

# LIVING WITH JUSTICE AND MERCY Sunday School- January 5, 2014

## Unifying Topic: HONORING THE SABBATH

### Lesson Text

I. **Jesus Is Lord Of The Sabbath** (Luke 6:1-5)

II. **Jesus Heals On The Sabbath** (Luke 6:6-7)

III. **The Sabbath Is For Doing Good** (Luke 6:8-11)

**The Main Thought:** Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it? (Luke 6:9, KJV).

**Unifying Principle:** Often rules and limitations set by others make it difficult for us to help one another. What causes us to want to help others? Jesus, who is Lord of the Sabbath, teaches that acts of mercy and justice should be practiced all the time.

**Lesson Aim:** To learn how legalistic observance of Sabbath laws results in warped understandings of both the Sabbath and the Law's purpose.

**Life aim:** To encourage all believers to live in such a way that they honor the Sabbath from the perspective of Jesus.

- 6:1 And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.
- 6:2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days?
- 6:3 And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungred, and they which were with him;
- 6:4 How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?
- 6:5 And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.
- 6:6 And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered.
- 6:7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.
- 6:8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.
- 6:9 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?
- 6:10 And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.
- 6:11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

### **HISTORY:**

**Chapter 5:1-11** The background is at<sup>1</sup>“the Lake of Gennesaret,” which is another name for the Sea of Galilee. Jesus enters one of the ships out of the two ships in the sea. He uses Peter's boat as a pulpit from which to preach to the crowd on the shore (vv.1-3). After Jesus finishes His message, He commands Peter to “*launch out into the deep*” water. Peter tells Jesus that he had fished all night and caught nothing (vv.4-5). Nevertheless, he was obedient at Jesus' Word and there was a great catch made because of the Word of God and Peter's obedience. Peter had to call for help from the other ship to help bring the catch in so that his ship wouldn't sink. This brought Simon to his knees before Jesus, for he realized that he was a sinful man (vv.6-8). The first step of calling men is stirring confession. Peter and all that were around were astonished at the catch of fish. Jesus told James and John (sons of Zebedee) that they were not to fear for they would be fishers of men; they would catch men (hearts). Jesus calls Peter, James, and John to become His first disciples. Then as they brought their ships to shore, they decided to forsake all, and followed Jesus (vv.9-10).

**Chapter 5:12-16** In a certain city a man full of leprosy fell on his face before the Lord asking for healing; to be made clean. Leprosy was considered unclean physically and spiritually. He was not to approach within six feet of any person but Jesus was moved with compassion and said “*I will!*” and touches this man and immediately he was cleansed; the leprosy left him. Jesus charged him to do two things: tell no one; and just go and show himself to the priest which was according to the Law of Moses. The priest then had time to confirm the cure and then after being well, the man could offer the necessary sacrifices according to the law. This would prove to everyone that he was healthy. However, the news of the man's healing spread more so and great multitudes of people came to hear, and be healed of their infirmities by Jesus. The impact of people caused Jesus to withdraw into the wilderness to pray (vv.12-16).

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/a-miraculous-catch-of-fish/>  
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

**Chapter 5:17-26** On a certain day Jesus was teaching in one of His meetings and the Pharisees and doctors of the Law happen to be sitting nearby. They had come out of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. They were there to investigate Jesus' claims, but His power was ready for the opposition. His power was present to heal them. At that time some men brought in a man (their friend) stricken with palsy; paralyzed on a bed. They couldn't get in through the door, so they found means to go through the roof of the housetop, opening a way there and letting the man down on his bed they were carrying, placing him before Jesus. Jesus, just seeing the faith of the men, forgave the man's sins. He could have said you are healed, but He didn't (vv.17-20). The scribes (teachers of the Law) and the Pharisees needed to be taught, for they began to say among themselves, "Who is this man, only God can forgive sins?" They said He was speaking blasphemies! Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked them why were they thinking this? "Why are they harboring such thoughts?" So He turned this around to get an answer from them, questioning them further "rather it was easier to say Thy sins are forgiven or to say rise up and walk." He wanted them know to know that the Son of man had power upon earth to forgive sins. He proceeded to say to the sick of the palsy, rise up, take your bed, and go to your house. Why? - Because he was healed! This man proved Jesus right because immediately he proceeded to take up his bed he had been lying on and walked to his own house glorifying God. Everybody present were all amazed and filled with fear as they had seen a strange thing that day. Faith allows us to see strange things (vv.18-26).

**Chapter 5:27-39** Departing from there, Jesus saw a publican, meaning tax collector named Levi (in Matthew and Mark his name is Matthew) sitting at the tax collection booth working for the Roman government. He was the most hated of men among the public and Jesus called him and said "follow me." Wow, he instantly rose up and followed Jesus! Levi prepares a great feast and makes his home welcomed for Jesus and his friends, but the Scribes and Pharisees murmur against Jesus' disciples, asking why, suggesting that they were eating and drinking with such notorious publicans and sinners (vv.27-30). Jesus gives four illustrations:

1. Jesus answered by illustrating and stating His mission.
  - The sick (sinners) are the ones who need a physician (Jesus, the Savior), not the ones that are whole.
  - He came to call the sinners not the righteous to repentance (vv.31-32).
2. Jesus now gives an illustration to explain why He does not require the disciples to observe the Jewish traditions of fasting.
  1. They continued to question Jesus about His disciples eating and drinking while the disciples of John fasting and praying often as do the disciples of the Pharisees. They asked a pertinent question because the religionist fasted twice a week. It was a ritual for them. Jesus answered with a question: Do wedding guest go hungry while celebrating with the groom? Then He goes on to say that there will be a time when the bridegroom will be taken away (killed) and then they wouldn't want to eat; they'll fast in those days. Jesus knew His death was coming.
3. Jesus gives the mission of a new life and spiritual movement (vv.33-35).
  - Jesus then comes forth with a parable concerning not patching new garment over the old garment. No one sews an old patch on a new. A piece of new cloth is not used to patch an old garment, for it fails to match the old garment. Jesus was saying that He was not patching up the old life, but starting a new life and a new movement (v.36).
4. Jesus gives a second illustration of the mission of a new life and spiritual movement.
  - Jesus states that no man puts new wine into old bottles for the new wine will burst the bottles and spill, and the bottles will perish. Jesus was saying that He was not putting His teaching into the old life and movement, but He was launching a new life and movement for God. The new wine is difficult to accept if one has been drinking old wine. Jesus was saying that His teaching of new life and spiritual movement would be difficult to accept; it would take time. Men were slow to give up the old, for they were too content with it (their religious ways and self righteousness). Therefore, men would often refuse to even consider the new life and movement. The old was better to them (vv.37-39).

## LESSON:

### Luke 6:1-5 Jesus Is Lord Of The Sabbath

**6:1** And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands. The very point Jesus is making in this passage is that men have the tendency to institutionalize religion, to make it full of form and ritual, rules and regulations, ceremonies and services. This event takes place on the second Sabbath. This referred to the regular Saturday Sabbath that followed the special Sabbath of the week on which it fell. On this Sabbath day, <sup>2</sup>possibly the next day after the feast at Matthew's house, another problem is brought up by the Pharisees. Jesus and His disciples are passing through some grain fields and being hungry they pluck some of the grain (barley or wheat) and ate it. "... *rubbing them in their hands*" meant they did this to shed the husks, and then would eat the grain raw, which was quite common at that time.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/jesus-works-and-heals-on-the-sabbath/>  
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

*To call Sunday "the Sabbath" is to confuse the first day and the seventh day and what each signifies. The Sabbath is a reminder of the completion of "the old creation", while "the Lord's Day" is a reminder of our Lord's finished work in "the new creation" (2Corth.5:21; Eh.2:10; 4:24). The Sabbath speaks of rest after work and relates to the Law, while the Lord's Day speaks of rest before work and relates to grace. The Lord's Day commemorates the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead as well as the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the church (Acts2).*

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**6:2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days?—** These Pharisees who saw them did not raise any objection to the grain being taken from the field of another, for this was permitted by the Law (Deuteronomy23:25). In such cases it was lawful for a Jew to eat from a neighbor's vineyard, orchard, or field, provided he did not fill a container or use a harvesting implement. However, they condemned the disciples for doing it on the Sabbath day which they said was breaking the law. Thereby, the Pharisees considered this to be harvesting, winnowing, and preparing food.

**6:3 And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungred, and they which were with him;—** Jesus uses David's experience to illustrate His point. Have you not heard when David had eaten the showbread in the tabernacle when he was hungry? (1Sam.21:3-6). Jesus was appealing to the same principle: human need. Human need was more important than petty laws about Sabbath observance. By comparing the illustration of Himself and His disciples, with David and his companions, He was saying, if you condemn me, you must also condemn King David. David was Israel's great king, God's anointed soon to be king, but here they were really speaking to Jesus – **the Anointed One** plus the Lord of the Sabbath!

**6:4 How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?—** This referred to when David was fleeing from King Saul and came to the Tabernacle in the city of Nob (1Sam.21:1-6). He went there alone and lied to the priest about King Saul sending him on a private mission. He was really running from the king, and he and his men were tired and hungry at this point. But they were not to eat the bread that was for the priests of the Holy Place (Lev.24:8-9). Ahimelech, the priest made an exception because David was on the king's business (which was a lie) and he did not want to refuse David's request. He asked if his men had not slept with any women for awhile; being ceremonial clean. David said no, so the priest gave David the hallowed bread (which had just been baked, meaning, it was for the Sabbath); the consecrated bread, the showbread (five loaves) in which David and his men did eat.

*"Shewbread" means "the bread of the face" or "the bread of the Presence." The showbread was twelve loaves of bread brought to the house of God as a symbolic offering to God. It was a thanksgiving offering expressing appreciation and praise to God for food. The loaves were to be taken to the Holy Place by the Priest and placed on the table before the Lord. The loaves symbolized an everlasting covenant between God and His people. The loaves were to be changed every week. This was the food for the priests and was to be eaten by them alone.*

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**6:5 And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.** Jesus refers to Himself as the Son of man and lets them know that **He**, the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath! <sup>3</sup>Jesus is the One who exercises authority even over their rules and regulations that govern the Sabbath day. He was greater than the Law and above the laws of the Mosaic Covenant because, as God in flesh, He is the Author of those laws. Since the Lord of the Sabbath had come, He who is the only true "Sabbath rest" made the old Law of the Sabbath no longer needed or binding. When He said "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27), Jesus was attesting to the fact that just as the Sabbath day was originally instituted to give man rest from his labors, so did He come to provide us rest from laboring to achieve our own salvation by our works. Because of His sacrifice on the cross, we can now forever cease laboring to attain God's favor and rest in His mercy and grace.

## **Luke 6:6-7 Jesus Heals On The Sabbath**

**6:6 And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered.** On another Sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue and began to teach. Amongst the people was a man with a withered right hand. <sup>4</sup>We see, here, a continuation of the teaching on the law of sabbath, even though this was at least a week later than the teaching of going through the corn field. One of the main differences, in this and the eating of the corn, is that the first one is outside the church, and this one is in the synagogue.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.gotquestions.org/Lord-of-the-Sabbath.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/luke/14.html>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

**6:7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.** In a most dramatic moment Ezra the scribe took the Law (Genesis-Deuteronomy) and read it aloud to the handful of people who had returned from exile. He then led the people to rededicate themselves to being the people of God's Law. Therefore, the law became the greatest thing in the people's lives. These rules and regulations were called the "*Scribal Law*." Now on the other hand, the Pharisees were born as a group several hundred years later. They dedicated themselves at all cost to keep every detail of the Law (Scribal Law). These men soon became professionals at the practice of preserving the Law. They had a consuming devotion to see that the Law was being taught and practiced among the people. Therefore, they were really anticipating whether Jesus would heal on the Sabbath Day. They were ready to accuse Him of breaking the Law, even though the man's hand was withered and useless.

### **Luke 6:8-11 The Sabbath Is For Doing Good**

**6:8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.** Jesus did not hesitate even though He knew their thoughts. Saying to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand! How awesome are those words to hear, to the one needing healing; to the one who had not used both hands in years? Jesus purposely did His miracle openly, before all, as if to demonstrate His contempt for the Pharisees' man-made regulations, for a man could be put to death for violating the Sabbath. The man stood up before them all.

**6:9 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?—**<sup>5</sup>Jesus' question had two parts. He first asked if it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath or if it was lawful to do evil. Then He asked if it was lawful to save a life or to destroy it? The obvious answer would be to do good and save a life. This would never abuse the Sabbath. In fact, there is no better day to help and minister than on the Lord's Day! If we do not help people, no matter the day, even on the Sabbath, then we are withholding good and doing evil to our neighbor. The old saying says "*Don't put off tomorrow what you can do today.*"

**6:10 And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.** Jesus had asked the question, and looks around at them waiting for their response, however, there was only stone silence. He told the man with the withered hand to stretch forth his hand. Jesus' point was clear, and that was to do good and save a life! The man might not ever stand before the Lord again; might not ever have this chance again, so he did as he was told, and his hand was restored whole as the other!

**6:11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.** Oh it's on now, they were insanely mad, plotting how to kill Jesus.

#### **SUMMARY:**

On the second Sabbath Jesus and His disciples went through the corn fields plucking and eating the grains, which according to the Pharisees was unlawful on the Sabbath days. Jesus led them to read the scriptures of what David did on the Sabbath; how he and his men ate the showbread from the temple on the Sabbath which was to be only eaten by the priests. The point to be made was that Jesus, the Son of man is as great as David and greater, for He is the Lord of the Sabbath (**vv.1-5**).

On another Sabbath He entered into a synagogue and began to teach. There in the midst was a man with a withered right hand. The Scribes and Pharisees were watching and waiting to see if Jesus would heal this man on the Sabbath so they could accuse Him of breaking the Law! (**vv.6-7**).

He knew what they were thinking, however, this was His chance to teach them about doing good or doing evil; about saving a life or destroying one. Jesus called out to the man to rise up and stand before Him. Looking at the Scribes and Pharisees, He asked them a question to challenge them, but they didn't respond. Jesus commanded the man to stretch forth his hand, and the man did, and his hand was made whole as the other hand. Now the Scribes and Pharisees were not filled with joy. They weren't happy at all that the man's hand was restored. No, they were filled with madness and discussed among themselves as to what to do with Jesus (**vv.8-11**).

#### **APPLICATION:**

Jesus being Lord of the Sabbath shows us how to be just, but also merciful. He used the Sabbath to make such a point. We can react to some man-made rules over the Spirit of God and miss the leading of the Holy Spirit to be a help to someone in their hour of need. Solomon, in all of his glory knew how to be just and merciful because he asked God. Let us ask also in the same way even on the Sabbath, the day of rest to take every opportunity to do good.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/jesus-works-and-heals-on-the-sabbath/>  
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>