

Tommy Meador / General

Gospel of Luke / Luke 5:33–6:11

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## Introduction

- Wedding planning - Best part - Cake testing. Cake still sits in our Freezer. Part of that cake has moved with us across the country - reminder of the celebration. We don't want to forget the commitment we made 15 years ago.
- I don't want you to forget the commitment that Jesus made to you. [Luke 5:20](#). Your sins are forgiven. Those words are life-changing - because those words bring us into a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Inside a relationship with Jesus Christ, there is joy and there is rest. Are you enjoying the joy and rest that comes inside of a relationship with Jesus?
- We live in a joyless world, and at times we can feel quite restless. The passage we're looking at this morning is a good reminder that inside of a relationship with Jesus, Jesus gives us what our hearts long for: joy and rest.
- Looking at three stories this morning where Jesus is confronted by the Pharisees. Pharisees = a highly influential religious sect that had been around for about 200 years. Approx. 6,000 pharisees - 1% of the population - had great influence on the common people. Sadducees = aristocrats. Scribes = intellectual elite. Pharisees = Ordinary men with a commitment to the Torah - so much that they developed "the tradition of the elders." - rituals, laws, and practices in addition to the Laws that God had given Moses to aid you in keeping God's law. And, they imposed these traditions on others. Some time after Jesus' ministry, the oral traditions were written down - this written collection of the tradition of the elders is called the mishnah.

- This morning, two truths I want you to remember about Jesus as you seek to live in His joy and His rest.

## Jesus is the joy-giver, so celebrate!

- Pharisees suspicious - Jesus doesn't seem as serious about the things of God as they are. He eats with sinners (previous story). because His followers are having too much fun.
- Pharisees demonstrated devotion to God through fasting (abstaining from food as a sign of mourning or dependency on God). Fasted 2x a week from sun up to sundown. OT didn't require weekly fasts - only one fast on the Day of Atonement. ([Leviticus 16](#)) However, people voluntarily fasted in the OT - often after natural disaster, time of difficulty (war), or simply a voluntary fast for personal matters.
- Pharisees tradition was 2x a week as a way of demonstrating piety. To be a good Jew, you fasted. John's disciples fasted as well - John pointed them to Jesus, but some never followed Jesus and stayed stuck in the old ways of religion.
- A religion of man-made rules, fasting, rituals, washings... Pharisees constantly policing to make sure people were keeping the rules... Where's the joy?
- BUT... something different about Jesus. He was a man of sorrows ([Is. 53:3](#)). He would carry our grief. BUT, He was also filled with joy ([Luke 10:21](#), [John 15:11](#), [17:13](#)). The Pharisees had a way of making you burdened by religious obligation while Jesus lifted burdens. Jesus came to give us joy! After all, His first miracle in John's Gospel was turning water into wine so a celebration could continue!
- Why don't Jesus' disciples fast? This is a time for celebration; not fasting. Disciples would fast later - (when groom taken away - a reference to Jesus' death) - but not now. The King is here! It's time to celebrate. **Like a wedding celebration: you don't fast at a wedding! You eat lots of cake!**

- If you put new, unshrunk on an old garment, it will tear off the old garment as it shrinks. If you put new wine into old, worn out wineskins, they will burst! You need a new wineskins to hold the new wine!
- Jesus didn't come to patch up the old. He didn't come to make our old lives and our old way of doing things better. He came to give new life! Jesus came to bring new wine. The life that He brings cannot be forced into the old ways of religious ritual that the Pharisees hold on to.
- Jesus has come to bring a better way, a new way, the way of joy.
- **You will not find joy if you try to patch Jesus on to your way of life.**
  - We attempt to conform Jesus to our way of life instead of conforming to His way of life for us.
  - Question many of us are subconsciously asking: "How does Jesus fit into my already busy life? That's the wrong question. We don't try to make Jesus fit into our lives. We GIVE him our lives.
  - Instead, ask, "How do I need to reorient my life around the will of Jesus?"
  - Many of us want the benefits of being a Christian without the commitment of being a Christian.
- **You will not find joy if you listen to the voice of the joyless.** Beware of the constant critic. Beware of the voice of the uninformed who don't Jesus wants to do in your life. (e.g., the Pharisees) Beware of the voice of the legalist who tells you the only way to please God is to live by their rules. Beware of the voice of your own heart that tells you joy is found outside of Christ or condemns you and tells you don't deserve the joy of Christ.
- **You will find joy when you listen to His voice and passionately pursue Him.** God wants you to enjoy Him! You enjoy God as you pursue God. When you are pursuing your way, and just trying to get God to conform to you, you will have no real joy. When you are listening to and influenced by the voice of the joyless, you will have little joy.

## Jesus is the Sabbath, so rest in Him!

- You can't embrace the new when you're stuck in the old - and the Pharisees were stuck...
- Jesus and his disciples plucking heads of grain as they walked through grainfields. According to the OT Law, field owners were to leave the corners of their fields unharvested, so that the poor could come along and freely harvest from the corners ([Leviticus 19:9-10](#)). So, Jesus' isn't stealing someone's grain, but He is harvesting on the Sabbath.
- Significance of Sabbath in Judaism - Sundown on Friday to Sundown on Sat. - remembering God's rest. [Gen. 2:1-3](#) - God invites us to enter His rest - 7th day - no day/night - ongoing. Picture of how God's people are supposed to live in ongoing rest - Ongoing rest is living out [Gen. 1:26-27](#) - ruling with God/subduing the earth for God's glory. In short, you rest when you live in God's will.
- Problem: sin robs us of rest because sin keeps us from the will of God. Sabbath was a reminder every week on the seventh day that God wants His people to rest. A day each week to cease from the burden of work and refocus on the rest that God has for His people.
- **The problem: the Pharisees made the Sabbath a day of work! The scribes classified 39 different kinds of work you couldn't do on the Sabbath**, and grain picking was one of them! (Other sabbath laws - how far you could walk, tying or loosening knots, sewing one stitch, writing more than one letter, etc. no extinguishing a fire, no kindling a fire. Sabbath elevator! **It's crushing! Supposed to be a day of rest, but it ends up being a day of work as you work to remember what you can't do!**
- Jesus asks, "Do you remember David?" [1 Sam. 21](#) - on the run from King Saul - had been anointed the future king by Samuel - comes to the priest in the tabernacle - he's hungry, and he has men who are hungry. All the priest has is bread that was put on the table of showbread - this was sacred bread that symbolized God's desire to fellowship with His people. But only the priests were allowed to eat it. Priest gives it to David. David allowed to eat because he was God's anointed.
- Jesus is the one from the lineage of David - the greater King. The anointed is with His people. Feasting in the fields! Jesus, the Son of

Man, the long awaited Messiah, is Lord of the Sabbath. He's the One who restores and gives us the rest our hearts long for. We find real rest not in a day of the week or keeping religious rules but in a person - Jesus Christ!

- Further, the disciples are experiencing Sabbath! How much more Sabbath can you get than actually being with God? The disciples are with God!
- On another Sabbath, a man with withered hand - Pharisees watching... Tension. They already see Jesus as a lawbreaker. They know He's a miracle worker as well. They're watching closely to see if He will perform a miracle on the Sabbath (vs. 7).
- vs. 8 - Powerful questions from Jesus. "Do you do good or harm on the Sabbath?" "Is it a day of evil?" Implication - it would have been evil for Jesus NOT to help this man. If Jesus has ability to heal, harmful to leave this man in this condition even if it violated Sabbath rules. Luke says it was the man's "right hand." Withered hand has kept him from working.
- Jesus heals the man because people matter more than rules. But, this concept that people matter more than rules was so foreign to the Pharisees that they would never experience restoration - renewal - real life. They begin to discuss what to do with Jesus (vs. 11).
- Rest - it's what are hearts long for. Rest from worry and anxiety. Rest from the pressures of this world. Rest from the brokenness in my life that's caused by my own sin. How do I experience Sabbath in my life?
- **You need a nap. You need a day off. You need a vacation.** Some of us are exhausted. We've overloaded our schedules with busyness. Our lives are restless. You have a tendency to think of Sabbath as taking a break. Taking a day to focus on God, more extended prayer, maybe fasting, etc. That's part of Sabbath, but the Sabbath is far more than a day of the week. Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is being in relationship with Jesus. Therefore...
- **You don't need a nap as much as you need abiding in Jesus.** Resting = I'm ceasing from my labors to focus on Jesus and His will. ([Matthew 11:28](#) - Take my yoke upon you). The reason you don't abide is because you don't make time to abide. You don't make it a priority so

you're restless. You're always most rested in life when you're abiding in and growing in Christ. Sabbath is more than a day of the week, it is a daily pursuit of resting in Jesus by abiding in Him.

- **You don't need a vacation as much as you need to minister to the needs of people.** Ministering to people is refreshing and exhilarating. It may leave you tired, but it will leave you fulfilled. When I put the needs of others above my own, when I disciple, when I teach God's Word, I am doing what God created me and saved me to do. When I am abiding in Jesus and serving Jesus I am experiencing Sabbath because I'm doing what God created me to do - what God intended for Adam and Eve in the garden.
- **You won't abide in Jesus or minister to the needs of people unless you're willing to let some things go.** Not simply talking about scheduling issues. What's making your heart restless? Unconfessed sin, worry, anxiety, stubborn and prideful heart, etc. Those things that make me restless, I must constantly bring them before Jesus and confess my restlessness to Him asking for His help.
- **You won't experience complete rest until you're home with Jesus.**
- [Hebrews 4:9 -10](#). Yes, we experience Jesus as our Sabbath rest now, but as long as we live in this world we will struggle with restlessness. Hope of Christians: Return of Christ - no more sin, no more worry, no more anxiety, no more distractions, no more voice of the critic, just rest - unhindered fellowship with God. Meaningful, joyful service to our King.
- How do you enter the rest of Jesus? Faith! Rest and joy not found in traditionalism, rules, legalism, rituals, or the things of this world. Rest found in the One who fulfilled the Law and went to the cross and died in our place, whose rose from the dead, and now invites us into His rest as we turn from our sins and turn to Him. Today, in Christ, there is rest for your soul. There's rest right now, and there is a perfect rest that awaits you in eternity.
- Unbeliever: we're not inviting you to a lifeless, ritualistic religion but a life-changing relationship.
- Believer:

- **Enjoy the gift.** You can't enjoy when you're always worrying if you've done enough to make God happy! How do you enjoy? **Get to know Jesus, His teachings, His way of life, and follow Him.**
- **Major in grace.** Quit calling people to conform to your standard and invite people to find joy in conforming to Christ.