

Sermon 79: A Good God Confronts Religious Pride: Luke 14:1-6

Text: Luke 14:1-6 "And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him. And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go; And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day? And they could not answer him again to these things..."

Summary: God graciously and masterfully confronts people's pride because the truth matters and souls are in the balances.

Proposition: We must be willing to learn from Christ's example and stand on the side of truth.

Introduction: Three important Proverbs and a New Testament application

- **Foolish leaders are surround by wicked advisors, because they will tell the leader what they want to hear, rather than what they need to hear: Proverbs 29:12** "If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked..."
- **While contending with foolish people is frustrating and generally a waste of time, there are times that we must engage a fool in their folly: Proverbs 26:5** "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit..."
- **When God allows the wicked to fall, He does it because He is just and because He wants to warn those who are toying with folly: Proverbs 21:11** "When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge..."
- **Applying these Proverbs: Titus 1:9-11** We must hold fast the faithful word: "That he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake..."

Part 1: Understanding this event in Christ's ministry:

The setting: Luke's gospel has a very definite structure:

- **The first four chapters of Luke introduced Christ as the Son of Man.**

- **The next five chapters presented numerous details from His ministry that validate the claims of those first four chapters.**
- **The next ten chapters presented selected examples of the stunning Jewish rejection of Christ.**
- **Our text is in the middle of the third section where Luke records a building opposition to Christ amongst the religious leaders, and a series of pointed warning from Him which further heightened this animosity.**
- **In Luke 13-14 Jesus had been teaching in the cities and village around Jerusalem and lamented the hardened rejection He received in Jerusalem.**
 - **It is not clear how much time had transpired between the confrontation in Luke 13 and Luke 14, however there are several similarities between these two events:**
 - **Both were miracles performed on the Sabbath.**
 - **Both were performed in a very confrontational manner.**
 - **The reasoning on both sides of the Sabbath debate was almost identical:**
 - **Don't you feed and water your animals on the Sabbath? Luke 13:15-16** "Doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox...from the stall, and lead him away to watering?"
 - **Doesn't this woman have more valuable than an animal:** "Ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?"
 - **Don't you rescue your vulnerable animals on the Sabbath? Luke 14:5-6** "Which of you shall have an...ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?"
- **It is also clear, that the chief Pharisees' invitation to Christ was a setup:**
 - **14:1** "As he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day...they watched him..."
 - **14:2** "Behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy..."

The confrontation:

- **Christ knew exactly what was happening, and He confronted the challenge directly: 14:3** "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?"
- **The legal scholars who were present did not answer Him: 14:4** "And they held their peace..."
- **Christ healed the man to bring the issue to a point: 14:4** "And he took him, and healed him, and let him go..."
- **He asked a follow-up question: 14:5** "Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?"
- **They did not have a satisfactory answer to His question: 14:6** "And they could not answer him again to these things..."

The significance of the confrontation: There are seven examples in the gospels of Christ performing miracles on the Sabbath Day.

- **He healed Peter's Mother-in-law in Mark 1:29-31**
- **He cast out evil spirits in Mark 1:21-28**
- **He healed a man with a withered hand in Luke 6:1-11**
- **He healed a lame man at the Pool of Bethesda in John 5:1-18**
- **He healed a man who was born blind in John 9:1-6**
- **He healed a crippled woman in Luke 13:10-17**
- **He healed a man with dropsy (a swelling of the legs) in Luke 14:1-6**
- **Over half of these situations led to significant confrontations:**
 - **Doesn't God have the right to tell you what is acceptable on the Sabbath day: Luke 6:5** "The Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath..."
 - **Doesn't God have the right to show compassion on His children whenever He chooses: Luke 13:16** "Ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?"
 - **If the Father and the Son are equal, doesn't that make Him God in flesh: John 5:18** "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God..."
 - **If the Son can perform such an unmistakable miracle, why don't people accept Him: John 9:32-33** "Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one

that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing..."

- **Why do you see your actions as righteous and God's as unrighteous: Luke 14:5** "Which of you shall have an...an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?"

Part 2: Understanding Christ's concern:

- **He came to save sinners: Matthew 18:11-14** "The Son of man is come to save that which was lost...it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish..."
- **No one gets saved without three basic realities:**
 - **Reality 1: There must be an acceptable basis to grant salvation: 2 Corinthians 5:21** "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him..."
 - **Reality 2: There must be a confrontation that calls people to repentance and faith: 2 Corinthians 4:1-6** "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ...should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord...For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ..."
 - **Reality 3: There is no repentance and faith without people willing to proclaim the gospel: Romans 10:14-18** "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God...Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world..."

Part 3: Learning from Christ's action:

- **Sentimentality does not save anyone.**
- **Compassion is meaningless without righteous action.**
- **Christ actively confronted, pride, self-righteousness, and theological error, because the truth matters, and people's lives were in the balances.**
- **Christ's actions give us a pattern to follow:**

- **Confrontation:** He confronted the errors that were at the heart of their rejection of salvation.
 - **14:3** "Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees..."
- **Reasoning:** He reasoned with them from a point of authority and appealed to their conscience.
 - **14:3** "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?"
 - **14:5** "Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?"
- **Persistence:** He continued to confront and reason with them while there was a point of contact.
 - **Doesn't God have the right to tell you what is acceptable on the Sabbath day: Luke 6:5**
 - **Doesn't God have the right to show compassion on His children whenever He chooses: Luke 13:16**
 - **If the Father and the Son are equal, doesn't that make Him God in flesh: John 5:18**
 - **If the Son can perform such an unmistakable miracle, why don't people accept Him: John 9:32-33**
- **This pattern is true whether someone is saved or lost:**
 - **God desires lost people to be saved:**
 - **2 Peter 3:9** He is: "Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance..."
 - **1 Timothy 2:4** It is His desire that: "All men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth..."
 - **He desires His children to grow: Hebrews 12:6, 11** "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth...it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby..."

Application: We need to sense the inescapable importance of truth.

- **The pride and the self-righteousness of our generation is no excuse to shrink back.**
- **We must engage this generation at this time after the example of Christ:**
- **Four Simple Words:**
 - **Courage:** We need to overcome our emotional apprehensions.
 - **Knowledge:** We need a good working knowledge of the scriptures.

- **Patience:** We need to endure the frustrations and disappointments we most certainly encounter.
- **Confidence:** God's word will not return void.