith by looking at it and be healed. The need for the serpent came in one of the times that Israel murmured against God and Moses. The people were in the wilderness after their refusal to obey God by entering the land of Canaan. Although God had provided food and water for them after their disobedience, they complained because of the monotony of the manna provided. As punishment for the people, God sent serpents among them. The serpents' bites were deadly, but God relented and chose to provide a way for rescue if those bitten would accept it. Anyone who looked on the bronze serpent set in the middle of the camp would be healed.

Bronze is a symbol of judgement

Medical Symbols up on the slides from different hospitals / healthcare companies ...

Read about this in Numbers 21

The snakes brought judgment and pain.

The bronze serpent that Moses put on the pole directed by God was a symbol of what would take place when Jesus would take upon Himself the curse of sin. Bronze always symbolizes judgment. The Serpent represents the curse of evil. Jesus because the bronze serpent - the curse of sin and judgment FOR US! JN 3:14-15 is a symbol of himself - He'd be lifted up on a cross to bear the judgment for our sins.

JN 1:29 tells us that Jesus takes away the sins of the world.

The bronze serpent on the pole represents Jesus taking the curse of sin and the punishment for it.

JESUS offered the sacrifice of Himself so we could be healed, not just eternally by here and NOW. We MUST look to the cross and realize that Jesus' sacrifice gave us not only access to God's holy presence and friendship, but also healing for our heart and mind.

We must be willing to share the power of grace with others!
We, the church of Jesus Christ, have got to let this sink in.
I'm afraid the American church knows the Gospel in theory but not in reality. We've forgotten that Jesus has healed us from the curse of sin and we need a powerful reminder of that today so that we are motivated to tell others. We won't tell others if we don't realize the gravity of our sin, the curse we were under.

Charles Edwards put it this way

"All your righteousness would have no influence to uphold you and keep you out of hell... any more than a spinners web would have to stop a falling rock!"

Your good deeds. My good deeds are that spider web. Your sin. My sin ... is like a rock. We are in need of help. IF you have found that help and looked to Jesus to forgive you of sin than I am so thankful!

If you are thankful and you actually understand that your sin was like snake venom in your blood, a curse causing you to die - and yet NOW you are healed of that, then you'll be SO THANKFUL and SO THANKFUL that you'll tell others.

Paul said in Hebrews

"I urge you brothers and sisters in **view** of God's mercy, to offer yourselves as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. This is your true and proper worship."

We view His mercy when we look upon Jesus on the cross.

Our worship is submission to God - submitted to His Word - to His ways ...

Worship without submission to God isn't worship at all. We worship Him with

our lives by remembering that HE became the bronze serpent not just for us but so that ALL could be forgiven and healed.

NO ONE is forgotten to the LORD.

NO ONE should be forgotten to us.

He sent His Son to win our hearts and save us AND others - to bring us back to HIS family for reunification with Him.

You have the power to tell another person who's been bit by the snake to look upon JESUS / look upon the bronze serpent on a pole / look upon the one who took all our punishment and find HEALING!

YOU are the leper who's been healed by the Messiah!

YOU have the opportunity to tell the other lepers about the One who healed you!

YOU have the joy of being HEALED by Jesus.

YOU and I were bite by the snake. We were infected with sin.

That sin was like venom in our blood.

That sin - that selfish nature - that self-gratifying, pride-filled, me-first attitude, sinful nature was ruining us from the inside out!

THEN, we were told by a friend or a pastor - to look upon JESUS - the one on the cross who took our sin. The one who became the bronze serpent. Hebrews says He who knew no sin became sin ..." Why? So that we could be HEALED!

This is so powerful but it doesn't end there.

This healing is not just for you. It's not just for me.

It's for others too.

There are hurting children who need to look upon Jesus and find healing. You can teach them to look upon Jesus and find healing in their heart and mind!

There are kids who have had their parents taken away from them and they don't know why. They blame themselves. They wonder what they did wrong. They go through the list in their mind of all the times they were "bad" and wonder "What did I do to have to be taken away from my parents...?"

"Nobody wants me. Nobody loves me. ..."

And the trauma they have in them - the hurt - is so deep and they'll carry that well into their adult lives - many of them - their WHOLE lives UNLESS you and me rise up - UNLESS the church of Jesus Christ says "Hey let me call you "son"

Let me call you "Daughter"

Let me call you LOVED!

Foster care and Adoption is one of the most clear ways that you and I can show the power of grace. Parents across Trumbull County are being enticed by satan into drug addiction or simply selfish behavior - so much so that ..

Kids who are then taken away from their parents for their safety are given to ... the government? They can't stay there. They can't grow up there without a mom and dad!

NOAS Northeast Ohio Adoption Services and Trumbull County Childrens Services are two great organizations that are training people how to foster - to care for these kids ages newborn up into their teenage years - to care for them - to love them - to give them a safe place to call home.

Do you remember what Jesus said?

“When I was a stranger you took me in. When I was hungry, you fed me. When I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink. Whatever you’ve done to the least of these, you’ve done to Me.”

I want to title a sermon one day “Where Is Jesus?”

Jesus is IN the little girl and the little boy that needs a home. That’s where Jesus is. You want to worship Jesus? You want to be with Jesus? Serve the least of these - become a mentor mom or dad - join the FAM team FosterCare Advocacy Ministry team. Consider even becoming a foster parent. God will teach you SO much about His heart for people.

JESUS has not forgotten any of these kids in the Trumbul County Childrens Services.

Jesus knows their name.

Jesus knows the name and fears the pains and the regrets of every one of your co-workers and staff. JESUS wants to show the power of His grace through you!

Jesus took the punishment of our sin on the cross by bearing the curse of sin; He took all the venom of the snake - He took ALL the sin of mankind and He crucified - nailing it to the cross that day. When He rose on the third day, He proved his power over the serpent! He proved His power over the venom of sin.

God takes the punishment for our failures. That’s the power of grace! He restores us.

Jesus wants more people healed of their emotional wounds, their shame, their feelings of rejection and hurt, pain and unforgiveness - it's like a venom in them that affects their entire life. YOU have Jesus, the answer!

YOU have the antidote! YOU have JESUS!

We need to rethink who we are as a church and what we are doing.

Honestly I think the pandemic did that for some. They let God use it to question their life actions - what am I doing? What am I doing for God? What is church? Yet for some a full year has passed since we closed down services last March. We were given even more reasons not to talk to people. But what about people's need for Jesus?!?! Can we ignore that anymore? Watch this video and then we'll close in prayer

Worship Team Comes Up as Video Plays

VIDEO: The Church Defined

Maybe we need to rethink HOW we view church?

Maybe we need to re-read the Gospels and notice how Jesus would engage people and bring GOD to them.

What if YOU are the church? **What if instead of you inviting someone to church, God was inviting someone to you... because YOU are the church.** YOU are where people can meet God. YOU are a city on a hill Jesus said. YOU are a light in the darkness Jesus said. YOU have JESUS within you and YOU have a testimony. YOU have the presence of God living with you.

Jesus brought "church" to people wherever they were.

We find Jesus making friends with ANYONE, even known thieves!
In the midst of Jesus beginning His ministry and recruiting a team - the group we call "the disciples" He chooses someone that we would likely not choose.
Turn to Luke 5:27

²⁷ After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, "Follow me." ²⁸ And leaving everything, he rose and followed him.

²⁹ And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. ³⁰ And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" ³¹ And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a

physician, but those who are sick. ³² I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” ESV

CHURCH ISN'T A BUILDING. IT'S A PEOPLE. IT'S YOU & ME.

And we have got to hey back to the book of Acts where people would meet God by meeting you in the marketplace! We need to tell them that Jesus can heal them and that Jesus has healed us.

WE ARE THE LEPER WHO WAS HEALED BY JESUS. WHO ARE WE TELLING?

WE ARE THE ISRAELITE WHO WAS HEALED OF OUR SNAKE BITE BY LOOKING UP TO THE CROSS WITH FAITH TO BELIEVE JESUS COULD HEAL US. WHO ARE WE TELLING?

WE ARE THE DESPERATE WOMAN WHO COULD NOT BE HELPED BY ANY DOCTOR. WE SPENT ALL OUR MONEY AND YET NOTHING WORKED ... UNTIL WE MET JESUS! WHO ARE WE TELLING!?

Live Worship: The Stand

THE POWER OF GRACE PART 3

HOOK: The power of grace is that God is able to heal our hearts and our bodies.

Last week we said over and over is that the power of grace is that you are never forgotten. The woman with the 12 year issue of blood was not forgotten. The leper begging for food and affirmation was not forgotten. The demon-possessed man was not forgotten by Jesus. Simon Peter's mother was not forgotten. Jesus knows your name and knows your pain and He is here to bring healing!

Today we're going to look at a few more moments where Jesus brought the power of grace and we're only into chapter 5 of Luke! We'll also take 10 minutes of looking at the Old Covenant also and the pictures of grace like we have the last two weeks.

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

¹⁷ On one of those days, as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with him to heal. ¹⁸ And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus, ¹⁹ but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd,

they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus. ²⁰ And when he saw their faith, he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." ²¹ And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" ²² When Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answered them, "Why do you question in your hearts? ²³ Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'?

²⁴ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the man who was paralyzed—"I say to you, rise, pick up your bed and go home." ²⁵ And immediately he rose up before them and picked up what he had been lying on and went home, glorifying God. ²⁶ And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."

[The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Lk 5:17–26). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

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OLD TESTAMENT PICTURE OF GOD’S desire / ability to heal heart and body ..

Tabernacle ...

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HOOK: The power of grace is that God is able to heal our hearts and our bodies.

Religion is NOT Jesus. Don’t confuse the two.

Yes, we can by definition say that being a Christian is being “religious” but by all definitions of Jesus, He was far from religious.

The religion at the time of Jesus required one to ignore the lost and hurting on their way to fulfilling their duty.

Religion meant committing oneself to God and earning your stripes through daily and weekly rituals thereby achieving your righteousness through good works.

Jesus invites us into a friendship with God by simply admitting our sin and asking HIM for healing and restoration.

A Man with a Withered Hand

⁶ On another Sabbath, he entered the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was withered. ⁷ And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him, to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath, so that they might find a reason to accuse him. ⁸ But he knew their thoughts, and he said to the man with the withered hand, “Come and stand here.”

And he rose and stood there. ⁹ And Jesus said to them, “I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?” ¹⁰ And after looking around at them all he said to him, “Stretch out your hand.” And he did so, and his hand was restored. ¹¹ But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.” ESV

The church leaders were MAD that this guy was healed!

Religion will blind you to the blind. On your way to obeying the letter of “the law” you can miss the law of love - what Jesus called “the most important law of all.”

I remember last August when a young man was insisting I enforce masks and “be a better leader” He repeated “This IS the law. You can’t ignore it.” I responded to him as I had many times before “The president who is over the governor has made it clear that masks are not mandated and it’s up to the

citizen to decide - even the governor of Ohio had used that same verbiage. I reminded him that if I start adding requirements to entering this building that aren't proven scientifically to stop all disease including covid, that I would be inhibiting people from coming to Jesus. Jesus would TOUCH the leper."

He emphatically repeated "You're disobeying the law and leading everyone in this church into sin!"

That's when I asked him "Who is your neighbor?"

He said "what?"

I said "Who lives in the house next to yours? What is their name and what is their biggest concern right now?"

He had no answer. Just silence

I then asked "What is the name of a waitress or waiter at a restaurant in champion where you live - someone you've prayed with while they were at your table?"

Again. More silence.

I asked "Who is the last person you prayed with anywhere outside of this church building - the gym, the grocery store, your neighbor ...?"

Again ... nothing.

I told him "Here's your problem. You are so concerned about "the law" and yet you've missed the most important law in the entire Bible. Jesus said... "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR.' You don't even know your neighbor. In your effort to "obey the law" you're making it difficult for people to come to God. That's the same problem the Pharisees had."

This is when I think it finally sunk in to this young man - at least I'm hoping it did.

That was one of many conversations with this young man that for some reason he simply wasn't open to learning.

You see ... That's what the religious did - they made such a huge deal out of one little law they would completely ignore the hurting person who needed healed.

They would get their mind fixated on a law like "not eating wheat on the sabbath" "not doing any work on the sabbath"

The religious and contentious are always more concerned with looking more righteous than others. The truly righteous are always more concerned with showing compassion.

Think of Jesus' parable of the good Samaritan. He made it clear in that story that (DON'T ASSUME they know the story, Jordan)

Look at my Religion Vs Jesus notes I made for that devo last summer

Fire or Hay
1 Cor 3:8-15

What do we really believe? Do you believe in Jesus power over the laws of nature?

Why do the miracles of Jesus always relieve suffering? Because these miracles point us to the future where Jesus has created a place where we will be where there is no suffering! No pain. No poverty. No injustice.
Miracles point us to the future

Suffering and sickness is hated by God just as much as we hate it.

I love how Tim Keller put it ...

Jesus healings are the only natural things in a world that is unnatural. Politics and demonized and falling apart.
The miracles show you that God is an enemy of suffering. He alleviates it!

Peter's sermon in Acts 2
Peter's sermon is about the miracle
2:21 Jesus must remain in heaven before he comes back to restore everything
Why does Peter say this?
Miracles gives us hope for the future!

Isaiah 35
The lame will leap for joy!

If you believe in God it's totally illogical not to believe in miracles

Story of real suffering. Knowledge that hope of Heaven.

Miracles ...

Today's passage is one of the richest on the topic of work in all of Scripture. We could spend weeks unpacking these eight verses, but this morning, I just want to focus our attention on three things.

First, "the quality of each person's work" will one day be tested by God. Work matters greatly to God as it is a means of glorifying him and serving others. Thus, we ought to strive to do our work exceptionally well and in accordance with his commands.

Second, this passage makes clear that there are varying rewards tied to how we work in this life. Verse 8 says this plainly: "each be rewarded according to their own labor." Which work will be rewarded? The work that "survives" the "fire" of God's judgment.

Paul lists six building materials in this passage: three that would survive a "fire" (gold, silver, and costly stones) and three that would not (wood, hay, and straw). The question then becomes, what sort of work is considered "gold, silver, [and] costly stones?" The quality work we do in accordance with the commands of our "foundation...which is Jesus Christ." In the words of New Testament scholar N.T. Wright, "What we do in Christ and by the Spirit in the present is not wasted."

But, while Paul makes clear that we will all receive varying rewards based on how we

