

## Set free

### Luke 13.10-17

Jesus shows compassion to a crippled woman, healing her on the sabbath. Jesus twice uses the term of setting her free. Jesus was angry with some members of the synagogue who objected to helping the woman in need, but were prepared to care for their animals on the sabbath.

Now read **Luke 13.10-17** see p.2 for text.

### A note on the passage

Jesus often moves towards the neglected and those on the margins, showing compassion and love. What stops us seeing and responding to the needs of those on the margins, the people who others avoid? How can we respond when those needs might even be hidden?



How might you become better at responding to the needs of people around you?



Find a plant pot or clear area of the garden, and good soil. Plant 'forget-me-not' seeds in the soil, then sprinkle a light layer of soil over the top and water. Keep the soil moist in the next few weeks. The seedlings will grow slowly through the cold winter months and flower in the spring. As you plant them, think about how difficult times may last for a while, but pray that God brings new things that are good from those struggles. Take photos of them in bloom, to remind you of how God works to bring beauty from hard times.



Share in your household about someone you know who is in need or on the margins. You could discuss ideas of how you might be kind to them. Go outside and slowly blow a soap bubble while thinking of the person, and as the bubble floats away, pray for God to set them free from their difficulties and for God to be with them. You could then each blow a bubble for yourselves and, as it floats away, pray to be set free from something that you want to change.

## PEBBLE FAMILIES



'And the whole family was filled with joy' Acts 16.34.

Families come in all shapes and sizes, and God wants children to enjoy being part of a loving family. Sometimes families are struggling; can you think of one? Find large pebbles/stones. Place a pebble and say 'This is [name of child].' Pick up another and say 'This is [N's] mother/carer'. Add more for each person in the family. Place another two and say 'These are [N's] friends'. Look at your pile of pebbles and pray for the people involved in that family.



Take some sewing thread and stand in a circle together. Gently throw the reel of thread to someone in the circle and they wrap it around their back/hips, and say something which separates people from God. Examples might be: being preoccupied with TikTok, feeling tired and irritable, gossiping. Continue throwing the reel of thread from one to another randomly until you have a tangled web representing many things which stop our freedom. Finish by saying 'So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed' (John 8.36), and as you do so, stretch out to break the threads. Thank Jesus that sets us free and gives us new life in him.

## Daily Kindness

Every day this week, carry out a surprise act of kindness for someone, either at home, school or work. You might choose a person who seems to be struggling. You could make them a sandwich or hot chocolate. Or offer to do the laundry. Or perhaps pick flowers as a small gift for someone.

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

## Jesus was teaching in a synagogue on the sabbath.

A woman appeared who had been severely disabled for 18 years. She was bent over and quite unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, 'You are set free from your disability.' When he laid his hands on her, she immediately stood up straight, and began praising God.

But the leader of the synagogue was very annoyed, because Jesus had cured her on the sabbath day, which wasn't allowed. He kept saying to the crowd, 'There are six days on which work can be done; come on one of those days and be cured, but not on the sabbath day!'

Jesus answered him and said, 'You hypocrites! Does not each of you, on the sabbath, untie your ox or your donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water, even though Jewish Law forbids any work on the sabbath day? So should not this woman, who has been bent double for 18 long years, be set free from her disability on the sabbath day?'



When Jesus said this, all those who were against him were put to shame; and the whole crowd rejoiced at all the wonderful things that he was doing.

Luke 13.10-17

### Did you know?

- A synagogue is a building where Jews worship. This one was crowded with people going to worship and listening to the teachers.
- The sabbath is a weekly day of rest and prayer for Jews from Friday night to Saturday night.
- A hypocrite is someone who says one thing and does another.

## Luke 13.10-17 (NRSV)

Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. 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. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, 'Woman, you are set free from your ailment.' When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. 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.' 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? 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?' 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.