

# Women Jesus Healed

## MY NAME IS LIBERTY (Luke 13:10-17)

—For 18 years, Liberty had looked not up, but only down. One Sabbath, this Israelite woman went to her place of worship and presented her needs to Jesus. *When we can't seem to look upward, we should bring our needs to Him.*

—Jesus saw Liberty, and against all social restrictions, He touched her. Immediately she stood straight. *Bound or weighted down with problems? Jesus reaches out to you. Our powerful and caring God offers healing.*

—Trouble came from the religious leaders; it was against the law to heal on the Sabbath. *We sometimes act the same way. So stuck in our traditions and preferences, we fail to see God at work.*

—Liberty responded by giving glory to God. *How do we respond when God touches our lives? Even if healing doesn't come, Jesus has loosed us from Satan's oppression. Honor Him as Lord and find grace to rejoice. That's the key to liberty.*

## MY NAME IS COMPLETE (Luke 8:40-48)

—In the midst of a crowd, one woman—sick, spent and rejected—reached out to touch the hem of Jesus' garment. *Desperate for healing or answers, we can reach out to Jesus, confident He feels our hurt and will respond to our needs.*

—“Who touched me?” Jesus asked. The woman, trembling, came forward and began telling her story of immediate healing. *Whether immediate or gradual, healing comes from our all-knowing Lord. Acknowledge His touch and begin telling your story.*

—Jesus, the Eternal Word, said, “Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.” *Through the power of the Word we can know comfort, healing, wholeness and peace.*

—If this suffering woman had not been in the crowd, at that time, in that place, and had she not made the bold move to touch His hem, would she ever have been healed? *We cannot fathom God's plans, but His plan for us is clear: Trust Him. Only when our faith exceeds our fear do we find healing.*

## MY NAME IS FUTURE (Luke 8:40-56)

—When illness threatened to turn a 12-year-old girl's bright future into a black abyss, her father Jairus frantically searched for Jesus. *Our first step to discovering or recovering hope for a future involves seeking Jesus, the source of hope.*

—En route to Jairus' home, Jesus stopped to heal another woman. With the delay came news of the daughter's death. Jesus had greater plans—to show His power over disease and death. *In the delays and despairing situations of our lives, God works all things together for our good and His glory.*

—Jesus saw something different in this lifeless girl. Hope Himself proclaimed hope for her future. *The Savior looks beyond our deadness in sin and the hopelessness of our past and proclaims hope for our future.*

—Jesus gave two commands: “Arise” and “Give her something to eat.” *Because He arose, we can arise to new life and grow in hope as we feast on His Word.*

(Find a more detailed summary for each study at [www.wnac.org](http://www.wnac.org).)

SEPTEMBER STUDY

My name  
is  
Liberty



We operate out of a twenty-first century mindset. Okay, maybe some of us still operate out of a twentieth century mindset, but you understand. It is hard for us to go back 2,000 years and understand the cultural context of Scripture—in a society where women were considered no more than property, were not spoken to in public, were not allowed to worship in the same area as men, were considered unclean and untouchable during their monthly cycle, and were generally ignored in the social and political activities of their world.

So operating with our contemporary outlook, we sometimes overlook the radical, revolutionary message of the Scripture. We don't gasp when Jesus, in the synagogue, speaks to and touches a disabled woman. We don't even notice when the gospel writers pause to tell the stories of women—the accounts of Jesus' intervention in their lives.

Dr. Luke may show some insights in the lives of these women, as he writes from his medical perspective. In fact, he is the only gospel author to tell the story of Liberty.



## *My Name is Liberty* THE WOMAN

**Key Verse:** “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.” (Luke 13:11).

**Key Thought:** Jesus offers us healing and freedom from bondage and suffering.

Liberty (as we’ve named her) was an Israelite, a “daughter of Abraham.” She followed Jewish laws and customs and was present at the synagogue when Jesus was teaching there one Sabbath day.

We just can’t know if she was there every week or if this was an unusual situation. (*Is that why the KJV says “behold”?*)

We can’t know about her pain level or pain tolerance. We can’t

know if she had family support or financial means. God’s Word doesn’t tell us. But we do know that for 18 years she had looked down, not up. We know she would have been unable to look you in the eyes unless you stooped down to her. We know she was limited and helpless to correct her disability. Inevitably, she would have been discouraged and frustrated with this long-term physical ailment; perhaps she would have been feeling quite hopeless about her future.

What about you and the ones you love? Are there physical or emotional disabilities that weigh you down, leaving you discouraged and frustrated and dreading the future? Your load may not be

as obvious as Liberty’s, but you find it hard to look up from under the weight. You have tried to pull yourself out of it and raise yourself up, but still you are bent over.

What do you do? Every situation is different, so there are no simplistic answers. But the starting place is always the same.

Bring it to Jesus. Yes, go to the doctors and counselors and take the medications you need.

Yes, use the therapies that help and find services to address your limitations. But first, go to Jesus.

And what does your place of worship, your church, do to invite those who are disabled? Do you provide a friendly welcome? Have you built a ramp for wheelchairs and situated a couple of short pews so people can park those wheelchairs near family and friends instead of in the aisle?

Do you offer a *Special Ed* Sunday school class or enhanced listening devices or other services? Wake up to the needs of your community and encourage your church to intentionally become a beacon of help and hope for those who need it most.

**Wake up to the needs of your community...**

## HE KNOWS MY NAME

**Introduction:** Read Luke 13:10-17.

**Exploration:** What two phrases does Jesus use to describe “Liberty” in Luke 13:16?

How does Luke describe her infirmity in Luke 13:11?

Speculate on how we would diagnose her physical condition today. Do you think she had arthritis? Scoliosis? Stroke damage? A slipped disk or broken back or other spinal disorder?

Imagine what 18 years of this disorder would mean. List three activities that would be difficult for this woman who could not stand up straight.

Even in this century, with its hover chairs and other technological advancements, picture yourself in her condition. What significant and meaningful task would you be unable to do?

Now, look at this woman’s disability symbolically. Is there something that has limited you for a long period of time? Is there an emotional or physical burden that has weighed you down and bent you over and made you unable to raise up? Name it here—and know that Jesus understands all about it. Who has bound you?

**Interaction:** If “Liberty” came to your church, would she feel welcomed? How can you make your church more accommodating to people with disabilities?

**Reflection:** Spend time in praise of *Jehovah Rapha* (the God who heals.)



## *My Name is Liberty* THE SAVIOR

**Key Verse:** “And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity” (Luke 13:12).

**Key Thought:** Jesus—powerful and caring—sees beyond our problems, speaks into our situation, and reaches out to meet our needs.

Jesus saw her. In the court of the women, outside the synagogue building, Jesus spotted Liberty, the disabled woman. She didn’t spot Him; she was bent over. Try it. You can’t look around when you are stooped over—holding onto a crutch just to be able to walk.

But Jesus didn’t stop there. He called her to Himself. He summoned the disabled woman to His side and spoke to her. He immediately recognized her need—but even more, He recognized her. Jesus already knew her; He saw beyond her deformity and her problems to the woman that she really was. He reached out to meet her there. He spoke directly to her, offering freedom from her long infirmity. Listen. Can you hear Him offer the same to you?

And, against all social restrictions, Jesus touched her. He laid His hands on this unknown, unnamed woman who was suffering from a difficult handicap and weighed down with the problems of her situation. And today, in your own worrisome condition, Jesus is reaching out to you as well.

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That’s not all. We have a God who cares; yes, we know and rejoice in that. But even more, we have a God who is powerful, One Who can speak into your situation and bring change and healing. Immediately. That’s what He did for Liberty. Instantly she was made straight. Instantly she was pain-free and liberated. The 18 years of exile and disability were history. She was set free.

## HE KNOWS MY NAME

**Introduction:** Read Genesis 16.

**Exploration:** Read the account of Hagar in Genesis 16. What name of God did this female Egyptian slave proclaim in verse 13? In your own life there are drastic situations like Hagar faced; can you also find comfort and strength in this truth?

Jesus sought out this woman with a disability. Examine these other Scripture passages to see if that was the case in His other encounters.

Scripture	Person	Contact
Matthew 9:20		
Mark 2:3-12		
Mark 10:46-52		
Luke 4:12-13		
Luke 7:1-10		
Luke 19:1-10		

The truth remains; however we seek Jesus and His help, He has already been seeking us.

Find a Scripture passage where Jesus tries to heal someone but cannot. (*Oh, never mind; there isn’t one.*) We can find where the disciples were unsuccessful (Matthew 17:14-21), but not Omnipotent Jesus.

**Interaction:** Does Jesus always heal? If you or someone you love is suffering from a long-lasting illness, how do you deal with God’s power when He chooses not to heal?

**Reflection:** Offer thanksgiving and praise to *El Roi* (the God who sees).





## *My Name is Liberty*

### THE OPPOSITION

**Key Verse:** *"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." (Luke 13:14).*

**Key Thought:** Regardless of cultural traditions or personal preferences, our practices in worship should honor and model Jesus Christ.

Then the trouble begins. Remember, this was the Sabbath day. Legally, no one was to work. And healing was work. So the ruler of the synagogue was not happy. He quoted Scripture to scold Jesus. So consumed with legalism, this local leader missed the miracle in their midst.

Sometimes we act the same way. We can't get past our traditions and preferences (even some we've supported with Bible verses) to see God at work. We want our cultural interpretations and our long-standing assumptions to be honored—even if we realize that what God is doing doesn't quite fit.

Jesus was quick to reprimand the synagogue leader. He noted the practical consideration that even the most observant Jews

could permit for their animals on the Sabbath day—untying them so they could be watered. Couldn't they permit as much for this woman who had been tied to her disability for 18 years? Is it wrong to do good, to be merciful?

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In our day, we are often forgetful of the command to honor God's day as holy. Sunday has often become just another day for shopping or activity or work. Let's model our behavior after Jesus Christ. He was faithful to attend the synagogue on the Sabbath and glorified God by showing mercy to those in need. We see Him healing others, feeding His followers, and pointing crabby legalists to the true God.

## HE KNOWS MY NAME

**Introduction:** Read Ephesians 4.

**Exploration:** This is not the only time Jesus met opposition for healing on the Sabbath. Who were the characters involved in these other healings?

Luke 14:1-5 (*the very next chapter*)

Mark 6

John 5:1-15

John 9:1-34

We can easily detect the attitude of the Pharisees as they object to Jesus' works of mercy on the Sabbath day. But our own attitudes about traditions appear harder to analyze. Are there times when the worship styles or evangelistic efforts of others make you uncomfortable? How so?

How can you evaluate these practices? Are there other areas we embrace as "law" that might have room for a new interpretation?

What can you do to make Sunday—the Christian Sabbath, the day we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus—holy and set apart unto the Lord?

**Interaction:** What steps can we take to assure that we as followers of Christ are not in opposition of His work in our midst?

**Reflection:** Focus your thoughts on *Jehovah-Saboath*—the Lord of Hosts, mighty in battle.



## *My Name is Liberty*

### THE RESULTS

**Key Verses:** “And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God...all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him” (Luke 13:13, 17).

**Key Thought:** Our response to God’s healing work in our lives should be thanksgiving and praise.

When Jesus called Liberty to Himself, things changed.

“Immediately, she was made straight, and glorified God” (Luke 13:13). Liberty was immediately healed and her response was to glorify God. She probably could not explain what had happened to her; she certainly would not have chosen to be in the middle of some synagogue ruckus. But she knew that God deserved her praise for what He had done in her life.

What is your response when you are healed? While we are grateful for medicines and doctors, and while we can be thankful for the help of family and friends, we must not fail to say, “To God be the glory—great things He has done.” Like the tenth leper, remember to return to Jesus with thanksgiving for His wondrous works.

“All His adversaries were ashamed” (Luke 13:17). When Jesus shows His power and authority, those who oppose Him will be

put to shame. They don’t have a leg to stand on. Whenever there is controversy, we want to be sure we stand with Jesus, not against Him.

“All the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him” (Luke 13:17).

Will you  
honor him  
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rejoice?

In our own lives, as well as in the lives of fellow believers, we should rejoice at the powerful works of God. As a congregation or even as a women’s group, we may not do enough rejoicing as we see God at work. Is there something you need

to praise Him for—right now?

Even when He chooses not to heal—when your body is still in pain or your spirit is still broken—will you in faith realize that Jesus sees you and has loosed you from the oppression of Satan? Will you honor Him as the victorious Lord of your life and still find grace to rejoice? Then you, too, will have liberty.

## HE KNOWS MY NAME

**Introduction:** Read Luke 17:12-19

**Exploration:** In the story of the 10 lepers (Luke 17:12-19), why do you suppose only one returned?

Do you feel this is typical of those who have seen God at work in their lives? Why?

In your life, do you glorify God enough?

When the Apostle Paul prayed for healing and it did not come, what was his attitude? Look at 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.

**Interaction:** Read aloud James 5:13-15 and Romans 12:9-16. As a body of believers, what should our attitude be when someone is sick or suffering?

**Reflection:** Reflect a few minutes on *Jehovah-Nissi* (the Lord our banner, the Lord our miracle) and the ways He has worked in your life. Write a few sentences of thanksgiving and praise to Him. Then share your experience with someone else. You might phone a friend. Or you could boldly ask God for a chance to share with a stranger about God’s power in your life or within your family.

Sing a hymn of praise to our wonderful Lord for His mighty works! Let it be your solo—straight from your heart to Him.

**Meet the Writer:** Carol Reid has always loved studying the women of the Bible. But she says, “Liberty was especially sweet to me because of my little stooped-over mother, Helen Ketteman Smith.” This year Carol is celebrating 25 years as librarian at Welch College and 10 years of a successful kidney transplant for her husband, Dr. Garnett Reid. Carol lives in Nashville, Tennessee.