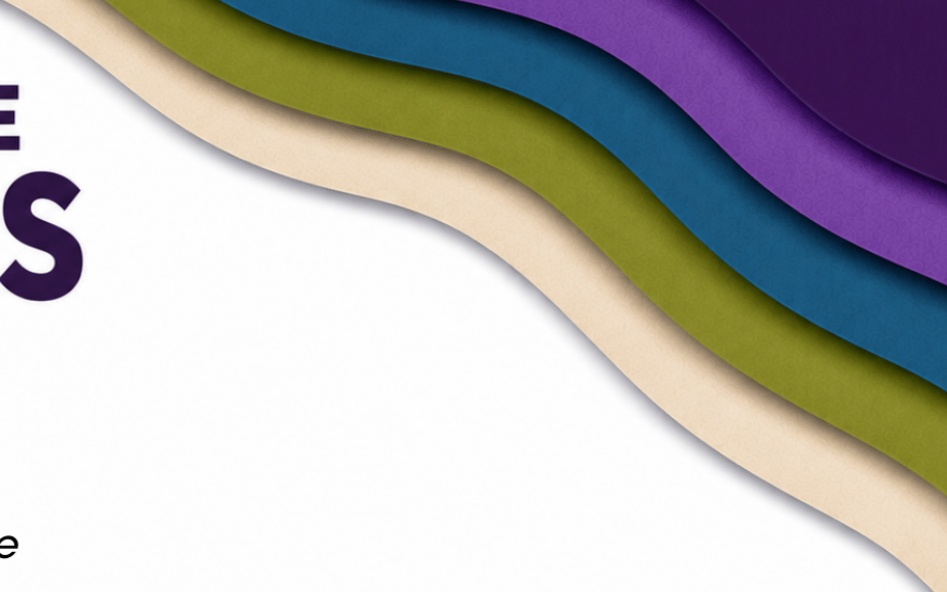


UNBELIEVABLE STORIES



Discussion Questions

September 6, 2026

Our Bodies Keep the Score

A Story of Oppression

1. What impacted you most during our worship service together this past Sunday? How would you describe what you experienced? In what ways did you experience encouragement and in what ways discomfort?
2. Read Luke 13:10-17. What strikes you most about this passage? What emotions do you observe in the story? With which character do you most identify and why?
3. Read Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:12-15. What differences in these passages do you notice about the meaning and purpose of the Sabbath? In what ways could Sabbath be a liberating experience? How might this apply to cultural forces in our own society? How might this apply to you personally?
4. The speaker on Sunday suggested that the woman in the passage could be weighed down under years and even generations of oppression. How do you relate to this personally? In what ways do you feel the weight of oppression bearing down on you? How does this feel? How does it impact you physically? Share your own experience with one another and seek to listen and understand one another rather than giving advice.
5. The term “the satan” in verse 16 is the Greek version of the Hebrew word meaning “accuser” or “enemy.” The speaker on Sunday suggested that we all are subject to a system of accusation emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually. We are told (or tell ourselves) that we are not good enough, strong enough, deserving enough, etc. (the list is endless!). In what ways does this ring true for you? How does it play out in how you live and how you feel, both emotionally and physically?
6. Take some time to reflect on the following and then share with one another whatever seems appropriate:
 - In what ways might you be complicit in “systems of oppression”? How could this story make you more aware of the collective oppression to which others are subject? How could you respond to this?

- In what ways might your behavior at a personal level be affecting other individuals in an “accusing” kind of way? How could you respond to this?
7. Take some time to pray for one another about things that surfaced during this discussion. If it seems appropriate, break into smaller groups for this.

Prayer Practice for This Week: The Welcoming Prayer

The Welcoming Prayer is a prayer practice that helps us get in touch with our emotions and welcome them (rather than resist them) in order to let go of unhealthy responses. The goal is to help us embrace more of God’s love.

Step 1: Awareness

Sit quietly and reflect on the situation for a moment. Notice how you are feeling. Be aware of your emotional state in this moment. Rather than repressing any uncomfortable emotion, go toward it and let it sink in. Stay with this step of noticing and sinking in until you really experience a connection to the emotion. You may feel it in your body, and it can help to place your hand there as a way of connecting with the emotion more deeply.

Step 2: Welcome

Welcome the emotion as a friend that is going to help you discover something about yourself, rather than as an enemy to be defeated. Don’t judge yourself, but simply accept how you are feeling right now. Say, “Welcome, anxiety, anger, etc.” Repeat it and sit with the feeling until you experience a genuine sense of owning and accepting it in this moment.

Step 3: Connect

Then allow yourself to honestly discern where the emotion is coming from. Usually this is from a thwarted desire for one or more normal and basic human needs:

- Safety and security
- Esteem and affection
- Power and control

Step 4: Let Go

When you have allowed yourself to accept the negative emotion and identified its source, let it go by saying, “God, I give You my anxiety, anger, etc.” Consciously let go of:

- Your demand for safety and security in this situation.
- Your demand for esteem and affection in this situation.
- Your demand for power and control in this situation.

Then rest for a while in God’s loving, affirming, and totally accepting presence.