

September 10, 2023

"Jesus Silences Critics"
Lesson 2

Luke 14:1-6

Intro

Today's text is the third time Luke mentions Jesus sharing a meal with a Pharisee. Each of these times Jesus was invited and accepted the invitation. We aren't told the motivation for the Pharisees, but they were closely watching Jesus to catch Him in some sort of transgression. That may have been the whole point in inviting Him, but may have also been to honor themselves for hosting an important guest. Instead of looking for their favor or approval, Jesus teaches them a lesson each time. The main subject at hand during this visit is keeping the Sabbath and the lawfulness of Jesus healing on the Sabbath. Keeping the Sabbath was something God commanded and took seriously. But Jesus shows a more gracious way to sort out competing priorities.

Read Luke 14:1-2

1. vs. 1: Jesus knows He is being watched in order to find fault
He went to the house of this "prominent Pharisee" anyway
2. vs. 2: A possible set up
This man who needed healing may have been invited as a test for Jesus
It is also possible that the man came seeking Jesus
Either way, Jesus certainly knew what was going on

Read Luke 14:3-6

1. vs. 3: Jesus Questions the Teachers
Jesus started by directly questioning the Pharisees and Law experts whether or not healing on the Sabbath was lawful.
This would put them and their words under scrutiny
2. vs 4: No answer is given
There was nothing in the Law that said healing on the Sabbath was forbidden
They were convinced it was wrong, but had no real proof
After they refuse to answer the question, Jesus heals the man and sends him away
3. vs 5: Jesus asks a second question
Who wouldn't rescue a child or an ox that has fallen into a pit (hand dug well) on the Sabbath?
To them, a sick person might just be getting what they deserve because of their sin
Jesus recognizes the man's value as a human regardless of his disease
4. vs 6: Again, they make no answer
Any answer they gave would have been rightly criticized
If they wouldn't rescue a child or even an animal, it would show a lack of even a common level of compassion.

If they admit that they would rescue either of these on a Sabbath, then it supports the lawfulness of Jesus healing on the Sabbath.
Even in silence, they still lost the argument.

Application: Jesus wasn't just having a debate with the Pharisees. He was showing them the importance of compassion, and reminding them that they still possessed at least some of this characteristic themselves. We need to be careful to prioritize things as God would. Human lives and souls matter more than appearances or legalism. The healing was for the benefit of the sick man, but even more to show the Pharisees what true righteousness looks like in practice. The same lesson is there for us as well. How do we react when people today violate our own unwritten laws in order to show grace or compassion to those who need it? How should we look at these situations?

Prayer:

Precious Father, help us to see things and people as You do. Help us to learn the lessons that the Pharisees rejected. May we always remember to prioritize compassion, mercy and grace as You have done for us. Help to always prioritize souls above appearances. In Jesus' name, amen.