

I. Sabbath Teachings and Miracles (Lk. 6:1-11)

- A. On the next Sabbath after the First - (vs 1) If there were no chapter break here you would clearly see the issue of Jesus trying to convince the Pharisees that God wanted to change their expression and understanding of their faith. That in fact, their expression and understanding—though sincere—was actually anti-scriptural even though their desire was to uphold the scripture. Jesus is desiring to get them to throw out their worn out garment or wineskin and put on the new to receive new, fresh understanding. He does this by purposely putting Himself in a position that challenges and even offends their traditional views.

The previous or first Sabbath in view here is the last Saturday that He taught in Capernaum. Meaning, that the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, the Simon fishing miracle and calling, the healing of the leper, healing of multitudes, the paralytic lowered through the roof, and the calling of Levi (Matthew) and his dinner party all happened in a six day period.

- B. Disciples were picking Grain - (vs 1) Thus, Luke showed his readers Jesus' position as the Master who comes to the defense of His disciples. Luke alone also mentioned the disciples "rubbing" the ears of grain "in their hands," probably in order to give his readers a more vivid picture of what really happened. The Mosaic Law permitted people to glean from the fields as they passed through them. However, the Pharisees chose to view the disciples' gleaning as harvesting, and their rubbing the grain in their hands as threshing and winnowing, and thus preparing a meal. The Pharisees considered all these practices inappropriate for the Sabbath. (Deut. 23:25)

This approach to the Sabbath continues today among Orthodox Jews. In early 1992, tenants let three apartments in an Orthodox neighborhood in Israel burn to the ground while they asked a rabbi whether a telephone call to the fire department on the Sabbath would violate Jewish law. Observant Jews are forbidden to use the phone on the Sabbath, because doing so would break an electrical current, which is considered a form of work. In the half-hour it took the rabbi to decide "yes," the fire spread to two neighboring apartments.

- C. David Ate the Showbread - (vs 3-4) Jesus was not questioning if they had ever actually read the scripture, He was questioning if they had ever considered what it said or meant. Jesus literally said "Have you never understood the scripture?" If their understanding and expression of obedience to Sabbath law was correct then David should have been struck dead or at least condemned by God for eating the showbread in the temple.

Jesus points out that this story indicates God cares about people's needs more than He cares about strict obedience to the law. It also indicates that the law, when understood rightly, should cause us to care for others and show them love, mercy, and compassion rather than condemnation.

“Any application of the Sabbath Law which operates to the detriment of man is out of harmony with God’s purpose.” (Morgan)

Why did the Scriptures not condemn David for what he did? They did not because David was meeting a human need. God permitted him to violate what, to the Pharisees, appeared to be the letter of the law, but not the true intent of the law, without condemnation. (Constable)

- D. Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath - (vs 5) In context, these are the same Pharisees to which Jesus already referred to Himself as the “Son of Man”. Now He repeats Himself in His identity as the rightful ruler and judge of the earth as well as the Master or Lord over the Sabbath, which was a full claim to Deity.
- E. It happened on another Sabbath - (vs. 6) Now Luke continues on this theme of correcting the expression and understanding of Sabbath observance by indicating that this happened on a Sabbath but not necessarily the next Sabbath after the picking and eating of the wheat. He's still after the hearts of the Pharisees in hopes of getting them to change their minds concerning Sabbath observance.

Jesus was not doing away with the Sabbath. He was attempting to show that in their understanding of the Sabbath, they missed the whole point. The religious spirit wants to debate and get hung up on adherence to rules, but the point wasn't which rules were the correct rules. The point was who is God and what is He like.

- F. Jesus knowing their thoughts - (vs. 8) At this point the Pharisees had made up their minds that they were going to reject Jesus and oppose Him because of His position on Sabbath law. Now they set Him up to do a public miracle (work) on the Sabbath in front of their followers so they could condemn Him publicly.

By their very actions, the Pharisees admitted that Jesus had the power of God to work miracles, yet they sought to trap Him. It was as if a man could fly and the authorities arrested him for not landing at airports. - Guzik

- G. Said to the Man with the Withered Hand “Stand There” (vs. 8) Jesus asks the Man to stand whom they had chosen to be the test. Here it is clear that adherence to religious tradition had taken the place of love for neighbor and now the neighbor had been chosen as bait in order to condemn the one sent to save them. The tone of the question is merciful, not harsh.

“Let me ask you guys a question, is the Sabbath law meant to uphold goodness or evil?” The next question He asks concerning “saving a life” in the original language is clearly speaking of “preserving physical life” which is very much of note. Jesus looks intently at them waiting for an answer to His question. If they say it is good to preserve life on the Sabbath, they are giving Him permission to heal. So they say nothing. Then Jesus, standing at some distance from the man, “commands” him to stretch out the fingers on His hand and he does. Jesus healed the man's hand, but He did so without performing any physical work. There was nothing that the critics could point to for which they could condemn Him.

- H. Withered Hand Healed and They were filled with Rage (vs. 10-11) The miracle of healing a man's pain and suffering caused them to be filled with rage. The original language means “senseless rage” or “rage devoid of understanding” and they began to plot how they might get rid of Jesus.

II. Choosing the Twelve (Lk. 6:12-16)

- A. Jesus Continued all Night in Prayer - (vs. 12) I believe this verse is meant to show us two things...
1. Like every other struggle Jesus faced, He faced this one as a man; a man who needed to seek the will of His Father and rely on the power of the Holy Spirit just as we do. He needed to make an incredibly weighty decision, one that would secure or destroy the future of the legacy He would leave.
 2. Jesus considered whom He would choose to share His life with to be an incredibly weighty decision, one that would secure or destroy the future of the legacy He would leave.
- B. The Dynamics of the Twelve - (vs. 13-16) It seems to me that you could spend hours meditating upon the dynamics of why the Spirit led Jesus to pick these twelve individuals. We can assume that Luke wanted us to consider the unique

culture of these men. Especially their social status, world view, economic status, and even potential previous run-ins with one another.

1. From the Group in Pairs - (vs. 13) Jesus had a large group of disciples from which he chose these twelve. He chose them in pairs or possibly put them in pairs. However this was initiated, they were talked about in pairs and sent out in pairs. This theme was carried on by disciples after Jesus's ascension.
 2. The Relational Dynamics (vs. 14) There are brothers (James and John, Peter and Andrew); business associates (Peter, James, and John were all fishermen); strongly opposing political viewpoints (Matthew the Roman-friendly tax collector, and Simon, the Roman-hating Zealot); and one who would betray Jesus (Judas Iscariot, who also became a traitor).
- C. The True Power of Gods Love - We must understand that Jesus bound these desperately different men together in unity and love in just a couple of years to the point that they referred to one another in the deepest of relational language, brothers who love each other.

III. Sermon on the Mount According to Luke (Lk. 6:17-49)

- A. Gathering the Crowd - (vs. 17-19) People came from great distances to be healed and delivered from demonic spirits by Jesus, even from Gentile cities such as Tyre and Sidon. This was a dramatic scene, with hundreds or thousands crowding in upon Jesus to touch Him, hoping to receive something miraculous from Him. In that scene and context, Jesus taught them. We might say that the healing service gathered the crowd so that He could get them in a position to receive His message.
- B. The Heart of the Kingdom - It is very important to understand that Jesus is laying out the beauties, growth, and hindrances of the hearts of the citizens of the Kingdom of God. This is all about our internal living or relational condition with God; not our salvatory legal position in God.

The main difference between Luke's recording of the Sermon on the Mount and Matthew's seems to be the forgoing of the teachings that have a distinctively Jewish religious appeal, specifically Jesus' interpretations of the Mosaic Law found in Matthew's Gospel. My assumption is that these parts had less significance for Luke's intended audience.

- C. The Garden or Foundation of the Heart - (vs. 20-49) Jesus uses the analogy of the foundations of a strong building and fruits found in a healthy properly cultivated garden multiple times in this teaching and in many other places. The foundations and the fruits represent the beauties of a heart transformed into His likeness. He starts out the message by listing the attributes of His heart of love that He desires for us to behold, experience, and carry.
1. Beatitudes - (vs. 20-23) Jesus presents us with four primary heart conditions that result in life “blessedness”, which is translated in the Greek as “happiness” which He carries and desires to form in us.
 - Poverty of Spirit - The original Greek word translated “poor” speaks of the most severe form of poverty. In other words, total dependance in every aspect of life. We know that Jesus had spiritual poverty foremost in mind, but He used a word that also pertained to physical well being as well. Blessed are those who depend on God and have chosen to rely upon Him for everything.
 - Hungering for Righteousness - Hunger speaks of those who have a constant desire or longing for both intimacy with God and a greater degree of holiness to be formed in them. Jesus uses the word in a voluntary way; in other words, blessed are those who choose to be hungry for righteousness sake.
 - Mourning for the Kingdom - There is a blessedness that accompanies those who have carried sorrow continuously for the things which God weeps over. Things such as sin, death, oppression, injustice, and pain over the gap between what God wants things to be and what things are in this fallen age.
 - Persecuted for Righteousness - When God's heart is formed in us to the point that we become like Him in certain aspects it will cause us to carry ourselves in a contradictory way from the fallenness of this age. There will be resistance and rejection from this spirit of the age and we will face persecution. The disciples rejoiced when they suffered in light of the transformative work of God in their lives.

2. Weeds/Sand - (vs. 24-26) Jesus now brings us four heart conditions that will produce weeds, not fruit in our hearts, and cause us to build the house of our souls on sand, which will ultimately fall when tested.
 - Woe to you who are Rich - Being rich here is set directly in contrast to the poverty spoken of previously. So we know by its context that He is mostly speaking of dependance or need. Woe to you if your need for God's leadership, care, strength, and righteousness is not part of your daily prayer.
 - Woe to you who are Full - Here in the American culture I believe this strong warning needs to be visited more often. All of us have access to endless schedules and generally fill up any spare time with some form of entertainment. Only an intentional lifestyle of fasting from our endless supply of business, food, and entertainment can slow us down enough, and empty us enough to feel the spiritual dullness that we have accumulated.
 - Woe to you who Laugh - Jesus is not talking about happy people with joyful hearts. He's talking in contrast to the heart that carries Godly sorrow and sobriety. The picture is an individual who feels no soberness or sorrow for the brokenness of their own heart and the world around them. No longing for Justice and Righteousness and the Restoration that all of creation groans and longs for.
 - Woe to you when all Men speak Well of You - Once again, this is in contrast to the persecution of righteousness. If your life and values do not provoke the darkness and evil in the world, it is questionable how real your faith and relationship with the Holy One is, Who is not of this age.
3. Cultivating Good Soil/Building on Rock - (vs. 27-36) Jesus now provides the building blocks for our foundation and the "miracle grow" that we can fertilize the garden of our hearts with. These are extremely practical positioners to root out death and to allow the master gardener to cultivate love in us. Though these statements are very real and practical, they are extremely counter cultural and counter to our flesh, so in short, they are very difficult to walk out consistantly, and impossible to walk out, apart

from the power of the Spirit giving us strength, perseverance, and awareness.

- Do good to your Enemies - This statement needs no explanation or in depth teaching, we just need to take in the devastating gap between the mindset of this fallen age and this aspect of who God is and how He loves. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.
 - Bear Insults and Offenses with a Clean Heart - In the culture of the first century, a common expression of insulting someone was to slap them on the right cheek in public. Jesus is not talking about someone trying to take your life or even physically damage you. He is talking specifically into the realm of an individual who is insulting or publicly slandering you. He tells us that when someone does this to us that we are to resist the fallen heart response to retaliate in kind. Jesus calls us instead to respond in the opposite spirit and let them insult and slander us.
 - Deal Graciously with minor Injustice - Jesus is very clear that we are talking about a petty lawsuit here like something we would bring to a small claims court. They want to sue us and take our “tunic/shirt”, not our business or home. In that day, a shirt was worth the equivalent of around 500 of today’s dollars. We get so hung up and consumed with acts of injustice that in the big picture are very petty.
 - The Golden Rule - Jesus is specifically targeting those who we dislike or are intentionally opposing us in the same manner. In that moment, treat them like you wish they would treat you.
4. Judgment in Love - (vs. 37-42) The word judge means to evaluate so as to approve or correct. In our culture today it is incredibly common to misinterpret this passage to say that we must never point out anything that is wrong or any person who is wrong. Many believe that we are to avoid all judgment. In fact, the leading thought in our culture is that any and all judgment stems from negativity and hate. This has led to the juxtaposition of judgment and love and so now it's very common to hear that, “If you love someone you won’t judge them, and if you do judge them, then you hate them.”

The word judge means to evaluate so as to approve or correct. In our culture today it is incredibly common to misinterpret this passage to say that we must never point out anything that is wrong or any person who is wrong. Many believe that we are to avoid all judgment.

In fact, the leading thought in our culture is that any and all judgment stems from negativity and hate. This has led to the juxtaposition of judgment and love and so now it's very common to hear that, "If you love someone you won't judge them, and if you do judge them, then you hate them."

Jesus tells us that the measure or standard in which we judge will be measured back to us. In my opinion, this is commonly misapplied as a statement about how God will judge us. If we judge harshly, then God judges us harshly. The problem with this is that God's character does not change based upon our behavior or mindset. He is always merciful, patient, gentle, true, and fully loving in all His judgments to both the righteous and the wicked. It is my conviction that Jesus is talking about how the standard in which we judge affects how we judge ourselves and how others return judgment upon us. We should judge in the right way, in line with the character of God, which includes the right process, right information, and right spirit. The whole purpose of our Judgment must be rooted in God's heart of love and care for the individual. We seek restoration and wholeness in the process which Jesus gives us

5. Exhortation of Wisdom - (vs. 43-49) The context for the fruits in this passage is not success in ministry, followers, popularity, or the sales of a book or teaching. Fruit, in context, is also not calling people to—or engaging in—the activities of waging war on the hindrances, or intentionally pursuing the positioning activities. Those are that which can help produce the fruits. The fruits are the beatitudes which can only be discerned through relational interaction and must be displayed in that relational context, not just simply talked about.

You will know them - The cultural context of Jesus's day was that teachers and prophets were those you did life with and were part of your community. There is a massive underlying theme to this section of exhortation that places a great emphasis on intentional relationships with like-minded believers, knowing that those relationships greatly hinder or encourage your intentionality to the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle. This means that Jesus is calling us to identify individuals based upon the

beatitudes of love flowing from their lives, and pursue intentional relationships with those individuals who bear the fruits of love exhorted to us in the Sermon on the Mount.

- a. Garden Growth - (vs. 43-45) Within the heart of every believer is a desire to walk in God's will for their life. The discussion and desire of God's will for their life almost always centers around questions of practical assignment or calling in this age with an outward focus. These discussions and desires to be in God's will outwardly must be eclipsed by the will of God for your life internally. Jesus refers to setting this priority of focusing internally on building your intimacy with Him through the Sermon on the Mount as a life of divine wisdom. The growth of the garden of your heart is far more important than the directional decisions of your life. Jesus makes it clear that those who prioritize the outward will of God above inward, or attempt to build an inward life in God outside of the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle are living a life of folly
- b. Unshakable Foundation - (vs. 46-49) Lastly, Jesus calls us out and says "If you call me Lord then listen to what I say and do it!" He tells us that this lifestyle is necessary in order to have unshakable faith and love. We must build on the lifestyle of this rock of teaching or our hearts will not make it when shaking comes.

In a recent poll done by Pew Research, 65% of Christians believe that Jesus will return to the earth by 2060. Jesus told us that the most difficult time in human history will unfold just before His return. The bible calls this the time "great shaking". Whether or not you believe this may happen in your lifetime or your children's lifetime, all have seen and experienced the fall of believers in the face of the storms of life.