

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church

Sunday Sermon

Date: May 16, 2021

Text: Matthew 12:1-14

Scripture Reading: Matthew 12:1-14

Subject: Jesus is Lord even of the sabbath day

In the preceding message from Matthew 11:16-30, we considered:

1. How Jesus compared that generation to children sitting in the markets calling to their fellows who would not respond by dancing or lamentation.
2. This comparing of the children in the market was a way to compare what that generation did in response to John the Baptist and to Jesus himself. John the Baptist was austere; whereas Jesus was more sociable, but neither pleased that generation.
3. Jesus pronounced woe upon Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum because of the mighty works done in them, and because they repented not. We are told that if the mighty works which were done in those privileged cities had been done in Sodom, Gomorrah, and Sodom, they would have remained to that day.
4. Jesus thanked the Father who had hidden the wonderful things mentioned from the wise and prudent, and had revealed it unto babes. Jesus responded: Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. None can know the Father or the Son unless the Son reveal them.
5. The chapter ended with a wonderful invitation, apparently to those who remained as the elect of the nation who would come to Jesus as individuals. **Matthew 11:28-30 (KJV)** *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

Let us now proceed on verses 1-14 of the 12th chapter of Matthew.

Matthew 12:1 (KJV) *At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.*

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Mark 2:23-28 (KJV) *And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. 24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? 25 And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? 26 How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? 27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: 28 Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.*

Luke 6:1-5 (KJV) *And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands. 2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days? 3 And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungred, and they which were with him; 4 How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone? 5 And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.*

At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; -- (John Gill comments concerning the second sabbath after the first on Luke 6:1) "What seems most likely is, that this sabbath was,

as it may be rendered, "the first sabbath after the second"; that is, the first sabbath after the second day of the passover, when the sheaf of the firstfruits was offered, and harvest might be begun; which suits well with ears of corn being ripe at this time, which the disciples rubbed.

Leviticus 23:11 (KJV) *And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.*

The word *corn* here means wheat or barley, and not maize, as our corn which grows on a cob in America. They *rubbed* it in their hands to separate the grain from the chaff.

and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. – Jesus' disciples were hungry. So they began to pluck the ears of corn – barley or wheat. After they had plucked them they rubbed them in their hands to remove the husk or beard, that were on them, and then ate the grains.

Matthew 12:2 (KJV) *But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day.*

And as plucking of the ears of corn was forbidden on a sabbath day; the Pharisees saw it and responded. Seems that they always followed the Lord and his disciples to comment about their "breaking their law." They said to Jesus, "**Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day.**" How was it unlawful? What did the Pharisees require? The field of barley or wheat did not belong to the disciples, but it was lawful for them to do this. How so?

Deuteronomy 23:25 (KJV) *When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the*

ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn.

John Gill tells us what the Pharisees held as law regarding the act of the disciples. What offended the Pharisees was, that it was done on a sabbath day, it being, as they interpret it, a servile work, the same as as reaping; though, in the law just mentioned, it is manifestly distinguished from it. Their rule is³.

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"he that reaps (on the sabbath day) ever so little, is guilty (of stoning), ותולש תולדה קוצר הוא, and "plucking of ears of corn is a derivative of reaping";"

The Pharisees were clearly indignant about this "breach" of their sabbath. As we continue through the gospels, we shall see many occasions when our Lord did good works on the Sabbath day – and as we suspect, each occasion will make the Pharisees indignant.

Matthew 12:3-4 (KJV) *But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; 4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?*

These Pharisees should have known this – and they probably did, but ignored it. If they had not read the Scriptures, they were very unfit persons either to be teachers, or censurers of others, and must have been very slothful and negligent. Let's read the record from the Old Testament:

1 Samuel 21:1-6 (KJV) *Then came David to Nob to Ahimelech the priest: and Ahimelech was afraid at the meeting of David, and said unto him, Why art thou alone, and no man with thee? 2 And David said unto Ahimelech the priest, The king hath commanded me a business, and hath*

said unto me, Let no man know any thing of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee: and I have appointed my servants to such and such a place. 3 Now therefore what is under thine hand? give me five loaves of bread in mine hand, or what there is present. 4 And the priest answered David, and said, There is no common bread under mine hand, but there is hallowed bread; if the young men have kept themselves at least from women. 5 And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women have been kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and the vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is in a manner common, yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel. 6 So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shewbread, that was taken from before the LORD, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away.

Let's read the record concerning the Lord's commandment about the shewbread. As we can see, what our Lord said about the shewbread being for the priests was written in the law of Moses.

Leviticus 24:5-9 (KJV) *And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake. 6 And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD. 7 And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 8 Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. 9 And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it is most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute.*

So, our Lord continues to press this issue with the Pharisees in the next verse.

Matthew 12:5 (KJV) *Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?*

One of the prohibitions stated again and again in the law for the Sabbath is “no servile work.” By the law the priests were obliged, every sabbath day, to offer up two lambs for a burnt offering; to which were annexed many servile works, as killing the sacrifice, flaying it, cutting it in pieces, and laying it on the altar, cutting of wood, and putting that in order, and kindling the fire. Let us ask ourselves, “Is this servile work?” Our reply: “Yes, it sounds like work to us!” Yet, Jesus says by doing this offering the priests profane the sabbath, and are blameless.

Numbers 28:9-10 (KJV) *And on the sabbath day two lambs of the first year without spot, and two tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and the drink offering thereof: 10 This is the burnt offering of every sabbath, beside the continual burnt offering, and his drink offering.*

The priests killed the Passover, sprinkled its blood, wiped its inwards, and burned the fat on the sabbath day, with many other things which were done in the temple. What exonerated these men was, that what they did was done in the temple, and for the service of it. Therefore the temple was the means of their exoneration.

Matthew 12:6 (KJV) *But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple.*

That is, in this field of grain, there is one greater than the temple – Jesus himself. In him dwelt the fulness of the godhead bodily – and it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. He was

the reason the temple existed, therefore, is greater than the temple. Our Lord's argument is, that if the temple, and the service of it, excused the priests from blame, in doing things in it on the sabbath day, which otherwise might not be done; then much more might his presence, who was greater than the temple, excuse his disciples from blame in this action of rubbing and eating the ears of corn; which was done to satisfy hunger, and to render them the more capable of performing their function as apostles; and which was of more importance than the service of the priests.

Matthew 12:7 (KJV) *But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.*

But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, -- The Pharisees were definitely not famous for understanding the spirit of God's word – but reveled in the "letter of the law." Truly, they sat in Moses' seat and used the law to condemn others. For them, the "sacrifices" of fasting and giving tithes counted for all. They knew nothing of showing mercy which is one of the blessed gifts which the Lord bestowed on members of his church.

Romans 12:6-9 (KJV) *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. 9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.*

Ye would not have condemned the guiltless. – Amen! Had the Pharisees known – really known the meaning of sacrifice as opposed to showing mercy, they would not have condemned those who were not guilty of sin.

Matthew 12:8 (KJV) *For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.*

By "the Son of man" is meant, not any man, as some may have thought. For no mere man is lord of any law, moral or ritual, natural or positive; or has a power of disposing of it, and dispensing with it at pleasure; but Christ himself; who is the person meant by this phrase "son of Man" in the New Testament. This is a name which he alone called himself. We think it comes from this mention of Messiah in the old Testament.

Daniel 7:13-14 (KJV) *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the **Son of man** came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. **14** And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*

Our Lord was the one who gave commandment to "remember the sabbath to keep it holy" to the nation of Israel. His commandment of rest of the holy sabbath in Exodus 16:23 is the first mention of the sabbath in the Holy Scriptures.

Exodus 16:22-30 (KJV) *And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. **23** And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, **To morrow is the rest of the holy***

sabbath unto the LORD: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. **24** And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. **25** And Moses said, Eat that to day; for to day is a sabbath unto the LORD: to day ye shall not find it in the field. **26** Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none. **27** And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. **28** And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? **29** See, for that the LORD hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. **30** So the people rested on the seventh day.

May I also say that after God finished his work of creation, then rested on the seventh day and blessed it, there is no further mention of the sabbath day for about 2677 years after creation. There is no record that any of the patriarchs or any other people kept the sabbath day for all that time. Then God gave it to Israel as part of the Old Covenant contained in the Ten Commandments – however, this command to remember the sabbath comes just prior to the giving of the Ten Commandments. Moreover, God would tell the children of Israel that the sabbath was to be kept throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant – a sign between God and the children of Israel for ever.

Exodus 31:16-17 (KJV) *Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. **17** It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days*

the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

The commandment to remember the Sabbath was given of the Lord which Jesus, as also Lord of the Sabbath could dispense with, or even abolish at his pleasure.

1. Every one of the ten commandments are restated in the whole of the New Testament with a single exception. That exception is the remembering of the sabbath day.
2. There is no commandment to the Lord's churches to keep the sabbath day.
3. There is no scriptural record of the church meeting together on the sabbath day. The churches did meet, at least the ones we know about, on the first day of the week.
4. There is no scriptural record that the seventh day sabbath was changed to a first day sabbath which some call a Christian sabbath.
5. There is one mention of the "Lord's day" by John the Apostle in the Revelation, but we do not know what that day was.
6. I, there conclude that there is no Christian Sabbath nor any command to keep the seventh day sabbath. We have neither an example nor a precept for it. We are told this concerning the sabbath, however.

a. **Colossians 2:16-17 (KJV)** *Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: **17** Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.*

Matthew 12:9 (KJV) *And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue:*

That is, when our Lord departed from the grain fields, he went into their synagogue, but as Luke records: It was "on another sabbath."

So, we can't be absolutely sure how much time passed. Both Mark and Luke recorded this healing of the man with the withered hand.

Mark 3:1-6 (KJV) *And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. 2 And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. 3 And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. 4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. 5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other. 6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.*

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Luke 6:6-11 (KJV) *And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered. 7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him. 8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. 9 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it? 10 And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other. 11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.*

Matthew 12:10 (KJV) *And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him.*

And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered.

– Jesus having come into their synagogue taught them as Luke tells us. Our Lord was very aware of the thoughts of all who were in the synagogue with him, for he knew what is in all men. The scribes and Pharisees were watching him to see whether or not he would heal on the Sabbath day. Apparently, they could not hold their peace any longer, so -

And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? That they might accuse him.

– This had been their design from the very beginning with Jesus. They were looking for something to accuse him of. Thus, their question: Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days?

Matthew 12:11-12 (KJV) *And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? 12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.*

Great question, the Lord uses to rebuff the scribes and pharisees! Indeed, what man among them would not rescue his sheep from the pit on the sabbath day? Would they not hurry to the place where the sheep had fallen into the pit and pull it out to safety? He did not wait for their answer, because the answer is obvious! They would do it – any of them. So, the Lord continues -

How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.

– Sheep are but one division of the “cattle after their kind” which the Lord created on the

sixth day of creation. As wonderful and marvelous as a sheep is – he is of lesser importance than a man, any man, who was created in the image and likeness of God. This unfortunate man with the withered hand was no exception. He too was a son of Adam, therefore, bore the image and likeness of God. Proving his point that a man is better than a sheep, our Lord concludes his argument and the result. Because a man is better than a sheep which any of you would pull out of a pit where he was fallen, it is lawful to do well on sabbath days.

Matthew 12:13 (KJV) *Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.*

Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. -- That is, after Jesus had looked round about upon all them in the synagogue, to observe their countenances; and what answer they would make to his arguments; and with anger for their inhumanity and cruelty; being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, i.e. their unmercifulness to their fellow human beings. Notice this: The man had a withered hand. The word “withered” comes from the Greek word: “ξηρος *xeros xay-ros*” which is found seven times in the New Testament and is translated as: withered 4 times, dry 1 time, dry land 1 time, and land 1 time.” His hand had been deprived of the natural juices which were in other parts of his body and therefore, his hand was dry and shriveled up making him incapable of using it. Isn’t it interesting that the word of the Lord told him to do something that he was incapable of doing in his own strength? Stretch for thine hand (which, of course, he did at Jesus word and by his miraculous power).

This is much like Jesus did with the man with palsy which was borne of four and let down through the roof of the house when he said to him: “Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee” and

“Arise, take up; thy bed, and do unto thine house.” And he arose and departed, but by the power of the Lord for he was hitherto unable. We see this so often in the scripture. Think of the man with an infirmity 38 years who Jesus encountered in the midst of a host of impotent folks at the pool of Bethesda. He was waiting for the moving of the water and needed somebody to pick him up and put him in the pool, but always someone else got there before him. Then Jesus said to him (to do the impossible): “Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.” *Immediately the man was made whole and took up his bed, and walked; and on the same day was the sabbath.* (John 5:5-9)

And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other. – At Jesus’ word, he stretched forth his dried up, withered hand and it was restored whole, like as the other. Our Lord showed great compassion for those who suffered. Can you and I imagine what a blessing this was for this poor man who must have already suffered much because his hand had dried up and become useless to him? But, the power of God changed that!

Matthew 12:14 (KJV) *Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.*

The Pharisees went out of the synagogue, being, as Luke says, filled with madness, because of the unanswerableness of his arguments; and because they thought Jesus had violated the sabbath. Most of all, they were incensed because of the miracle done by him; all of which proved him to be, as he had said, Lord of the sabbath. Doubtless they thought this miracle could not fail to create great esteem of Jesus among the people. They held a council against him, how they might destroy him. Mark says, the council was held by them with the Herodians. The Herodians were another political sect (probably named after Herod the great) who held at least some of Herod’s views and were more in agreement

with the Sadducees than the Pharisees. But here, they joined together in council to destroy Jesus. This is most interesting. Even wicked men who are at enmity with each other tend to be on friendly terms when they join in persecution of one for doing righteously. Such was Pilate and Herod. After Herod had mocked the Lord Jesus, we are told this: “And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.” -- **Luk. 23:12 (KJV)**.

Let me ask my hearers: What do you think of Jesus? Whose son is He? Is Jesus the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth? Did Jesus go about doing good? Did not he come into the world to die on a cruel Roman cross to pay for all the sins of His people?

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (KJV) *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:*

Galatians 1:4 (KJV) *Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:*

Ephesians 1:6-7 (KJV) *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. 7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*

Do you believe that all those whom the Father gave him shall come to him – and those who come to him, he will in no wise cast out? Do you believe that he forgives all sin and gives those who believe in him everlasting life? If you believe, you have surely called on His name as the dying thief did who said: “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom? ”

If you believe, then be baptized and join His church and walk with him. Amen!