

The Suffering Servant Confounds the Pharisees

Sermon 38 in the Matthew Series

Matthew 12:9-21

Two weeks ago we had Part 1 of a two part sermon – “Lord of the Sabbath”. We closed that message by asking – Did Jesus intend to abolish the Sabbath? Short answer – No. The very root of the Sabbath is the one in seven principle – and the moral truth that we owe God regular and consistent worship.

I. Healing on the Sabbath 12:9-14

A. It was a test v. 9-10

What the Pharisees didn't understand was who was being tested.

B. The Question they could not Answer -- v. 11-12

He asks them a question to give them the opportunity to see their own hypocrisy.

Positively the Sabbath exists to:

- give God the worship we owe.
- be refreshment and rest for man.
- allow for acts of mercy and necessity.

John Gill's excellent commentary has insights on page 128-129.

Because of debates between Christians and Jews in the first two centuries and because of their unrelenting opposition to Jesus, they even changed the interpretation of their laws, because they could not legitimately refute him.

The school of Hillel had taught:

“Care may be taken of the preservation of life on the Sabbath... and this is praiseworthy.”

But later Sabbath rules stated:

- “If a beast falls into a ditch or a pool of water, if food can be given it, where it is, they feed it till the going down of the sabbath; but if not, bolsters and pillows may be brought, and put under it, and if it can come out, it may come out.”

And

- “It is forbidden a man to bring it out with his hand.”

Their utter hypocrisy

Mark 3:5 -- And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.”

C. The Pharisees were angry too – v. 14

“filled with rage” Luke 6:11.

And the idea begins to hatch, How will we put Jesus to death?

D. The Man with the withered hand Himself.

1. Christ dealt with him publicly.
2. Christ dealt with him faithfully.

II. The Suffering Servant’s Actions -- Matt. 12:15-21

They couldn’t refute him – so they sought to destroy him. But his time had not yet come.

A. He Withdrew from Them -- v. 15-16

B. The Application of Isaiah 42 -- Matt. 12:17-21

v. 18 -- The voice of God the Father commending the ministry of the Son of God and their plan of redemption from all eternity. It is a vindication of the God-Man – as a perfect man – absolutely pleasing to the Father – and of his Office of Mediator. And not just to the Jews – but to all the world – the Gentiles included! (see also v. 21)

v. 19 – Why Jesus withdrew

v. 20-21 – In that day – and still today – those who believe in Him and trust fully in Him are the recipients of this verse.