

# A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

## An Expository Study of **The Gospel According to Luke** **Chapter 6- Luke 6:1-5**

### **74- Jesus is Lord Also of the Sabbath- Part 2**

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May 30, 2010

#### **Luke 6:1-5**

Now the Apostle Paul wrote in **Galatians 3:24-25**:

**24 So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith.**

**25 Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.**

So as we found out last week- the Law of God acts like a very strict guardian, or school teacher, that drives us to a place of utter desperation and helplessness- as we collapse under the weight of our own sin and our own guilt, and we have no excuse whatsoever, and we have no defense against God's Just Wrath against us, and all that we have left is to cry out in our desperation and beg God for a Mercy that we do not deserve, and beg God for a Forgiveness that we cannot earn that has been paid for by the Life and the Death and the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Law of God teaches us that human beings *cannot* develop our own righteousness by religious duties, and at that point- God Himself promises to save us to the uttermost by and through the finished Work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So here is the main point of all that I have said so far. If it is true that the purpose of the Law is to stop every mouth that insists on arguing for its own innocence and its own righteousness, and if the purpose of the law is to bring all the world guilty before God, as Romans 3 says- if that is why God gave us the Law- then the religion of the Pharisees here in the 1st Century is the single worst and most evil religion that anyone could ever trust in because their religion taught that Man is really not that fallen, and they taught that Man is really

not so helpless that he cannot improve his own condition before God, and they taught that by doing certain religious duties that we humans have the power to save ourselves and to make ourselves righteous in God's Eyes without the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and without Grace and without Mercy and without Forgiveness - which is the worst thing that anyone could ever teach, and the religion of the Pharisees is in direct opposition to the very purpose of why God gave the Law in the first place- which Law- these guys said they were following!

You see, contrary to Secular Humanism and Sociology and this religion of the Pharisees- the Holy Bible teaches over and over and over again that what is wrong with Man is what is *inside* of him- in his fallen and depraved nature, and in his wicked and sinful heart- Jesus Himself said in **Matthew 15** that it isn't what goes *into* your mouth that defiles you as the Pharisees taught- but it is what comes *out* of your mouth that defiles you because all evil, all lust, all covetousness, all violence, all injustice, and all idolatry does not come from some *external* place- but those things originate from inside the human heart and they come out of your mouth. In fact the Bible says in **Jeremiah 17:9**:

**The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?**

So the worst possible counsel that we could ever give to people is to tell them to "*follow their heart*" or to "go and do *all that is in their heart*" to do, because their heart is the worst and the most evil and the most sinful and fallen and the most depraved aspect about them. And this knowledge is offensive, and this is the part of the Bible that so many people object to in our day and fight against because this part strips all mankind of any pride and hope that says that we can save ourselves, and it causes us to be helpless before a holy God- in need of both Forgiveness and Salvation.

And the Bible goes on to say- in complete contradiction to Humanism and Sociology and Psychology and Psychiatry that what is *right* about Man does *not* come from within him but it lies *external* to Man- in Heaven, in the Bible, on the Cross, and in the Person and finished Work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So for anyone to "look inward" for help with sin and righteousness is to deny the *external* Grace and Forgiveness and Salvation offered by Jesus Christ. And to teach that we all can "tap into" that "inner strength" is to deny the Power of God from Heaven, and for anyone to "follow their heart" is to deny the external Objective Propositional Divine Truth found only in the 66 Books of Holy Scripture.

I think that you can see by now why Secular Humanism is so prevalent in our day. Secular Humanism is easy to teach, and it is easy to learn, and it is easy to accept because it makes sense to our fallen minds, and it confirms and verifies and rewards the Lie that already exists inside fallen Man- that lost Man may periodically do bad things- but basically- way down deep inside him- he is just fine, and that while Grace and Mercy and Salvation and The Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus and the Word of God is just fine for the people that might need it- most of us really don't need it- they say- because we are really not "bad" people anyway, and we work real hard to improve our own lives by what we do for ourselves without Grace, and we labor very diligently to improve our own human morality by what we do for ourselves- without Jesus having to die and rise again, and, therefore- we are not at all- "bad" people- but are, in fact, really "good" people.

But the Bible says that the Original Sin of Adam passes down to every human being at the very moment of conception through the seed of the father. And the Bible says that we are not sinners because we periodically sin- but that we periodically sin because in our very nature- we are already wicked sinners who delight to do our own thing, and who love darkness rather than light, and the Bible says that we are all born sinners, and that without the Sovereign interference of God in our lives- we naturally and normally desire to run away and hide from God, and the Bible tells us over and over and over again that our human depravity is so deep seated and so far reaching that left to ourselves- without any Sovereign interference from a gracious and Merciful God- nobody would ever love God, nobody would ever be convicted of sin, nobody would ever repent, nobody would ever serve God, and nobody would ever be saved.

And the Bible says that not only is it true that we are all terrible sinners- but that because of our sin- God is correct and He is Right and He is Just to judge us for our sins. So we are all in the worst of all possible positions- not only are we all guilty of being wicked sinners-

but we are all standing underneath the certain and Just Wrath of a Holy God, and that unless and until we repent and beg God for a Forgiveness that we do not deserve, and beg God for a Mercy that we cannot earn- we have no hope at all and we are, in fact, doomed.

But this is what makes Grace so magnificent, dear friends- and this is what makes unmerited Favor and God's Mercy so glorious. If, in fact, it is true that we are all guilty, if, in fact, we are all helpless sinners and unwilling and incapable of changing that fact by *anything* that we do for ourselves, if it is impossible for fallen human beings to develop their own righteousness by their own actions- then God's Mercy through the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the only game in town. And this is precisely the conflict here between Jesus and the Pharisees.

So if you're going to preach the Gospel faithfully- then the Gospel is exclusive. It does not and it cannot and it must not mingle or mix or blend with anything else. You cannot bring the Gospel in like a new piece of garment and sew it in to old Judaism. You can't bring the Gospel in like new wine and try to put it into the old wineskins of Judaism. You can't mingle the Truth of what Jesus had with the error of the Pharisees. You can't mingle the Gospel of Grace and Faith, a gospel of humility and repentance, with a humanistic religion of spiritual pride, self-righteousness, merit and works. It is either/or, it is all or nothing, it is "leave" and "press non to", it is totally abandon all false religious ideas and fully embrace Divine Truth, It is accept Jesus and the free imputation of Christ's Righteousness by Faith alone and categorically reject Judaism or it is to categorically reject Jesus and accept man-made humanistic self-righteousness.

And that is where we are today- so come to Jesus and leave everything else behind.

Now the Jews took the Sabbath very, very seriously. And these men who stood before Jesus had inherited a tradition that had been sort of accumulating for centuries. And the Sabbath day had become literally a collection point for very complex restrictions that had been mounting and mounting and mounting and mounting as rabbi after rabbi had continued to make more and more regulations through the years, and they continued to interpret them and they reinterpreted and reinterpreted and reinterpreted them until finally this accumulation of

things made the seventh day- literally the single worst day of the week for most people.

What they did was totally repressive, and ridiculously and unnecessarily strict. And so Jesus came on the scene to show the difference between what these men had manufactured and the true Heart of God.

So let's read **Luke 6:1** again together:

**Now it happened that He was passing through *some* grainfields on a Sabbath; and His disciples were picking the heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands, and eating *the grain*.**

Now we really don't know exactly what it means here when the King James and the NKJV both say, " **the *second* sabbath after the first**". It may be referring to a "different" Sabbath than the Sabbath where Luke says that Jesus preached in the synagogue down in Nazareth back in Chapter 5 rather than a literal "second" Sabbath because that timeline wouldn't work out based on all that Jesus did in the rest of Chapter 5. Both the ESV and NASB say, "**on a Sabbath**" as on a *particular* Sabbath, and the NIV says, "**one Sabbath**".

It is also possible that this particular phrase may *not* have been in the original text- but in any case- it really doesn't make any difference. All that really matters here is that Jesus did these things and He said these things as recorded here by Dr. Luke on a Sabbath day. Just which particular Sabbath day is left for us to wonder about.

But it is here for the first time- that Luke gives us a glimpse of Jesus' Own Personal Attitude toward the Sabbath in general. Now the word *Sabbaton* is the Greek word for Sabbath. And the root of *Sabbaton* simply means: *to cease*. But in the Greek language- when you add the letter, "b" or a double "beta" into the middle of that particular word- it adds a strong intensification to it.

So this word carries the idea of a very intense or very serious cessation of all activity. So to the Jew of the first century- the Sabbath was a time to completely cease all activity. And this word was used to describe the seventh-day command.

Now please turn with me back **Exodus 20**, for a moment. Now I'm not going to take a lot of time with this- but I want to give you a little background on this because it's important that you know it. Back when

God is giving Moses the Ten Commandments- at that time- God instituted the Sabbath law. And I want you to see how clear it is and how simple it is. Here's the Sabbath day. Please look at **Exodus 20:9**:

**9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work,**

**10 but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns.**

**11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.**

So what is God's Sabbath Law? Don't work. That was it. Don't work. That sounds good, right? Take a day off, refresh your body, refresh your spirit, refresh your relationships in the family, enjoy the creation, go out and see what God has made. Take a walk. Go to the shore, take a swim. Do whatever you want, just don't work. This is a day of restoration and a day to be re-created, or a day of recreation.

That's all that God ever said about it. Just rest. So it was a complete cessation of all activity for the purpose of resting.

Now by the way- although it is true that God rested from His Creation on the seventh day back in **Genesis**- God never commanded Man to do that until right here as He gave Moses the Law. So all of the events of the entire Book of **Genesis** after Creation up to and including the Book of **Exodus** until right here in **Exodus 20** with all of the people of **Genesis**- including Abraham- the father of faith- and including the great deliverance of the children of Israel out of 400 years of bondage in Egypt had absolutely nothing to do with a Sabbath as part of their understanding of God or of Worship or of being saved or of serving God or of Redemption.

So right here in **Exodus 20**- the Sabbath became part of the Ten Commandments. But, it was a ceremonial law rather than a moral law, and that is why it is not ever mentioned anywhere in the New Testament as part of Salvation or Worship or service to God under the New Covenant - precisely because it was not a part of the moral law. The moral parts of God's Law are eternal because they reflect the Personal Character and Nature of God, and God never changes, and they define what is holy and what is not holy in God's Eyes.

But the dietary and the ceremonial and the sacrificial parts of the Old Covenant are *not* eternal- they were strictly for the Jew and only for the Jew during that particular time, and they are not binding at all on the conscious of the believer under the finished Work of the Lord Jesus Christ- either Jew or Gentile.

So the Sabbath was a general gift from God to the nation of Israel back then, and I think it's a very wise thing, in general- even beyond the nation Israel- although God didn't require it before **Exodus 20** and even though He doesn't require it anywhere in the New Testament.

And in the development of the Sabbath the Jew began to use it as a day of worship. But then their religion became so external and so hypocritical and so superficial that they began to look for ways that they could earn their Salvation with God by filling that day with all kinds of rules and regulations and religious things to do that if you kept them- you would please God and earn your Salvation. But none of those things did God ever intend for His people and none of those things are Biblical.

So after these religious hypocrites added this and took away that- the Sabbath finally became the most painful day of the week. People hated it because it was a day of tremendous restriction. Let me give you just a little of the things that fit into Sabbath law that were developed through the Pharisees and added to the concept of the Sabbath.

For example, in the Talmud- the writings of the rabbis- there are 24 chapters of Sabbath laws required. 24 chapters! And one rabbi says he spent two and a half years studying just one of those 24 Chapters trying to figure out all of its ramifications.

So it became a ridiculously complex system through which the net idea that was conveyed to the people was that by doing all of this stuff- you could earn your Salvation. So, for example- you could travel no more than 3,000 feet from your home. Unless you were smart enough to plant food or boil an egg at the 3,000 foot point, and then you could go *another* 3,000 more feet because you constituted the place where you had planted food or the place where you boiled an egg as being your "home".

Now, if you lived down a long narrow street and you might have been a few hundred feet down from the end of the street or the end of the alley- you could take a piece of wood and put it across the end of the street or the alley, or you could take a piece of robe and put it across the

end of the alley, or you could take a piece of wire and string it across the end of the alley, and that would- in the Eyes of God according to the Talmud- turn that spot into a "doorway", and so by doing that- you could consider that place to be the front door of your "house" so you could travel an additional 3,000 feet from there.

You could lift up certain things and put down certain things only from certain places. You could lift up something from a public place and put it into a private place, or from a private place and put it into a public place. You could lift up things from a wide place and put them into a narrow place, you could put things in a free place. And people have asked me *"What does that mean?"* And I tell them *"I don't have a clue because you have chapter after chapter of the writings of these rabbis with endless discussion as to what it all means, and, frankly, I'm not interested in knowing that much about a false religion."*

You couldn't carry anything on your person that weighed more than a dried fig. There goes your wallet and certainly there goes your purse. But you were allowed to carry half a fig two times on the Sabbath.

You couldn't eat any of the forbidden foods. And there were all kinds of food forbidden on the Sabbath. But another place says that you couldn't eat any forbidden food that is larger than an olive. And then still another rabbi said that if you put an olive in your mouth and spit it out because it was bad- you couldn't replace it with a good one because your palate had already tasted the flavor of the first one.

Now this would all be laughable except for the fact that your Salvation depended on all these crazy and convoluted rules. And this is how the people thought. It was all tied in with pleasing God.

If you threw an object in the air, you could catch it with the hand that you threw it with- but if you caught it with the other hand- it was sin because supposedly there's less work in catching it with the same hand that threw it.

If you were in one place eating at say, just before sundown on Friday and your arm stretched out to reach for food and sundown came right at that moment- and it was now the Sabbath. And so you had to drop the food on the ground or on the table or in your mother's plate rather than bring your arm back to you with the food- because that was considered to be work, and if you did that- you had sinned.



A tailor couldn't carry his needle with him on the Sabbath. A scribe couldn't carry his pen. A pupil couldn't carry his books. You couldn't even examine your clothes before you put them on to see if they were dirty- lest in the examining of them- the brushing and the shaking of your garments- you might kill an insect. Wool couldn't be died. Nothing could be sold or bought or washed. A letter could not be sent in the mail- not even with a heathen. No fire could be lit and no fire could be put out. Cold water could be poured on warm things, but warm water couldn't be poured on cold things. An egg couldn't be boiled even if you buried it in the hot sand, which is how they would boil an egg in the desert. You couldn't take a bath for fear that the water would flow off you and accidentally wash the floor. You couldn't move a chair since it might make a rut and that would be too much like plowing. Women could not look in a mirror or put on any jewelry. If she were to find a white hair, she had to resist the temptation to pull it out.

When it came to grain and food, the laws are just as staggering. You could pick no more grain than a lamb's mouth could hold. That's the maximum amount you could pick. You couldn't leave a radish in the salt because it would pickle it. The laws go on endlessly about wine, and about honey, and about milk, and about spitting, and about getting dirt off your clothes.

You could have enough ink only to write down two Hebrew letters. You could only carry enough wax to fill a small hole somewhere. You could stick a wad in your ear if you had an earache- but you couldn't put your false teeth in. And this is how it goes for 24 chapters!

The following 39 are forbidden things. And here's the list from Alfred Edersheim, in his book, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, a classic work on the history of the people of Israel in the 1st Century. So here are the forbidden things on the Sabbath:

"Sowing, plowing, reaping, binding sheaves, threshing, winnowing, sifting, grinding, sifting in a sieve, kneading, baking, shearing the wool, washing it, beating it, dying it, spinning, putting it on the weaver's beam, making two threads, weaving two threads, separating two threads, making a knot, undoing a knot, sewing two stitches, catching deer, killing, skinning, salting, preparing its skin, scraping off its hair, cutting it up, writing two letters, scraping in order to write two letters, building, pulling down, extinguishing the fire, lighting the fire, beating with the hammer and carrying one thing from one place to another."

Now keep in mind that the majority of all the people back then were illiterate- so they couldn't read the Talmud, and so they either had to memorize all 24 chapter of these rules and regulations or else they had to get the priest to ask him first before they did anything. But keep in mind that if they walked more than 3,000 feet- even to ask the priest- they had sinned and broken the Sabbath and lost their Salvation.

Now what kind of a day of rest is that? This is supposed to be the rest day and you can't even sort out all this stuff you have to "not" do.

Now over in **Matthew 11**, Jesus said, **"Come to me, all you who are...what?... weary and burdened, and I will give you... what? ... rest"**

You see under this man-made system of Salvation by works- the people were heavy laden with all these rules. This was a very oppressive and joyless life. All religious systems where Salvation is based on human activity are all the same- they demand so much out of you and they sap the very joy and the very life out of you until you are empty and lifeless and beaten down and condemned.

But then Jesus said, **"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle ... For my yoke is easy and my burden is ... what?... "light"** So here Jesus was comparing Himself with this ridiculous Sabbath stuff that the people were convinced was what earned them their Salvation- all the rituals and all the ceremonies and all the regulations, ad infinitum, ad nauseam. And He invites us to come to Him for true and genuine and eternal Rest.

Now the Jews were dead serious about all this. And this very same mentality about the Sabbath hangs around today in Israel. If you've ever been over to that land and you get away from the Arab sector where people normally tour and you get over into the Jewish sector where the Israeli people actually live- those that are orthodox- the Jews eat only leftover food on the Sabbath and they drink day-old coffee because they still can't prepare anything or cook anything from sundown Friday until sundown Saturday.

The buildings- like the apartment buildings in New York City and other cities where they have a large Jewish population- they have what they call a "Sabbath elevator" that has no buttons on it. It just goes up, and it hits every floor and then it goes down and hits every floor on the way down so that you don't have to actually push a button on the Sabbath because pushing a button in an elevator constitutes "work".

And they have what they call "Sabbath timers" in the houses that turn the lights on and turn the lights off on the Sabbath because they can't start a fire or even put one out, and flipping a switch constitutes "work". And this kind of minutia goes on and on, and it is absolutely ridiculous and it has nothing to do with being holy or honoring God or serving God- it is simply a man-made religious system that seeks to develop human righteousness and bring forth pride in human accomplishments as they completely ignore the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of the sinless Lamb of God, and they work so hard to try to earn their way into Heaven.

But this was the heart of their religion back then, and it is the heart of their religion today, and the Sabbath was at the very center of their false religious system.

Now let's look again at **Luke 6:1**:

**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.**

Uh-oh- Jesus was going through some grain fields- literally in the Greek it means: *sown fields*- probably wheat or barley. And the grain was ripe- which probably means it was spring or summer. And in the Jordan Valley- the grain usually ripens in April and east of there in August. And so harvest was perhaps near and the fields were full of ripened grain.

And basically the way you traveled in the land back then is that you just walked through the fields. And according to writings that we have found dating from the first century- the fields back then were laid out in long narrow strips and between the rows were walking paths and that's how people went places because most roads back then were not always distinguishable from fields because the paths went right through the fields and that's how people went from one place to another.

And there had been a wonderful provision that God made in the Old Testament back in **Deuteronomy 23:25**- and it's really a great thing to know.

This is what God said,

**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.**

So you can't just go over and harvest somebody else's crop and haul it off. But when you're walking through his field- God said- if you're hungry- then you are free to pluck whatever you can get in your hand and you can rub it together, and when you rub it together it takes the outside shell off and you can blow away the chaff and what you have is the grain, and you can eat it and get some nourishment.

So the Law of God provided for a wonderful way in which the people of Israel could enjoy the blessing of the land without necessarily owning the land or the crop. And that's exactly what the disciples were doing. They were doing what God had provided for them to do in that wonderful provision of **Deuteronomy 23:25**.

So Luke says they were going through the fields and the disciples were hungry- along with Jesus- and they were picking and eating the grain- rubbing them in their hands. Now look at verse 2:

**Some of the Pharisees asked, "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"**

Now just where did these Pharisees come from? Because remember the man-made rules of the Sabbath was that you're not supposed to walk more than 3,000 feet- so they must have had some kind of tag team going on so they could follow Jesus- I really don't know how this would have worked for them- because Jesus was just walking and walking, and they had this artificial restriction on how far they could walk, but somehow- no matter how far Jesus walked- these religious hypocrites are always around- dogging the steps of Jesus, and they're looking for any way they can to find fault with Him and to indict Him and discredit Him. So some of these Pharisees said in verse 2:

**... "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"**

Now let me ask all you Bible scholars a question. Did the Word of God that we just read from **Exodus 20** say anything about what was worrying the Pharisees so much? Not one single word. It simply said *"Enjoy your day off and while your off from your normal work- worship*

*the Lord and honor Him, and make the day separate or different or distinct from the other six days-(which is what the word "holy" means) and take that day to enjoy God; learn of Him and meditate on Him and get refocused on what really matters and enjoy the day and rest."*

It didn't say anything about all this stuff that the Pharisees were so worried about. But they had this man-made religious system, you see, and they were with their constant scrutiny looking for any way to get rid of Jesus.

Now again let me reinforce to you that to these Pharisees- this is very serious stuff and according to the Talmud it says,

"In case a woman rolls wheat and she rolls it to remove the husks- then it constitutes 'sifting' which is work, and if she rubs the heads of wheat- it is 'threshing', and if she cleans off the shell- it is 'sifting', and if she bruises the ear- then it constitutes 'grinding'. And if she throws it in her hand- that is 'winnowing'. And you can't do any of that on the Sabbath because that is classified as 'work'."

And the rabbis said that reaping and grinding grain can only be done to something the size of one dried fig or less. Anymore produces sin.

So these guys were apoplectic and they said:

... **"Why are you** (being plural here- meaning Jesus and the disciples) ...  
...**"Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"**

So, obviously, Jesus and His disciples had violated a lot of those silly rules. They had been reaping, threshing, sifting, grinding, winnowing and preparing food- so they were in big trouble here. And the real question of the Pharisees is,

*"Why do You have such utter disdain for our religion? You know we're here."*

*Why do You so flagrantly do this right in front of us? That's the real question. Why do You have such disdain for our religion? Why do You challenge our religion like You do?*

And as always, Jesus' response is just perfect. Look at verse 3&4:

**3 ... “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.”**

Now there is a bit of sarcasm here in Jesus' Words because remember- He is not just answering their question- He is exposing their false demonic man-made religion that cannot save anybody and is dooming them and many others to hell. So Jesus had absolutely no respect whatsoever for their false and pagan rituals that had absolutely nothing to do with what God said in the Law.

So Jesus exposes their ignorance by recalling what The OT said about King David some 1,000 years earlier. Now these Pharisees knew the story that Jesus was about to tell but like all of the Word of God- they never understood its true meaning. They were great about knowing the information- but missing the entire meaning. So Jesus says to them:

**3 ... “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.”**

Wow! Now just what is this all about? Well let me give it to you very quickly. Listen carefully, it's really a fascinating story. Back in **Leviticus 24-** you don't have to turn to it- just write it down if you want that information. **Leviticus 24:5-9-** God Almighty laid down some things for the tabernacle, right? Certain things in the tabernacle- and one of the things that God wanted in the tabernacle was a golden table in the holy place.

And on the golden table was what was called “the showbread”. Another name for it is the “the bread of the presence.” And it was a symbol, and God said in that section,

“Every Sabbath you guys bring in twelve loaves of hot bread and line them up in two rows of six on the table before the Lord. And this is symbolic of the fact that you know that God is the source of your bread or in other words- that God is your

Provider. And you need to do that every week without fail- every week- as a continual reminder to you that God is your Provider."

And, according to **Leviticus 24**,

"The old bread that comes off can be eaten only by the priests because it has been consecrated to God- so it can't just be treated like common bread- so it can't be sold or just given to any common person because it has special consecrated significance. Only the priests can eat it."

Now you say, "*Who in the world wants seven-day-old bread anyway?*" Well, this is that kind of flat bread and without preservatives it becomes like a cracker in very dry climate and so even after seven days- it's edible. So they would eat it and that was the provision.

Well in **1 Samuel 21:1-6**- David had lied and had created all kinds of problems- but Jesus doesn't deal with any of that, but in that part of the Bible- David is being chased by Saul. And David has been anointed king and he's going to replace Saul. But Saul wants to kill him, right? You know the story.

So David is running from a place called Gibeah and he's running away. And he's got some men with him and they are all trying to escape from Saul. And they come down to a place called Nob. And in **1 Samuel 21:3**- he gets down to Nob. And Nob is about a mile outside Jerusalem. And it's really right on the edge of Jerusalem. And it's where the tabernacle was. And David gets down there. And he's hungry. And those that are with him are hungry. And he goes into the tabernacle. And there's a priest there, his name is Ahimelech.

Now, apparently Abiathar was the high priest of that time and Mark makes reference to that. But Ahimelech was the priest that David ran into, and David says to this priest, and **1 Samuel 21** records it,

"I need some bread, I'm hungry."

And he is the king even though he's not yet taken his throne, and these men are with him, "*I'm hungry, my men need bread,*" and he says, "*I need five loaves of bread.*"

And in **1 Samuel 21:4** we read this,

**But the priest answered David, “I don’t have any ordinary bread on hand; however, there is some consecrated bread here—provided the men have kept themselves from women.”**

... this priest wanted to make sure that these men were spiritually clean. And so he said there's this holy bread- which is the showbread, or the bread of the presence. And it may well have been on a Sabbath and the new bread had been put there and the old bread taken off. And David said,

"Yes, the men are clean and we're hungry."

And in **1Samuel 21:6** the Bible says:

**So the priest gave him the consecrated bread, since there was no bread there except the bread of the Presence that had been removed from before the LORD and replaced by hot bread on the day it was taken away.**

Now what's the point here? The point is this- Mercy and Compassion is far more important than religious ceremony; it is far more important than Church rituals. And, frankly- this was an indictment of the whole system of Judaism because they had made the entire Sabbath system to be nothing but oppressive and merciless and completely void of any compassion and any grace and any kindness.

As we shall see in the next passage, they get very irritated at Jesus because He had the gall to heal somebody on the Sabbath. It was like to them- the Sabbath was supposed to be the most painful and the most horrible day of the week. And that was because they completely missed the whole point of why God initiated it.

Well, in Luke 6:4- Jesus remained these unsaved religious leaders that David entered the house of God, and he took and ate the consecrated bread- the shewbread- the bread of presence- which is not lawful for any to eat except the priest alone, and he gave it to his companions, and God never even reprimanded him for that.

You see, that old priest- Ahimelech- he understood that to God- Mercy toward somebody who's hungry, and Compassion and Kindness and Goodness is more important than religious ceremony. But the



Pharisees didn't get that- they didn't get it at all. They were all about the shallow superficial and ceremonial things.

But if David could be allowed by a priest to violate a Regulation that was Divine- maybe even on a Sabbath- then the disciples of Jesus were absolutely just fine to be allowed by the Son of God to violate- listen- a completely *unbiblical* regulation- a stupid and ridiculous regulation that you couldn't take a little grain and rub it in your hands and eat.

Now just as a footnote to this. You meet people today who say they are Sabbatarians- meaning they worship God from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday, and not on Sunday, and I always wonder whether these people are really Sabbatarians like **Exodus 20** says to be or whether they're Sabbatarians like these non-biblical Jews of Jesus' day.

The Sabbath Day was meant for rest. The day was meant for being set aside from the normal daily routine of cooking cleaning washing and laboring to make money and is to be set aside or made to be different from the other days and to be distinct from the other days so that we can recreate or be "re- created" or refreshed in the Presence of the Lord, and on that day we are to look at the Wonders of God's Glory in Creation and in His Word and we are to dedicate the day to worship Him.

The day was meant for meeting needs and of showing mercy and of showing compassion. And religious ceremony and ritual is never to be burdensome.

The inspired inerrant Holy Bible says that King David was allowed to violate a Divine Law to fulfill the truest Law of Mercy. So certainly Jesus and His disciples could violate a man-made human law to fulfill the true Law of Mercy. And then Jesus dropped the big bomb. At this point He could have said, *"Oh, my bad. I'm sorry we offended you guys because I realize how sincere you are- so please forgive us."* He could have said that- but He didn't. Look at **Luke 6:5**,

... **"The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."**

Now what in the world does that mean? Here it is. *"Guys, you aren't in charge of the Sabbath- I am. I'm in charge of it. I am God, and as God- I am in complete command of the Sabbath day, and not you!"*

Now I would have loved to see the expression on their faces right about now. This is why I say that Jesus always escalated things. Rather than try to appease them- He insulted them to their face. Why? Was Jesus just a rude man? No, Jesus was absolutely perfect. These men had taken the Holy Law of God and they had perverted it. And the fact that they perverted it sincerely didn't in any way alleviate their guilt. They had twisted the Word of God and made something horrible out of it, and Jesus rebuked them to their face about it.

Now the literal Greek order is this..."The Lord of the Sabbath is the Son of Man"...whom Jesus had claimed to be back in **Chapter 5:24** and is a Messianic Title drawn directly from **Daniel 7:13**.

In other words- Jesus was saying, *"A greater than David is here. I am the Lord of the Sabbath. I will interpret the Will of God on the Sabbath. I will interpret the Law of God. I will interpret the Word of God. I will tell you what God means by what He says. I will tell you what the Sabbath is to be and what it's not to be. You are not in charge of the Sabbath, I am."*

Wow! You guys don't rule the Sabbath- I do. You guys don't set the standards- I do. Jesus is the great interpreter of God's Law. He's the great interpreter of God's Word. He's the great interpreter of God's Will. And, beloved, I say it to you this morning- you can never ever understand the Old Testament Law without the New Testament interpretation of that Law by Christ and the Apostles- who wrote the Words that Christ wanted them to write to interpret the Truth.

Jesus is the interpreter of God's Will and God's Law and God's Word.

And Mark tells us that He also said, *"Man was not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath was made for man."* The point being, you weren't designed to somehow conform to some impossible man-made rules- but rather the day was made for you and for your benefit and for your blessing and for your joy and for your fulfillment and for your rest and for mercy and for compassion and for doing good.

Now Jesus could have reminded them of **Micah 6:8** that says:

**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.**

The Pharisees didn't have any of that; no kindness, no mercy, and no compassion.

Now Jesus indicts them in **Matthew 23** in that diatribe against the leaders when He says about them that they bind on people- burdens impossible to bear while they give them no help carrying them. The legalists knew nothing about Grace back then and they know nothing about Grace today. The Lord offered only Grace. They knew nothing about humility and Jesus came only to the humble. They thought they were righteous, and, therefore, they were the enemies of true righteousness.

To walk as a Christian, my dear friends, is to walk with a God Who is Merciful. **Hebrews 4:16** says:

**Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.**

Jesus said, "I don't care what your religious system says- you're not in charge of the Truth- I am. I don't care how you interpret Scripture- you're not the interpreter- I am. I am Lord of the Sabbath." And in so saying that He was saying, "I am the Lord of the Truth, and I am in charge of the true meaning of Sabbath and the true meaning of rest and the true meaning of worship and all that the Law of God describes."

So to live as a Christian then is to live under the lordship of Christ, isn't it? And we must know that there is absolutely no compatibility between a system of self-righteousness and a system of spiritual pride and a system of human merit and a system of religious works- by whatever name you want to call it- with the true Gospel of Repentance, Humility, Grace and Faith. The two are utterly incompatible.

And so- of necessity- if and when we speak the Truth- we automatically escalate the conflict with error. Because to speak Truth automatically uncovers error and exposes it. So for the sake of the Glory of God and for the sake of the eternal souls of men- we are compelled to speak the Truth.

Let's come and pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.