

## Wednesday Evening Bible Study

February 20, 2019

The Gospel of Luke

*The Lord of the Sabbath*

Topics – Luke 6; Jesus and the Sabbath

Text – Luke 6:1 - 11

### Introduction

Jesus was often placed under the scrutiny of the Pharisees and other of the religious leadership, especially on the Sabbath days. They were always watching Him. They were always trying to catch him doing something that they perceived to be wrong. This is exactly what was happening in our text. Jesus wasn't doing anything wrong, but the Pharisees had some misconceptions about what God said could or couldn't be done on the Sabbath.

Verse 1 tells us that this was the second Sabbath after the first. The first Sabbath mentioned in Luke was back in Luke 4:16, when Jesus preached in the synagogue in Nazareth. Another Sabbath is mentioned in Luke 4:31.

The Sabbath was the seventh day of the week. It began on Friday evening at sundown, and ended on Saturday evening at sundown. It was the day of rest for the people of God. It was first alluded to way back in the Creation story:

*"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." (Genesis 2:1-3)*

God sanctified, or set apart, the seventh day, blessed the seventh day, and rested on the seventh day.

The next Old Testament reference to the Sabbath was regarding manna. God would give them manna every day, except on the seventh day. On the day before the sabbath, the Israelites would collect twice as much as other days, so that they would have enough to last them on the Sabbath. (Exodus 16:22 – 30) The underlying principle behind this passage is that God can give you enough during the week so that you won't have to gather or work on your sabbath of rest.

God also included the Sabbath in the Ten Commandments. (Exodus 20:8 – 11; Exodus 31:12 - 17)

The principle of taking one day out of seven in order to rest and reflect is a great principle for us to observe today.

Jesus taught us that the Sabbath was made for man. (Mark 2:27) This means that it was made for man's benefit.

### I Helping a Workers Hunger (vs. 1 – 5)

First of all, we should point out that the disciples were taking grain from somebody's field; but that permitted according to the Law. (Deuteronomy 23:24 – 25)

The story that Jesus was referring to is from 1 Samuel 21:1 – 6. (See also Leviticus 24:5 – 9) The account of David taking the shewbread took place on the Sabbath day, and Jesus uses it to support the point that when people are hungry, it is OK to do what you have to do to feed them. The spirit of the Law would certainly allow for feeding the disciples, but the Pharisees were more concerned about observing their letter of the Law. The prohibition against working on the Sabbath was to keep people from working toward a profit, like a farmer would be doing if he was planting or harvesting a crop. However, there was nothing wrong with gleaning some grain to satisfy hunger.

Jesus had already declared His deity by forgiving the sins of the man "sick of the palsy," in Luke 5:23. Now, He was stating that He was the Lord of the Sabbath, meaning that He would determine what was or was not right on the Sabbath.

Keep in mind that Jesus was not actually violating any principle or Law given by God, but He was violating some of the man-made traditions set forth by the Pharisees.

Phillips states:

The rabbis had tinkered with the simple Sabbath requirement (Exod. 20:8–11) to the extent that Sabbath keeping had become, for many people, a burden. For instance, “a Sabbath day’s journey” was said to be about a thousand yards, but a man could circumvent this rabbinical rule. He could deposit at the thousand-yard boundary food for two meals before the Sabbath. He could then make this spot his dwelling, which would enable him to go another thousand yards.

And what constituted work? The rabbis defined a “burden” as “the weight of a dried fig.” To pick up anything heavier than that was work. If a person were in one place and his hand, filled with fruit, was stretched in another, he must drop the fruit if overtaken in that position by the Sabbath! The rabbis forbade a woman to look in a mirror on the Sabbath because she might notice a gray hair and pluck it out, and that would be work! And so on, page after page—endless, mindboggling pettiness, burden heaped upon burden.<sup>1</sup>

## II Healing a Withered Hand (vs. 6 – 11)

The Pharisees claimed that healing was a violation of the Sabbath. However, Jesus stated that healing was doing good and saving life, rather than doing evil and destroying life. (See also Matthew 12:11 – 12)

The second point from this passage is that Jesus did not actually work. He merely spoke, and the man’s hand was healed.

Notice the third point from this passage, in v. 7, that the Pharisees knew what Christ would do. They were watching the man with the withered hand, and they were using him to set up the Lord. The Lord would certainly heal him, because the Lord always healed everyone who needed help: (See v. 19)

*"Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them." (Luke 4:40)*

*"When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." (Matthew 8:16-17)*

Jesus was consistent. He always did right. The Pharisees knew that Jesus would do this. What does the enemy know that you are going to do?

The fourth thought from this passage is that Jesus was not afraid of the Pharisees, and He was not afraid to do right in front of everyone. He put this man in the middle of everyone, and then he healed him.

By healing this man, Jesus infuriated the Pharisees who were now publicly humiliated. They apparently were content to let the man suffer. The enemy hates it when the good guys do something good. The Pharisees begin conspiring as to how they will catch Jesus.

See Matthew 23 for information regarding the Pharisees.

## Conclusion

1. We are not under any law to keep a sabbath of rest.
2. It is still good for man to take one day out of seven to rest, refresh, relax, and reflect on the Lord.
3. Sunday is the day that Christians have chosen for worship. It’s the day that we celebrate the resurrection. (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1 – 2)
4. It is logical then for us to make Sunday our sabbath.
5. We should strive to maintain Sunday as a day for rest and worship as much as we can.
6. However, when that is impossible at times – see rule 1.

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<sup>1</sup> Phillips, J. (2009). *Exploring the Gospel of Luke: An Expository Commentary* (Lk 5:27–6:5). Kregel Publications; WORDsearch Corp.

