

## **The Twenty Seventh Sunday after Pentecost**

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. And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him (KJV)

The present Gospel verifies that Jesus is the healer of infirmities created by the bonds of Satan. Jesus healed the woman in the Gospel. Jesus freed the woman from eighteen years of being bent over caused by the influence of Satan.

Sin bounds every person to a certain degree. Some believers are bound more by Satan than others due to personal choices and behaviors. Everyone sins and the sin affects personal life physically, emotionally and spiritually.

The hunger in the soul yearns for the purity and health found in the life in Christ. Living in Christ yields the health and purity desired. Constant repentance leads to renewed purity and health for the heart, mind and soul

The body benefits when repentance occurs. The emotional and spiritual weight of sin are removed through repentance. The present Gospel makes clear that Satan has the power to affect personal health.

Believers enter the life in Christ at Holy Baptism. Health in Christ continues as the believer participates in the life of the Church and adheres to the ways of Jesus Christ in daily life.

When sin becomes a part of daily life, bodily health, the heart, mind and soul are affected and compromised. Repentance and the Holy Mysteries of the Church lead to improved health to the body, the heart, mind and soul.

Even when believers suffer from debilitating illnesses or injuries, the health of the body improves to a certain degree through repentance. Suffering from illness or injures are better understood when viewed through Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ underwent suffering on the Cross. The Lord's suffering led to the Resurrection and the joy arising from the Resurrection. Holy martyrs suffered for Christ. Christian martyrs' lives shine through the centuries.

Believers are not exempt from suffering. Examining personal suffering through Jesus Christ leads to a new understanding and newness in life. Drawing strength through Jesus Christ makes suffering more manageable.

Joy in suffering becomes possible when the believer is united with Christ and faces the suffering with Christ. Suffering brought Jesus Christ to the woman in the present Gospel. The woman glorified God when she was healed.

Healing the woman's suffering was a lasting lesson Jesus taught to all hearing the Gospel down through the centuries. When suffering occurs in personal life, wise believers turn to Jesus Christ for healing and understanding.

Joy is possible throughout the Christian life. The life in Jesus Christ provides context for personal health. Health of body, mind, heart and soul are connected with the life in Christ.

A person freely engaging in sin can expect consequences to the body, heart, mind and soul. Gluttony, abuse of drugs or alcohol, and living with abandon bring consequences.

Abusive and dishonest relationships take a toll on the body, heart, mind and soul. Greed eventually leads to downfalls and reckonings. Jesus Christ offers the way to health and wholeness in life's relationships.

The present Gospel intends for believers to recognize and appreciate the healing power of Jesus Christ. The pitfalls and power of Satan over a person are clear in the Gospel.

Believers freely choose whether to follow Jesus Christ. Each moment is an opportunity to invest in the life in Christ. Investing in the life in Jesus Christ is an investment in the Kingdom of God.

The Lord Jesus Christ said: "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."<sup>(Mt.6:20)</sup>

The Lord Jesus Christ is the way of healing and wholeness in life. God's Holy Church offers healing and health in Christ. The woman in the present Gospel learned directly of Jesus' healing powers.

The woman's healing is convincing evidence to follow the way of Jesus Christ. Repelling Satan in personal life requires repentance and the forgiveness of sins by Jesus Christ.

Repelling Satan and living in the way Jesus Christ is the important message for today. Health and wholeness come through Jesus Christ. Let us benefit from Christ's healing power and glorify God in repentance.

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The Twenty Seventh Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Great Martyr James the Persian. St. James, Bishop of Rostov. November 27/December 10, 2023. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania.

Father Rodney Torbic