

Sent Week 4: The Law of Love, the Sabbath.

Mike's Minutes:

As we come near the end of the 21 Days of Prayer I want to ask that you would begin to pray about who you could invite to Easter.

Review:

As we talked about last week...

Everyone wants a revival, they just want *their* version of a revival.

For most people, God moving in their lives means God helping them win their way over someone else's.

How many people pray for revival and mean, "I am in sin. My people are in sin. Forgive me, oh God!"

Illustration:

I grew up in a smaller community. The culture of that small community still protected church time. The sabbath was sacred. Moving to a big city and the progression of time has drained that away. The sabbath is no longer sacred.

What's gained seems fairly clear. You can make more money! Business can stay open, employees can work more hours.

Let's talk about the Sabbath.

It begins in the rhythms of Creation. For six days or spans of time depending on how you interpret it, God worked. On the seventh "day" something changed... He rested.

What do I mean by rest?

Rest (Sabbath) simply means a turning of your hands and attention from making more to sharing and enjoying what has been made. Imagine a turning of the hands from down at the plow to facing up to receive.

The number 7 is a big deal in the Bible. It represents fullness. It's the time when you stop working and turn around and enjoy what has already been created. Adam and Eve were supposed to be the King and Queen of the seventh day rest, the champions of receiving and practicing charity. The enemy came and deceived them. Satan broke the rest. ¹ Satan came and deceived them out of enjoying and offering this charity. He destroyed rest.

A couple ways to say:

You cannot rest without trust. Trust that God will provide.

¹ The Bible Project: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFTLvKB3JLM>. Last accessed January, 25, 2021

This lack of trust broke something very important – charity. You cannot rest without charity. Those that have much aren't satisfied, thus they can't rest. Those that have little aren't shared with so they must keep working. When charity dies so does rest.

With this in mind let's go to the text.

[Luke 6:1-11](#)

6 On a Sabbath, while he was going through the grainfields, his disciples plucked and ate some heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands. 2 But some of the Pharisees said, "Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?" 3 And Jesus answered them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: 4 how he entered the house of God and took and ate the bread of the Presence, which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those with him?" 5 And he said to them, "The Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."

A Man with a Withered Hand

6 On another Sabbath, he entered the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was withered. 7 And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him, to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath, so that they might find a reason to accuse him. 8 But he knew their thoughts, and he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come and stand here." And he rose and stood there. 9 And Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?" 10 And after looking around at them all he said to him, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored. 11 But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.²

- The Sabbath was supposed to be a day of charity and rest; the Pharisees made it a day of fear. People were afraid they would worship and rest in a wrong way and that their failure would keep the Messiah from coming. Ironically the Pharisees are missing the very thing they are trying to bring because of wrong heart. Let's take this even deeper.
- The Pharisees were convinced their lack of rest or peace with God was because they weren't getting spirituality right. Like all good deceptions there is truth to it. We are all sinners (Rom. 3:23) but our response to failure is not to continually perfect our man-made ways but to submit to the way maker.
 - How do you find financial satisfaction? Not by having more than the person you admire or are competing with, but by practicing satisfaction and charity. (Prov. 19:17; Prov. 21:13; 1 John 3:17; Luke 6:38)
 - How do you find the favor of God? Not by leaving those around you "in the dust," but by helping them out of it. (Deut. 15:7-11; Prov. 21:13; Prov. 22:9; Isaiah 58:10; James 1:27)
 - How do you live your faith out correctly? Not by merely examining more information about the Bible, but by letting the Bible examine and shape your heart. (Joel: 2:13; Heb. 4:12; Rom. 12:1-2)

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Lk 6:1–11.

- Back to the text:
So there is Christ, it's the "day of rest", the sabbath. The pharisees know the world is a mess and know it's because of their sin. They have made deep and complicated rules to help people obey God. They did this because they are hoping the Messiah will come and rescue them when they get it all right. Don't cast heavy blame on them. They were taught to do this. Jesus comes along and sees this man in need of charity. Jesus reaches out and heals him, demonstrating that He is Lord over the sabbath.³ He so wisely even teaches the real intent of the sabbath by using a hero of theirs, king David.⁴

The real sabbath is the practice of charity, both receiving and offering it. For those that have, trust that God will provide and resist the desire to hoard. For those that do not have, you are free to rest because someone gave.

What does this mean for me?

Years ago I did a hike in Colorado. I remember getting up before the sun had come up, putting on our boots and starting off on the trail. It's so easy for your mind to wander when you are hiking mile after mile with nothing but the trail in front of you. There is a saying hikers use. "Be where your boots are." The idea is that you have no control or contact with much of what is consuming your thoughts on the trail. Just, be where your boots are.

In the early days of the coronavirus lockdown I honestly struggled a bit.

There were reports that the economy was going to completely crash and expect people to stop giving to non-profits. I thought about all the families that I am responsible for on my staff. What happens if that comes true?

Another report was saying that it's possible in person church services are a thing of the past. Another report early on said millions of Americans were going to die this year from Covid. Another report said that children who survived were having all kinds of weird health issues. There was another story in the newspaper about a mother dying during delivery.

I had people in our church who were having anxiety attacks reaching out.

I came home with a very busy mind. I felt like the Holy Spirit whispered in my heart, "Just be where your boots are." I felt like He was asking me to represent God with what I have control over and just trust him with what I can't control.

Personally and as a Church we just trusted God and gave more and more to help people.

God kept providing. Tithes and offerings were going up. Many of you told me your businesses were doing better. Instead of hoarding you gave more, we gave more, we ministered to more and God kept providing.

When the world was in chaos, we found sabbath, because of trust, because of charity offered to others and charity accepted from them.

Remember:

³ Crossway Bibles, [The ESV Study Bible](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1961.

⁴ Luke 6:3-5

Some of the greatest revivals of God follow the greatest trust moments with God, both personally and corporately. This is not a call to sinful foolish living. However, the Pharisees applied man's wisdom all the way to the point where they were no longer faithful to God.

Next Steps:

The world needs to see your sabbath, your charity. You need to practice sabbath, practice charity. Who is God putting on your heart to offer it to? Who do you need to receive charity from?

The kings and queens of the Sabbath rule their land by accepting charity and offering it.