

JANUARY 26, 2020

The Lord of the Sabbath

Many of Jesus's interactions with people happened on the Sabbath¹— the Jewish day of rest. To this day, “Shabbat,” as it is called, is meant to remind God's people that he made them, he rescued them out of slavery (and labor/work), and that his plan for them is to enjoy his care and provision. In Jesus's day, the religious leaders had imposed many rules upon the people regarding what they could and could not do. The burden of keeping these rules meant that many people could not truly “rest” in what God had designed these hours to represent. As you read these stories, observe how Jesus draws people back into its rightful intent and helps them see God's true plan of restoration.

- **Verses 2:23-3:6** – How does Jesus demonstrate controversial behavior regarding the Sabbath?
- Jesus asks them the question, “Have you not read what David did?” What *did* David do? What is the point Jesus is making by reminding the Pharisees of this story? (See 1 Samuel 21:1-9)
- What might consecrated bread and Sabbath have in common?
- What does Jesus mean by “the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath”? (vs.27-28) How does Jesus illustrate this purpose in healing the man in the synagogue? (vs. 3:3-5)
- **Verses 13-19** – Why do you think Jesus picked these Twelve men to be his followers? What type(s) of men are they?
- **Verses 20-30** – Why were people untrusting of Jesus's healings? What is Jesus's response to them?
- **“Blasphemy”** is the sin of slander/lying/exaggerating about God. “Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit,” then, is lying against the testimony of the Holy Spirit. What claim is Jesus making by offering this serious warning? (vs 28-30) Is this a sin that people commit today?
- **Apply it.** What we say about Jesus matters – who he was/is, where his authority came from, and why he healed and touched people (even when he wasn't supposed to). What do you struggle to believe about Jesus? How might you begin to follow him (more) and learn more about his Kingdom?

²³ And it happened that He was passing through the grainfields on the Sabbath, and His disciples began to make their way along while picking the heads *of grain*. ²⁴ The Pharisees were saying to Him, “Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” ²⁵ And He *said to them, “Have you never read what David did when he was in need and he and his companions became hungry; ²⁶ how he entered the house of God in the time of Abiathar *the* high priest, and ate the consecrated bread, which is not lawful for *anyone* to eat except the priests, and he also gave it to those who were with him?” ²⁷ Jesus said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸ So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

³ He entered again into a synagogue; and a man was there whose hand was withered. ² They were watching Him *to see* if He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. ³ He *said to the man with the withered hand, “Get up and come forward!” ⁴ And He *said to them, “Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to kill?” But they kept silent. ⁵ After looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He *said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored. ⁶ The Pharisees went out and immediately *began* conspiring with the Herodians against Him, *as to* how they might destroy Him.

[Verses 7-12 are omitted in this study. Read and study separately.]

¹³ And He *went up on the mountain and *summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him. ¹⁴ And He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He *could* send them out to preach, ¹⁵ and to have authority to cast out the demons. ¹⁶ And He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom He gave the name Peter), ¹⁷ and James, the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them He gave the name Boanerges, which means, “Sons of Thunder”); ¹⁸ and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot; ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him.

²⁰ And He *came home, and the crowd *gathered again, to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal. ²¹ When His own people heard *of this*, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, “He has lost His senses.” ²² The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and “He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons.” ²³ And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶ If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished! ²⁷ But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house.

²⁸ “Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; ²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”— ³⁰ because they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.”

¹ See Exodus 20:8-10; Exodus 31:17