

# The Lord of the Sabbath

Sermon 37 in the Mathew Series

## Matthew 12:1-8

This passage and the one that follows it, is the extent of the “Sabbath” controversies in Matthews gospel. Luke and John mention a few more.

### I. Was Jesus Guilty of Committing or Condoning Sin? 12:1-2

Circumcision and Sabbath had come to be the two main distinctive marks of the Jewish religion.

- Understand Jesus’ teachings on the Sabbath
- what he was rebuking,
- and what should be our present understanding of the Sabbath.

**Deut 23:24-25** -- <sup>24</sup>“When you come into your neighbor’s vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes at your pleasure, but you shall not put *any* in your container. <sup>25</sup>When you come into your neighbor’s standing grain, you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not use a sickle on your neighbor’s standing grain.

### II. A Four-fold Biblical Defense (rightly interpreting the Sabbath) 12:3-8

#### A. Defense Number One – The Example of David v. 3-4

1 Samuel 21-22  
Leviticus 24:5-9

What was Christ’s point in this Biblical reference?  
A legitimate need can take precedence over the letter of the law.

#### B. Defense Number Two -- The Priests v. 5-6

The busiest day for the OT priests – was the Sabbath Day, and certainly other Sabbaths – like the Day of Atonement was full of work!

Jesus argues from the lesser to the greater.

1. Who gave those Tabernacle and Temple regulations? – Christ Himself.
2. What did those sacrifices and rituals represent? – Christ Himself.

The One who would end those rituals by His once for all sacrifice and even literally end the Temple itself -- was in their midst  
Immanuel – GOD WITH US!

### C. Defense Number Three – The Biblical Injunction v. 7

*Mercy above Sacrifice.*

They did greatly err – not knowing the Scriptures!

He upbraids them for their ignorance – even though the Pharisees prided themselves on their scholarship and law-keeping above all other things.

They do not keep the law and they do not even understand the real significance of the law.

Mercy is above their interpretation of the letter.

And they failed to recognize the law-giver.

### D. Defense Number Four – He is Lord of the Sabbath v. 8

**Mark 2:27** – adds in the parallel account “And He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. <sup>28</sup> Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”

See hymn 324

God didn't need the Sabbath.

It was given for a reason.

It was given for MAN.

The Sabbath is a blessing.

The Sabbath is for worship.

The Sabbath is for refreshment. .

If it is laborious and restrictive only – we have missed the point.

## III. Was Jesus Intending to Abolish the Sabbath?