

Give Strength to the Broken

Over the summer we have spent our time talking about *Receiving the Heart of Jesus*. What does it mean to love the way He loved? What does it mean to do what Jesus did? Today's lesson comes to us from Matthew 12:1-14 where Jesus and the disciples get into a confrontation over the keeping of manmade sabbath day rules ... which had been ... in some cases ... elevated above God's law. It is not accidental that Matthew places this story right after the conclusion of chapter 11 where Jesus promises "rest for your souls."

I. The Sabbath in Jesus' Day

- A. Genesis 2:2-3 - Ordained at Creation - *God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, for on it he rested from all his work of creation.*
- B. In the wilderness: Exodus 20:8 - *Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy:*
- C. Adherence to it was seen as a test of a person's allegiance to God.
 1. Exodus 35:2; Numbers 15:32-36 - willful disobedience to it was a capital offense.
 2. Leviticus 23:3 - it was a day of worship .. a day of sacred assembly.
- D. The Jewish Talmud ... 24 chapters of rules and regulations.

II. The Story

- A. 12:1-8 - Growing Suspicion of Jesus
 1. 12:1 - *At that time Jesus passed through the grain fields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick and eat some heads of grain.*
 2. 12:2 - Pharisees: *See, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.*
 3. 12:3-4 - Sabbath law never intended to restrict needs of necessity.
 4. 12:5-6 - Sabbath law was never intended to restrict service to God.
 5. 12:7-8 - Sabbath law was never intended to restrict acts of mercy.
- B. 12:9-14 - An Illustration
 1. 12:9 - *Moving on from there, he entered their synagogue.*
 - a) Inside the synagogue is a man with a withered hand.
 - b) Mark 3:4 - *is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath or to do evil, to save life or to kill.*
 2. 12:11-13, the man's hand was restored, *as good as the other.*
 3. 12:14 - *but the Pharisees went out, and took counsel against Him, how they might destroy him.*
- C. Why?
 1. Matthew 12:12b - *it is lawful to do what is good on the Sabbath.*
 2. Matthew 12:12a - *A person is worth far more than a sheep...*

III. As We Close...

- A. We must not bind where God has not bound.
 1. Ephesians 4:3 - *making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*
- B. We must focus properly.
 1. Meeting needs, serving God, and showing mercy *is doing what Jesus did.*
- C. You can experience the Jesus who brought deliverance, assurance, grace and hope. Do you know Him?