



# ***The Westminster Pulpit***

Sermons Preached at Westminster Presbyterian Church  
3900 West End Avenue Nashville, Tennessee 37205-1899

## ***“Unhealthy Peace”*** **Sermon on Luke 13:10-17**

Donovan A. Drake

August 24, 2025  
Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

“Now! That’s the first word in our text this morning. And “Now” is the only time we really have. What was, is “so yesterday.” What will be, we will never know. One moment you’re off to work and the next you’re calling AAA for a jumpstart. None of this was on the agenda. But, “Now” we can do something about.

The “Now” of Luke 13:10 is contained in a day called the Sabbath.

A word first appearing in Genesis 2:2 “On the seventh day God- וַיָּשָׁבֶת, God rested. The definition of sabbath is “to rest.”

But the sabbath as a DAY, isn’t just a day of rest, where one sits around and twiddles the thumb, waiting for the moment when we can get on with it. No!

I want you to understand this: The Sabbath, well, you know how we have different time Zones? Eastern Time, Central Time, Mountain Time.... The sabbath is when we enter into God’s “cathedral” of time.

As God rested after a busy workweek, we too rest in God and the experience of the complete creation. The stunning beauty of past, present, and future all coming together at once.

You might get close to that feeling when you stand on the mountaintop and you can see it all – it’s amazing! When you hang your feet over the edge of the Grand Canyon, and you can see the past, present, and future. When you raise your eyes and see the stars in the sky for the very first time.

This week, I stood at the foot of the Grand Tetons and all I wanted was for my wife to be with me. Beth, be with me, because it was so much to take in and I knew I could not explain it. It is so majestic I wanted Beth by my side to be part of it. It's awesome. When you go out at night and there's a billion stars, past and present. The light is still coming from ages ago.

"When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established, who am I that you are mindful of me." (Psalm 8.)

We rest in the care of God.

"Now" is the first word of the text. Now is the time of our lives. How are you doing in your "now"? Are you anxious? Stressed? Are you putting your life into things that fall apart, pride and prejudice? Worried! Exhausted!

Now, we were made for the sabbath. Rest in the cathedral of time! The Providence of God. The eternal love that conquers all things, and there nothing will separate us from love. Nothing. Now.

*Luke 13:10-17*

<sup>10</sup> Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. <sup>11</sup>And just then, there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. <sup>12</sup>When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, 'Woman, you are set free from your ailment.' <sup>13</sup>When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. <sup>14</sup>But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, 'There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the sabbath day.' <sup>15</sup>But the Lord answered him and said, 'You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? <sup>16</sup>And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?' <sup>17</sup>When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing.

"Now, he was teaching..."

"Just then, there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years." Just then?

Do you suppose that she was a first-time visitor to the synagogue, and this was her lucky day? Jesus was the guest preacher. The two collided at church, she gets healed, and her life changed forever! Her lucky day!

Or I suppose it is equally possible that she had been there every sabbath day. It's just that in those days, in all the hierarchy of things, the power and presence of woman wasn't high on the agenda, and a woman who had an ailment for 18 years knocked her down further.

Made her fodder for poor theology. "Who sinned? This woman or her parents?"

Now! NOW! Jesus saw her! Welcome to the cathedral of time! Welcome to the Sabbath! "When I survey the work of thy fingers, who are you that you are mindful of

me?” That you see me! You see all of creation! We are poor keepers of the Sabbath. This is why we need sabbath: so that we can see God, and so we can see one another as created in the image of God. Now, see here! Open your eyes. In this very room, you have come in need of some rest. Rest from their worries. Hoping for a hope. Needing mercy and healing. It is an act of God that we see God. It is an act of God that we see one another, that we are mindful of those around us. That the heart and the hand reach out... NOW SEE HERE!

People have a gift for seeing other people. I remember Linda receiving her chemo treatment at Duke in a room with 20 others, all in chairs in a big circle, receiving treatments. She would visit with each and every one of them. She had charisma. She would brighten your day. A spirit. She could look at you and heal you with a smile, and you didn't know you were sick. She would go from person to person, and it was holy, entering into the cathedral of time. Who are you that you are mindful of me?

“NOW he was preaching on the SABBATH Just then there appeared... NOW SEE HERE! A woman... A man... a doorman.... Ken”

Ken was my Irish friend during my doctoral studies days. He had a gift. A spirit. A charisma. I'd be walking down a sidewalk in Chicago, talking to Ken, and then I'd realize I wasn't talking to Ken. I had lost Ken. Where's Ken? I'd turn around, and would see him talking to someone, a doorman. In Chicago. And then he embraced the doorman, and I could see the doorman just wiping away the tears from his eyes. Now, see here! See the creation. Participate in the cathedral of the holy. That's the Sabbath- the cathedral of God's creation and care!

Jesus saw her! The eyes of Jesus saw past the establishment. His eyes pierced through the theology of the day. Jesus saw a woman! A crippled woman. Luke writes that she had “a Spirit” that crippled her.

That just seems a little primitive, as if she were possessed. That just seems like dangerous theology. I've never said I've thought any of you were possessed. I've never said it. I've thought it! But I've never said it.

I know better. We know better. If that woman came into our midst and we saw her, we would say, “She has a bad disk, osteoporosis.” Not “some Spirit!”

When we think of a spirit in us, it is usually a wind that has been knocked out of us. The absence of spirit.

When you have trust in someone, and suddenly they can't be trusted. They have the problem. But you, you lost your spirit. Crippling! Can you ever trust again?

Disappointment. When life doesn't go as you planned, can you move on? No drive. No spirit.

When you get to an age when you retire and wonder, “Who am I now that I am old and my work is over?” No identity. Lacking spirit. Worried about being unseen!

Jesus saw her! Jesus healed her!

And the leader of the synagogue was indignant! Indignant. The word is pulled from Latin, which means “not worthy.” Not worthy of my time. Not worthy of my help. Not worthy of my work! Not now!

“There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, but not now, not on the sabbath day.”

Not now! There’s nothing as worthless as a religion that doesn’t work.

Take a Sabbath. Step into God’s cathedral. It’s so vast. So majestic! It’s instantly evident that we are part of it all. That there’s nothing that can separate us from that Love. And that we are created to love back. That we are to love the lord our God with all our heart, mind, strength, and soul, and love our neighbor as ourselves.

That’s the cathedral, folks. That’s the sabbath. When you can see the amazing work that God has done.

We cannot be swayed by the authorities in charge, telling us to give that a rest. We have this Spirit in us! That SEES NOW!

NOW! Jesus saw her and healed her. And everyone who saw it... rejoiced.

That’s what we’re about. Not resting until we hear the sound of joy from everyone.

What Jesus did was break the law. It went on his record, and he was convicted.

May we be so convicted!

Copyright©Donovan A. Drake 2025