

Luke 6:1-3

One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and his disciples began to pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands and eat the kernels. 2 Some of the Pharisees asked, "**Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?**"

From the standpoint of the law...what they did was allowed

- Deu 23:25 NIV If you enter your neighbor's grainfield, you may pick kernels with your hands, but you must not put a sickle to their standing grain.

BUT From the standpoint of the Sabbath rules - the disciples were in violation

Rules of the sabbath

The Law simply said the Sabbath is to be kept holy, and that on it no work is to be done

- The Jewish teachers needed definition - so they asked - '**What is Work?**'
- They defined **39 categories of work** (see list below)
- In the eyes of the religious leaders the disciples were guilty of reaping, harvesting threshing, and winnowing grain for food...four violations of the Sabbath in one mouthful

1. Carrying	11. Knotting	21. Sifting	31. Building
2. Burning	12. Untying	22. Grinding	32. Demolishing
3. Extinguishing	13. Shaping	23. Kneading	33. Trapping
4. Finishing	14. Plowing	24. Combing	34. Shearing
5. Writing	15. Planting	25. Spinning	35. Slaughtering
6. Erasing	16. Reaping	26. Dyeing	36. Skinning
7. Cooking	17. Harvesting	27. Chain-stitching	37. Tanning
8. Washing	18. Threshing	28. Warping	38. Smoothing
9. Sewing	19. Winnowing	29. Weaving	39. Marking
10. Tearing	20. Selecting	30. Unraveling	

These 39 categories weren't enough - Now they needed further definition of each

- For instance, CARRYING - "**What does it mean to carry a burden on the Sabbath?**"
- Now they have to define a **burden**
 - A burden is "food equal in weight to a dried fig, enough wine for mixing in a goblet, milk enough for one swallow, honey enough to put upon a wound, oil enough to anoint a small member, water enough to moisten an eye-salve, paper enough to write a customs house notice upon, ink enough to write two letters of the alphabet, reed enough to make a pen"—and so on endlessly

- They debated about if a man could lift a lamp from one place to another
- Whether a tailor committed a sin if he went out with a needle in his robe
- Whether a woman could wear a brooch or false hair
- Even if a man could go out on the Sabbath with artificial teeth or an artificial limb
- Or if a man could lift his child on the Sabbath Day

These cumbersome rules became the focus, they lost their way

- Their religion consisted of **man-made rules, regulations and traditions**
- They were **drowning in legalism** and turned the Sabbath into **a grievous burden**

LEGALISM: Moves us beyond the simple interpretation of the clear word of God

Some of the believing Pharisee's...felt the Gentiles should keep the law

- Acts 15:10 - [But Peter said] Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles **a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear?**

LEGALISM: Those raised in legalism sometimes find it difficult to be free of it after salvation

Jesus' response to "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"

Luke 6:3-5

Jesus answered them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? 4 He entered the house of God, and taking the consecrated bread, he ate what is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." 5 Then Jesus said to them, **"The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."**

Mark's Version

- Mar 2:27 Then he said to them, **"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."**

Matthew's Version

- Mat 12:5-8 Or haven't you read in the Law that **the priests on Sabbath duty in the temple desecrate the Sabbath and yet are innocent?** 6 I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. 7 If you had known what these words mean, **'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent.** 8 For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

Add'l Comments from John about the Sabbath

- Joh 7:22-24 NIV Yet, because Moses gave you circumcision (though actually it did not come from Moses, but from the patriarchs), you circumcise a boy on the Sabbath. 23 Now if a boy can be circumcised on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses may not be broken, why are you angry with me for healing a man's whole body on the Sabbath? 24 **Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly."**

Summary of the issue with David eating the showbread

- The Son of Man is LORD of the Sabbath - He can do what He wants with it
- The Sabbath was made for [serves] man - not man [to serve] for the Sabbath
- The priest is innocent of “breaking the sabbath” if he carries out his duties
- The priest is innocent of “breaking the sabbath” if he circumcises a boy
- Jesus considered David as INNOCENT in the eating of the showbread - though it was NOT LAWFUL - The LORD said “I desire MERCY not SACRIFICE” - IF YOU UNDERSTOOD **you would not have condemned the innocent**
 - It boiled down to “**Lack of Understanding**” (condemning the innocent) & “**No Sound Judgement**” (judging by mere appearance rather than judging correctly)

LEGALISM: keeps us from sound judgement and understanding about the things of the LORD

Luke 6:6-8

On another Sabbath he went into the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was shriveled. 7 The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were **looking for a reason to accuse Jesus**, so they watched him closely **to see if he would heal on the Sabbath**. 8 But Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Get up and stand in front of everyone." So he got up and stood there.

They watched to see if he would heal on the Sabbath

- **they knew he had power to heal - they were looking for a reason to accuse Him**
- **they cared more about the Sabbath infraction** than about the healing of this person
- the law was summed up as “love God and love your neighbor as yourself”
 - all they could see was the violation of their rules - not the healing of this man
 - **Somehow they missed the deeper purpose of the law**

LEGALISM: Blinds us from grasping the true focus of the law (love God and others)

Luke 6:9

Then Jesus said to them, "**I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?**"

Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?

In the days of the Maccabean Revolt, about 200 years earlier, there was the question of whether it is permissible for a Jewish soldier to fight on the Sabbath

- The strategy of the enemy was simple...attack on the Sabbath
- Terrible massacres occurred, so it became permissible for soldiers to fight to protect themselves and to save lives on the Sabbath
- Jesus is asking a related question “**is is lawful to do good, TO SAVE LIVES? on the Sabbath?**”- and the reference to Maccabees may be the reason they were speechless

LEGALISM: Keeps us from giving an honest answer to a valid question.

Luke 6:10-11

He looked around at them all, and then said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was completely restored. 11 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law **were furious** and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus.

- Mark 3:4-6 NIV Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent. (5) He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. (6) Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians **how they might kill Jesus**.

They were FURIOUS...and discussed how they might kill Jesus...They can only see the infraction of their own rules. They are carried away with this breaking of the Sabbath rule, but somehow in doing so **they overlooked the sin of anger and murder in their hearts**

LEGALISM: Keeps us from seeing the greater sin of anger and murder in our hearts
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What does this have to do with us?

We must guard against false teaching that drifts toward legalism

- 1Ti 4:1-3 NIV The **Spirit clearly says that in later times** some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. 2 Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. 3 They **forbid people to marry** and order them **to abstain from certain foods**, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.

We must guard against becoming legalistic - it leads us to fall from grace

- Galatians 5:1-5 NIV It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. (2) Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that **if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all**. (3) Again I declare to **every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law**. (4) You who are trying to be **justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace**. (5) For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope.

We must guard against legalistic attitudes - they lift us up in pride and comparison

- Luke 18:9-14 NIV **To some who were confident of their own righteousness** and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: (10) "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. (11) The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, **I thank you that I am not like other people--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector**. (12) I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' (13) "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' (14) "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

What about keeping the Sabbath?

The Sabbath was a shadow...the reality is Christ

- Colossians 2:16-17 NIV Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a **Sabbath day**. (17) **These are a shadow** of the things that were to come; **the reality, however, is found in Christ.**

REST - Christ is the true Sabbath of Rest

Heb: to repose, that is, desist from exertion;

God was not tired and in need of REST because He was WEARY...it is that on the 7th day he was FINISHED with His work of creation - He CEASED or RESTED from work because the work was FINISHED...it is the FINISHING of an activity because it is complete...

- Genesis 2:1-3 KJV Thus the heavens and the earth were **finished**, and all the host of them. (2) And on the seventh day **God ended his work** which he had made; and **he rested on the seventh day from all his work** which he had made. (3) And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that **in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.**
- When Jesus Said IT IS FINISHED - it is similar to what was said about creation...The LORD said it is FINISHED when the work of creation was completed...Jesus said IT IS FINISHED when the work of the New Creation was completed.

Hebrews 3 and 4 shows the true Sabbath is our faith and relationship with Christ

- Hebrews 4:1-2 KJV Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. (2) For **unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them:** but the word preached did not profit them, **not being mixed with faith** in them that heard it.

We Cease from OUR DEAD WORKS to have FAITH IN CHRIST

- Hebrews 4:9-11 KJV There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. (10) For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath **ceased from his own works**, as God did from his. (11) Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.
- Hebrews 6:1 KJV Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of **repentance from dead works**, and of faith toward God

If you put yourself under the law you are obligated to keep the whole law

- Galatians 5:1-3 KJV Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (2) Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. (3) For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that **he is a debtor to do the whole law.**

Recognize there are disputable matters - honor the Lord's heart in these

- Rom 14:1-6 NIV **Accept** the one whose faith is weak, **without quarreling** over disputable matters. 2 One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. 3 The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for **God has accepted them**. 4 **Who are you to judge someone else's servant?** To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for **the Lord is able to make them stand**. 5 One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind. 6 **Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God.**

Closing...

Mark 7:5-13

At the center of our faith is a relationship - not a set of rules

- These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.
- Matthew 11:28-30 NIV "**Come to me**, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. (29) **Take my yoke** upon you and **learn from me**, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (30) **For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.**"

At the center of our belief and practice is God's Word - not the traditions of men

- They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.
- You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions
- "You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!
- Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition

The kingdom of God - is not eating and drinking but righteousness peace and joy

- Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,
- Micah 6:8 NIV He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.