

A TASTE OF NEW WINE

LUKE 6:1-11

It Takes A Great Deal Of Humility To Surrender To God's Ways.

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A Taste Of New Wine

Luke 6:1-11

In order to understand this morning's text, we quickly have to review what we discussed last time. Jesus made it clear that He could not be mixed with culture, religion, or tradition. As the Messiah, He was initiating a new age. He illustrated this by saying that no one ruins a new garment by cutting a patch out of it to sew onto a broken old garment. It would be foolish for two reasons. First, no one would ruin the new garment to patch an old one. Secondly, even if one sewed the patch onto the torn garment, the patch wouldn't hold. The first time it was washed; the new patch would shrink and be torn apart. One would end up with two ruined garments.

Then Jesus went on to say that no one pours new wine into old wineskins. The point is that when the new wine started to ferment, it would expand and since the old wineskins had lost their elasticity, the wine would burst the wineskin, and all the new wine would be lost. So what Jesus is saying is that what He has to offer is a new way of life that is beyond anything human, and even surpasses the Old Testament Law. If people tried to judge Jesus according to the Old Testament Law, Jesus was too big to be contained by it. In order to receive the fullness Jesus came to offer, people had to start thinking in new and exciting ways. However, Jesus also ended last week's text by saying that people tend to prefer the old wine and are unwilling to try the new wine. People don't let go of the past so easy.

We are going to see that even though Jesus tries to get people thinking about the new Messianic Age, they hold on to defective religious beliefs. He will present them new wine characterized by freedom, but people feel much more comfortable drinking the old wine of slavery.

I think I can give you a great example of this defective thinking by illustrating a conversation between a mother and her 12-year-old daughter in the church fellowship hall. The mother was a teetotaler and believed that everyone should totally abstain from all kinds of alcohol. In fact, the mother believed that only grape juice should be used for communion. The daughter innocently said, "But mother, don't you remember that Jesus' first miracle was to turn water into wine at a wedding in Cana?" The mother, with eyes ablaze said, "Yes! And He never should have done that either!"

We all kind of chuckle at that, but we church people have a lot of rules that are not even based on the Bible. Some of the most religious people of the time start to hate the very Messiah they had so long been waiting for. Many people miss Jesus as their salvation because they have some real faulty thought patterns and a great deal of pride to go along with it.

I have to admit that I am seeing so many things for the first time while studying through Luke. I realized this week that I can't fully understand some of the examples that Jesus uses. I think I understand the upshot of it all, but even after studying through this all week, I'm still not sure that I'm clear on it. What I do realize is the main idea of this morning's text. **IT TAKES A GREAT DEAL OF HUMILITY TO SURRENDER TO GOD'S WAYS.** Having just said that, it sounds like a no-brainer but it's not as easy as one may think. Going back to last week's

message, we often get stuck into a certain way of thinking and refuse to change even though God Himself may be telling us we are wrong.

I. GOD'S ANOINTED ONE

In verses 1-4, Jesus introduces Himself as God's Anointed One. What we need to take into the deepest part of our being is this. JESUS IS GREATER THAN ALL HUMAN-MADE LAWS. It seems as if Jesus and the disciples, at this point Peter, James, John, and Matthew, travel from town to town, announcing the Age of Messiah has arrived. Jesus preached, taught, and healed the sick. He cast out demons and set people free. In addition to all this, Jesus set people free from the bondage of sin by forgiving them of their sins and informing them of their forgiveness.

An Act Of Innocence (1)

As we read through the Gospels, we get the idea that they are constantly on the move, engaging people, and ministering to all sorts of people's needs. That's why verse one seems to be an act of innocence. Luke makes sure to inform us that this is a Sabbath day. Jesus and the disciples were walking along the road, passing through a grain field, and realized they were hungry. They grabbed a few heads of grain, rubbed them up in their hands, and ate some of the kernels. This is perfectly lawful and legitimate according to Hebrew law. They were not stealing. The problem becomes the fact that it is the Sabbath. It is Saturday and people are not supposed to work.

An Act Of Malice (2)

And that brings us to this act of malice in verse 2. The verse starts out, "Some of the Pharisees asked." Again, I must remind us that all the Pharisees did not reject Jesus and His ministry. All the Pharisees were not involved in the plot to kill Jesus. Some of the Pharisees who were present challenged them by asking them, "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" At this point I have to stop and give you some background information.

The Jews felt that if every Jew kept the Sabbath perfectly together on the same day, this would usher in the presence of Messiah. In fact, some branches of Judaism still believe this today. So since they longed for Messiah, they were especially insistent that all Jews keep the Sabbath holy. In order to make sure no one broke Sabbath, they composed a list of 39 activities that should be refrained from on the Sabbath. Here, by reaping, harvesting, winnowing, threshing, and preparing, the disciples broke at least 4 or 5 of these prohibitions.

An Act Of Authority (3-4)

Next the word that is used for unlawful here means unauthorized and not permitted. Keep that word in mind as we proceed because I think it helps me to understand what happens next. So the question becomes, "Why are you doing unauthorized things?" That's why I think that verses 3-4 are all about an act of authority. I was so confused by Jesus' example all week that I didn't think I would understand it enough to preach. Here was my confusion. The Pharisees accused Jesus

and the disciples of breaking the Sabbath Laws by working. And then Jesus goes on to retell the story of when King David was hungry and ate the showbread used for worship. The story is found in I Samuel 21. David had been running for his life from King Saul. David had already been anointed as King by the prophet Samuel. However, because of David's strong faith, he did not think it right to kill Saul who had been God's anointed king. Saul pursued and tried to kill David several times but David always escaped. On one of these occasions, David and his men were on the run and were hungry. They stopped by the Tabernacle and asked the priest if he had any food. The priest responded that the only food he had was the holy bread that had been set aside for the priest and his descendants to eat. The priest made sure David and his men had remained ceremonially clean, and then gave them the bread to eat.

Jesus started His retelling of this story by saying to the Pharisees, "Surely you have read the story of David and the showbread," meaning that it was a very famous Bible story that they had heard from their youth. I kept thinking, what does this have to do with working and eating on the Sabbath?

The Pharisees could have responded, "Surely you remember that the bread turned to maggots when people went out to gather it on the Sabbath and that angered God," but they didn't. So obviously they understood what Jesus was getting at even though I still didn't. And then I went back to the question the Pharisees had asked, "Why are you doing unauthorized things?" could also be rephrased to say, "Who authorized you to do these things?"

If that is the question, then Jesus' use of David's situation makes sense on several different levels. First of all, David was the legitimate king and yet he was being pursued by the illegitimate king, Saul. David was the proper authority. Saul was actually the illegitimate authority, even though he had the power. David was actually God's anointed king. Keep in mind, the word anointed is Messiah. David is the anointed one; Saul is the pretender. Jesus is the Anointed One; the Pharisees are the pretenders. Further, David was unjustly persecuted by Saul; the Pharisees unjustly persecute Jesus.

Next, after examining the ritual cleanliness of David and his men, and find them to be pure, he gave them the bread to eat. Jesus the Messiah, is both higher in stature than King David and all the high priests in Israel's history, including the time of this incident. So here is what I think Jesus is saying. He is saying that He is the Anointed One, the Messiah. As the Messiah, He has the authority to determine what is lawful and what is unlawful on the Sabbath. By what authority are the disciples picking, rubbing, and eating the grain? They are doing this by the authority of Jesus. If Jesus said the activity was authorized, then no one had the right to say it was unauthorized.

These Pharisees had formulated in their minds and in written form, what people should or should not do on the Sabbath. These laws are found in the Mishna, a running commentary by famous Rabi down throughout the centuries. They believed so strongly in these laws that in their mind the Messiah had to conform to these laws. But in order to be a believer in Christ, we must come to realize that JESUS IS GREATER THAN ALL HUMAN-MADE LAWS.

I truly believe that pride is what keeps people from becoming authentic Christians. Some people verbalize the fact they believe that Jesus was a good teacher but not God. People who claim to be Christians often say they believe in Jesus but then live their lives according to their own made

up standards. Verse 5 describes Jesus as God's Anointed. Here is a clear instance where JESUS CLAIMS TO BE THE PROMISED MESSIAH. Scholars throughout the years have stated this about Jesus' claims. Either He is a fraud, insane, or Who He says He is, God. There is nothing in history or in Christ's teachings that would indicate He was a conman. And surely as we read His teachings, observe His life and death, we could not judge Him to be insane.

II. JESUS IS GOD'S ANOINTED

Those who say Jesus never claimed to be God are just plain mistaken. In verse 5 Jesus said this of Himself, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." Let's examine the terms by which He refers to Himself. The Son of Man was Jesus' favorite self-referential term. In the Hebrew Scriptures, God addressed the prophet Ezekiel as the son of man. The prophet Ezekiel was commissioned by God to preach against how perverted worship had become and how priests and leaders had become so corrupt that the people were left in total confusion. Listen to what God says to the priests and leaders through Ezekiel:

"23Again a message came to me from the LORD: 24"Son of man, give the people of Israel this message: In the day of my indignation, you will become like an uncleared wilderness or a desert without rain. 25Your princes plot conspiracies just as lions stalk their prey. They devour innocent people, seizing treasures and extorting wealth. They increase the number of widows in the land. 26Your priests have violated my laws and defiled my holy things. To them there is no difference between what is holy and what is not. And they do not teach my people the difference between what is ceremonially clean and unclean. They disregard my Sabbath days so that my holy name is greatly dishonored among them. 27Your leaders are like wolves, who tear apart their victims. They actually destroy people's lives for profit! 28And your prophets announce false visions and speak false messages. They say, 'My message is from the Sovereign LORD,' when the LORD hasn't spoken a single word to them. They repair cracked walls with whitewash! 29Even common people oppress the poor, rob the needy, and deprive foreigners of justice.

30"I looked for someone who might rebuild the wall of righteousness that guards the land. I searched for someone to stand in the gap in the wall so I wouldn't have to destroy the land, but I found no one. 31So now I will pour out my fury on them, consuming them in the fire of my anger. I will heap on them the full penalty for all their sins, says the Sovereign LORD" (Ezekiel 22:23-31 / NLT).

Before we go on, let's get a feel for what Jesus is saying. He is saying that Israel's social, political, and religious leaders have lost their way. Not only have they lost their way, but they have led the whole nation astray and are actually keeping people from recognizing Him as the Messiah. Jesus came to restore God's interpretation to the Hebrew Scriptures through Jesus.

Secondly, in the Ezekiel passage I read, God was looking for someone to stand in the gap, Someone who could save His people. The prophet Daniel records a vision he received from God:

“13As my vision continued that night, I saw someone who looked like a man coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient One and was led into his presence. 14He was given authority, honor, and royal power over all the nations of the world, so that people of every race and nation and language would obey him. His rule is eternal—it will never end. His kingdom will never be destroyed” (Daniel 7:13-14 / NLT).

Son Of Man

Jesus is the Son of Man Who will stand in the gap. He is the One who has authority, honor, and royal power over all the nations. Jesus came to lead the lost sheep of Israel back into a right relationship with God. Jesus, the Son of Man, has come to lead you and me back into a right relationship with God.

Lord

Jesus puts some more bite into the title of the Son of Man by referring to Himself as Lord. The word in general means master. We know from the first chapter of the Gospel of John that all things that exist anywhere in the entire universe were created by, through, and for Jesus. He is Lord of all creation. But then He tops it all off by claiming to be the Lord of the Sabbath. Let's look at the creation of Sabbath:

“2By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. 3And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done” (Genesis 2:2-3 / NIV).

Sabbath

For the Jew, God Jehovah created the Sabbath. God was the only legitimate Lord of the Sabbath. And here, Jesus is claiming equal authority over the Sabbath. Therefore, Jesus is claiming to be the One Who authorizes what ought to be done and not to be done on the Sabbath. Jesus is telling these religious people to let go of their preconceived notions and allowing rabbi throughout the centuries determine what the Bible means by adding extra laws. This verse is the pivotal verse that determines the meaning of this morning's text. Jesus is the Son of Man and Lord of the Sabbath. In this verse JESUS CLAIMS TO BE THE PROMISED MESSIAH.

There are too many times in our individual lives and in the life of the church that we make up our own rules for living. If we were to examine them, we could easily see that they are not what God wants at all. But it takes a great deal of humility and courage to look at it. I'm sure if the religious leaders of Jesus' day put aside their pride, they would have seen God speaking to them through Jesus. If we can put our pride aside, we too will be able to hear the voice of God speaking to us.

III. JESUS DEMONSTRATES GOD'S POWER AND HEART

I don't think Jesus could have been any clearer. In verses 6-11 Jesus demonstrates God's power and heart. Here is the sad part of this passage. EVEN THOUGH JESUS GIVES ENOUGH

PROOF AS TO HIS ANOINTED STATUS, BECAUSE OF PRIDE, PEOPLE WILL REFUSE TO SURRENDER THEIR LIVES TO JESUS. The older I get, the more I can see how easy it is to get set in our ways, how prideful we become about being to live up to the standards we have set for ourselves, and how resistant to change we are. However, as God's dearly beloved children, I want to encourage us to never let this happen. Rigamortis is the stiffening of the muscles of a body after death. If we become so stiff in our ways and beliefs that even God cannot speak to us to change our thinking and behavior, then we are spiritually dead, as spiritually dead as these Pharisees in this morning's text.

An Immediate Need (6)

In verse 6, Jesus is presented with an immediate need. Again, Luke wants us to know this is a Sabbath. It's Saturday morning, and Jesus went into the synagogue with His disciples. It just so happens that a man with a shriveled hand is also present at the service. You can tell that Luke is a physician because he lets us know it is the man's right hand and that it's shriveled. In one of the apocryphal gospels that were floating around the church in the second century, the man is identified as a stone mason who injured his hand on the job. His hand was crushed and he couldn't work. We don't know if this part was true, but we do know for certain the man couldn't work with a crushed hand. As the story unfolds, notice that the man does not approach Jesus or ask Jesus to be healed. He is just sitting there and Jesus and the disciples are just sitting there. We don't even know if the Pharisees planted the man there. At any rate, a man is sitting in the worship in obvious need of help.

It is Jesus Who ends up noticing the man's need. In church there are people with obvious needs and people with not so obvious needs. For those with needs that are not so obvious, I want to give you a rule for relationship. One of the things I make a big deal about in premarital counseling and in couple counseling is making your needs known to your partner. I have used this example before but I'll use it again because it is so clear. I had a wife who was furious with her husband. I asked her, "Judy, why are you so furious with George?" She responded, "He never helps with the dishes and he never simply does the dishes." I asked her if she ever asked George to do the dishes and she said no. I turned to George and asked, "George, would you be willing to help with the dishes or simply do the dishes?" He said, "I'd be happy to do the dishes every night. I don't mind doing dishes. I just figured Judy didn't want me in the kitchen so I stayed out." As far as I know, George is still doing the dishes and Judy is happy with that. The moral of this story and any relationship is that none of us are mind-readers. Learn to state your needs and make your requests known.

Who's Working (7-10)

However, in this guy's case, it's good that Jesus was able to read minds, hearts, and situations. But let's go on because it gets even more dramatic and interesting. Remember the tension created in this text is over working on the Sabbath. In verses 7-10, we have to ask who's really working here. Let's start by observing what the Pharisees are doing in verse 7. Here they are in the worship service worshipping. No, they are looking for a reason to accuse Jesus. The wording is very strong here. It says they were spying on Him. They were watching Him insidiously.

They were working hard at trying to catch Jesus healing on the Sabbath. They were not there to worship. They were there to work evil. Isn't that true of the modern church as well? People come with all sorts of motives. Some come to spy so they can go and tell their friends what the latest news or gossip is. Some come for the specific reason to get caught up on the latest gossip. Some come to evaluate the singing, the music, the prayers, and the message. Some come to spread gossip or cause trouble. Some come to see and judge what others are doing. How about if we try a new concept in worship? How about if we come to church to worship God and listen for Him to speak to us so that we can change our lives so that they are pleasing to God? Oh, that's a new concept, right? Let's come to worship, not to work evil.

On the other hand, Jesus sees a man whose livelihood and dignity have been taken away from him. Let's also keep this in mind. The synagogue worship service focused a great deal on teaching. Jesus knew what they were thinking and planning. And so to get them interested in the lesson, Jesus asked the man to get up and stand in front of everyone. The man immediately obeyed Jesus and got up in front of everyone. Jesus wants to give them another lesson about Sabbath. If a newborn boy turned 8 days old on the Sabbath, it was important to have him circumcised on that day even though it was a day in which work was not to be done. Midwives would work if a woman was giving birth on the Sabbath. If a person was sick and it was a matter of life and death, they could work on him to heal him or her. However, if the sickness was not life or death, no matter how painful, they would wait until sundown to work on the person.

Now remember, we have already said that the Pharisees were working at trapping Jesus. And so here is the lesson Jesus gave. He said, "Is it lawful to do good or to do evil on the Sabbath?" Obviously if that's our choice, it should only be lawful to do good, especially on the Sabbath since it is the day of worship. However, if the Pharisees gave this some thought, they would realize that they were in the process of working to do evil. So Jesus seems to be saying that doing something that will benefit another on the Sabbath is lawful. Doing good ought to be characterized by being other-centered, never self-centered.

And then Jesus asks, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to save a life or to destroy it?" Jesus is about to give a man his life back. He is about to heal this crushed hand. The man will be able to return to work and support his family. Jesus is giving the man back his dignity and his health. On the other hand, since the penalty for breaking the Sabbath is death, the Pharisees are trying to destroy the life and ministry of Jesus. In fact, if they had the power to heal this man, they would wait until the Sabbath was over. But even if they had the gift of healing, but they died before the Sabbath was over, this man would have to go on living without dignity or health.

The conclusion rational people would make is that it is God's will that we both do good on the Sabbath and save lives on the Sabbath. And with that, Jesus told the man to stretch out his hand, he did so, and the hand was completely healed. Jesus didn't lift a finger. Jesus did not break a sweat. Jesus just spoke a couple of words. The man was completely healed. And so we have to ask, "Who is really working here?" Jesus spoke a few words and a man's life was restored. The Pharisees are working hard to do evil to Jesus and destroy His life and ministry. It is obvious who is breaking Sabbath and Who is truly keeping Sabbath.

Let me quickly add what Jesus has not said. Jesus did not say that keeping the Sabbath was not important. He did not say we could do whatever we want to do. Doing something on the Sabbath should be intentional. It is a time to rest and be restored physically, spiritually, and

emotionally. It is a time to connect with God, family, and friends. Sabbath is not a time to catch up on work or do things out of self-interest. Jesus believed the Sabbath was important and we see Him and the disciples attending synagogue regularly on the Sabbath. We would do well to think about Sabbath and follow Jesus' lead. We need to understand the value and nature of Sabbath.

Who's Insane (11)

There should be great rejoicing in the worship service. There was a powerful teaching and a powerful healing. God was present and active. But in verse 11 we see who's really insane. Again, let me point to a specific word here. The NIV says that these Pharisees were furious. Literally the text reads they were filled with madness. Madness is a great word because it captures the meaning of the Greek word. The Greek word means no mind. In other words, these people were now out of their minds. Their rage is born out of pride in their own understanding and their unwillingness to understand Jesus. They started to plot against Jesus and started to make plans as to what they might do to Him.

I have seen and come in contact with all kinds of evil and the thing that strikes the most is the insanity of the evil. In the Greek, the sentence is worded in the passive, "They were filled with madness." Did madness fill them? Did some outside force fill them with madness? Satan is the one who clouds the mind with evil. I have seen people filled with this demonic madness. They are literally out of their minds. We need to be careful because when we give into evil of any kind, Satan will fill our minds with madness. I hope and pray that none of us here have given our minds over to Satan. The results are too painful to watch. **EVEN THOUGH JESUS GIVES ENOUGH PROOF AS TO HIS ANOINTED STATUS, BECAUSE OF PRIDE, PEOPLE WILL REFUSE TO SURRENDER THEIR LIVES TO JESUS.**

IV. SUMMARY

We may think our little bit of gossip is harmless. Looking at the picture of a naked woman on the computer is no big deal if no one sees. We may think that starting rumors and firing up people to make trouble is no huge sin. We may think that the way we live our lives is fine. But Jesus made it crystal clear. No one gets to heaven except through Him. **IT TAKES A GREAT DEAL OF HUMILITY TO SURRENDER TO GOD'S WAYS.**

John Blanchard, in his book *The Truth for Life* said:

"One of the greatest theologians in the history of Christendom was undoubtedly Aurelious Augustinius, better known as St. Augustine, who was converted in the year 387 and later became Bishop of Hippo in North Africa. One of his memorable sayings was this – 'For those who would learn God's ways, humility is the first thing, humility is the second, and humility is the third.' That may at first sound like an unwarranted exaggeration, but it is surely an echo of these words in the Old Testament – '[God] has showed you, O man, 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' (Micah 6:8)."

Let me wrap this up by encouraging us to give up the idea of Jesus plus anything else. As I preach through the Gospel of Luke, please take time to measure your live, your thoughts, your behaviors, and your beliefs according to the life and teachings of Jesus. Anything less will lead us straight to hell, no matter how good we think we are.