

Sept 10, 2023



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

Lesson Leaders:

James Haymon
Barry Hosford

Class Leaders:

Inreach: Pat Hester
Deacon: C M Hester

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

Our desire to please God should be our highest motive for obeying God

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

Help me to evaluate the good and bad in the criticism, to trust You, and to continue in my work wholeheartedly

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

Hear, O our God, for we are despised; turn their reproach on their own heads, and give them as plunder to a land of captivity
(Neh 4:4 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", June 14, 2018)

Series: God's Law Is Love

UNIT 1: Love Completes, Law Falls Short

NEXT WEEK

Jesus Glorifies God
(John 7:14-24)

Jesus Silences Critics Luke 14:1-6

Lesson Background and Introduction

This lesson depicts the third occasion in Luke's Gospel that Jesus shared a meal with a Pharisee (see also Luke 7:36-50; 11:37-53). All three interactions share a common pattern of events. First, a Pharisee invited Jesus to join the meal. Second, a tense moment between Jesus and the host led to a conversation regarding issues of religious observance. Third, Jesus used the opportunity to instruct those in attendance on issues regarding how to follow God. In doing so, Jesus taught his fellow diners to act mercifully in their dealings with other people. The issue of doing work on the Sabbath is the primary concern of Luke 14:1-6, today's Scripture. The Jewish Sabbath was established based on the day that God rested after six days of creation (see Genesis 2:2-3; Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15). As a result, the people were commanded to cease work on the Sabbath. Such requirements regarding that day were a sign of holiness between God and his people (see Exodus 31:12-17). As the ancient Israelites left Egypt, they were commanded to take certain steps to prepare for Sabbath observance (example: Exodus 16:21-30). Later, as the people entered the promised land, the Law of Moses provided further descriptions regarding proper observance of the Sabbath (see 34:21; 35:1-3). Defiance of these commands brought harsh consequences to the people (examples: Numbers 15:32-36; Nehemiah 13:15-18; Jeremiah 17:27). Jesus never disputed the importance of the Sabbath. His high regard for it can be seen in his habit of teaching in synagogues on the Sabbath (examples: Mark 1:21; Luke 13:10). Further, he was willing to use the day to show mercy toward suffering people (examples: Mark 1:21-34; Luke 6:6-11; 13:10-17; John 5:1-18). As "Lord ... of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:28), Jesus demonstrated the true intent of the Sabbath: to remind God's people of his mercy (see Deuteronomy 5:15). The day was not to be a religious burden or an excuse to limit works of love and mercy.

The emphasis of this story is not on the ailing man. Instead, this story at its heart is a caution against focusing on religious practices at the expense of showing mercy. Jesus was not trying to nullify the Pharisees' practice of observing Sabbath. Not only did the Sabbath require a pause on work, but it also provided time for people to consider how they could show mercy to others. Further, the question of whether or not a person could heal on the Sabbath was an obscure point. Most people are unable to heal another person on any day of the week. Only the one who is the Lord of the Sabbath (see Luke 6:5) has the ability to heal on the Sabbath. Sometimes we unintentionally limit our expectations of what God ought to do. What are some traditions we hold to that perpetuate this? God's work is not limited by human expectations. We are to trust God and his timing of his work. When we exercise faith by trusting him in this way, we commit to lives of mercy, following the ways of our heavenly Father. Twentieth-century Jewish scholar Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972) describes the Sabbath as being an expression of holiness based in time. Although Christians today are not required to observe the Jewish Sabbath, we can still apply similar principles. The idea of observing specific time in order to show mercy to others meets a vital spiritual need for Christians. Followers of Jesus should desire to show mercy in sustained and tangible ways. Although we may sometimes get tunnel vision and focus on other parts of our (busy) lives, we must remember to keep mercy at the forefront of our minds, regardless of the situation.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Critical Through Testing (Luke 14:1-2)

Testing by watching (1)

Watched intently to see sincerity (Acts 6:15)

Watched for knowledge (Acts 4:13)

Watched the words used (Acts 8:6)

Watched for advantages (Acts 8:18)

Testing by providing an issue (2)

Issue so that Jesus could sympathize with man's temptations (Heb 4:15)

Issue because Jesus shouldn't have been put to the test (Luke 4:12-13)

Issue because Jesus was human and temptation is common to man (1 Cor 10:13)

Issue because Jesus could not be tempted by evil (James 1:13)

Critical Response through Questioning (Luke 14:3-4)

Questioning about lawfulness (3)

Questioned because the law can kill (2 Cor 3:6)

Questioned because God's righteousness is apart from the law (Rom 3:21-22)

Questioned because righteousness is not achieved by the law (Rom 9:30-32)

Questioned because righteousness that comes from God is by faith (Phil 3:9)

Questioning not answered (4)

Not answered because of lack of knowledge (Matt 21:27)

Not answered because of fear (Matt 22:46)

Not answered because they must be silent before God (Hab 2:20)

Not answered because they were humiliated (Luke 13:17)

Critical Response through Example (Luke 14:5-6)

Example of necessity (5)

Necessity because it was commanded (Exodus 23:4-5)

Necessity because it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath (Matt 12:12)

Necessity to keep from being a hypocrite (Luke 13:15)

Necessity to keep from doing evil (Mark 3:4)

Example proves lawfulness (6)

The law is perfect and revives the soul (Ps 19:7-8)

The law is holy (Rom 7:12-14)

The law holds the world accountable (Rom 3:19)

The law uncovers sin (Rom 7:7)