

Are doctors for sick people?

Rev. John Belden

What would you say to a friend who limped around with a broken leg but wouldn't go to a doctor? I hope you would try to convince him to get help. But what if he said he was waiting for his leg to heal first?

More than once I have had a similar conversation with non-Christians. They know they're sinners and that Jesus is able and willing to save them. But they won't go to Him. When I press them to tell me why, they respond like the people who were invited to the great supper: "they all with one accord began to make excuses" (Luke 14:18).

Many think they have good excuses not to be a Christian. But an excuse is usually nothing more than the skin of a reason stuffed with a lie. In the end, God says everyone will be "without excuse" (Rom. 1:20).

One excuse I hear frequently is that they don't want to go to Jesus until they get their lives straightened out. They want to be worthy first. They really believe this is a good excuse to wait.

I would like to take a moment to take the skin off this one. Let me begin with a simple question. If you broke your leg, would you wait until you were well to go to the doctor? Don't you go when you need treatment? If Jesus is the Great Physician, shouldn't you go to Him now, regardless of how bad your condition is?

Take the example of the prodigal son. Notice that he went straight from the pigpen to his father. He went poor, skinny, hungry, worn out, and with the smell of pigs still on his ragged clothes.

In fact, God will often put a person in the pigpen of sin in order to bring him to repentance. It doesn't make sense to say, "I'll come to him as soon as I get out of the pigpen, get cleaned up, get a job, and straighten my life out." The prodigal son said, "I will arise and go to my father" (Luke 15:18).

God commands us to be like the prodigal son and hate the pigpen. Hate your sin. See it for what it is. Repent of it and forsake it. But remember that He

saves people while they are sinners: "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:7-9). Christ calls people who are worn out: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

Christ doesn't want you to clean up before you come. He doesn't want you to wait until you're strong enough. He calls you to come dirty, sick and tired. He wants to be the one to heal you, wash you, and clothe you. That's what it means for Him to be the Savior.

So take the skin off your excuse and see it for what it is. It's a dangerous lie. It will cost you your soul if you continue to believe it. There is only one thing you need in order to come to Christ and be saved. You need to be a sinner. You need to be sick. Every person reading these words qualifies.

Stop trying to get yourself well before you go to the doctor. Go to Christ now. Go to Him spiritually poor, hungry for righteousness, and with the rotten smell of sin still clinging to your soul.

He died for those "without strength," for "the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6). Christians are those who were reconciled to God when they "were enemies" (v. 10). If you wait until you're well, you will never be well enough. Sin left untreated "brings forth death" (James 1:15).

And if you don't go to Christ, at least be honest. You really don't want to leave the pigpen. You still love your sin. Your condition is described in John 3:19: "light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light." Perhaps your sickness is worse than you thought.

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