

CHAPTER SIX

Outline

- A. Luke completed the account of a series of five complaints against Jesus (1-11).
1. The complaint about plucking grain of the sabbath (1-4).
 - a) The circumstances.
 - (1) The disciples of Jesus plucked and ate the grain.
 - (2) They rubbed the heads of grain in their hands.
 - (3) The Pharisees, assuming that this was work, asked, "Why do ye do that which is not lawful on the sabbath?"
 - b) Jesus answered the complaint.
 - (1) He asked, "Haven't you ever read about what David did?"
 - (2) David took the showbread and ate it and gave it also to his men.
 - (3) This was not lawful except for priests.
 - c) Jesus reminded them that "the Son of Man is lord of the sabbath."
 2. The complaint about healing on the sabbath (6-11).
 - a) The circumstances.
 - (1) It was on another sabbath.
 - (2) Jesus was teaching in the synagogue.
 - (3) A man was there with a withered hand.
 - b) The attitude of the scribes and Pharisees.
 - (1) They were watching to see what He would do.
 - (2) They were looking for an excuse to accuse Him.
 - c) Jesus' bold action.
 - (1) Knowing what they were thinking, He said to the man, "Get up and stand in the midst"—that is, where he could be seen by all.
 - (2) He asked, "Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good or to do harm?"
 - (3) He looked around the room at all of them, then said to the man, "Stretch forth your hand."
 - d) The miracle: "His hand was restored."
 - e) The effect of the miracle on the accusers of Jesus.
 - (1) They were filled with senseless fury.
 - (2) They talked over their problem: "What are we to do with Jesus?"

CHAPTER SIX

- B. Luke told about Jesus selecting the twelve apostles (12-16).
1. The circumstances (12-13).
 - a) Jesus had gone into the mountain to pray.
 - b) He continued in prayer throughout the night.
 - c) When it was day, He called His disciples and chose twelve of them whom He called apostles.
 2. The twelve whom He selected (14-16).
 - a) Simon and Andrew.
 - (1) Simon was also called Peter.
 - (2) Andrew was the brother of Peter.
 - b) James and John.
 - c) Philip and Bartholomew.
 - d) Matthew and Thomas.
 - e) James and Simon.
 - (1) James is the son of Alphaeus.
 - (2) Simon was called the Zealot.
 - f) Judas and Judas.
 - (1) The first of these having the same name was the son of James.
 - (2) The second is Judas Iscariot, who became the traitor.
- C. He told about Jesus teaching a large crowd of His disciples (17-49).
1. The occasion (17-19).
 - a) After choosing the twelve, Jesus came down with them and stood on a level place.
 - b) The large crowd of His disciples.
 - (1) They were from Judea and Jerusalem and from the coast of Tyre and Sidon.
 - (2) They had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases.
 - c) The healing of the multitudes.
 - (1) Those who were troubled with unclean spirits were healed.
 - (2) All the multitude sought to touch Him, for power came forth from Him, and He healed them all.
 2. A summary of what Jesus taught (20-49).
 - a) The Beatitudes and the Woes (20-26).
 - (1) The four classes included in the Beatitudes.
 - (a) Those who were poor.

- (b) Those who hunger now.
 - (c) Those who weep now.
 - (d) Those who are hated for the sake of the Son of Man.
- (2) The four classes included in the Woes.
- (a) Those who are rich now.
 - (b) Those who are full now.
 - (c) Those who laugh now.
 - (d) Those of whom all men speak well.
- b) Regulations for proper conduct (27-38).
- (1) Toward enemies (27-35).
 - (2) Toward others in general (36-38).
- c) Some concise statements of truth (29-45).
- (1) Blind guides of the blind.
 - (2) Disciple and his teacher.
 - (3) Mote and beam.
 - (4) Good and corrupt.
- d) The necessity of obedience (46-49).
- (1) "Why call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"
 - (2) The lesson illustrated by house built on the rock and the house built on sand.

Plucking Grain on the Sabbath

Scripture

6:1-5 Now it came to pass on a sabbath, that he was going through the grainfields; and his disciples plucked the ears, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands. 2 But certain of the Pharisees said, Why do ye that which it is not lawful to do on the sabbath day? 3 And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read even this, what David did, when he was hungry, he, and they that were with him; 4 how he entered into the house of God, and took and ate the showbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat save for the priests alone? 5 And he said unto them, The Son of man is lord of the sabbath.

Comments

Now it came to pass on a sabbath day.—Many of the incidents described in the Gospel record occurred on a sabbath day. It was

natural for the writers to tell about those occasions when the people gathered together for their regular synagogue services. But there was more than this to it. The enemies of Jesus frequently attacked Him for doing what they said was unlawful on the sabbath. They, of course, were never able to prove Him guilty on this charge. On one occasion, Jesus challenged them by asking, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" John 8:46. Although they tried hard, they were never able to convict Him, for He was the sinless Son of God and Son of Man.

rubbing them in their hands.—This constituted work, in the minds of His accusers. It was not lawful on the sabbath, so they said.

Originally, no work was done on the sabbath. But Jesus reminded them that the Jews did many things on the sabbath which they did not consider work. They led their animals to water on the sabbath; they pulled the ox out of the ditch on the sabbath. But they considered this to be necessary, and not work.

Have you not read even this, what David did.—Jesus' answer to the charge of sabbath breaking carried a double thrust: First, they were ignorant of the Word, because they had not been reading it; second, they had neglected to read about Davids' taking the showbread and giving it to his hungry men. Who were they to sit in judgment over the Son of Man and His disciples? Before condemning the innocent, these self-appointed leaders should read their own law.

The incident to which Jesus referred is found in I Sam. 21:1-7. David was fleeing from Saul. He came to Abimelech the priest and asked for anything he might have on hand. But there was no bread except the loaves that were used in the worship of the Lord. After David had assured the priest of the purity of his men, he was given the bread that only priests ate. As Jesus put it, "It was not lawful to eat save for the priests alone." Evidently, such sacred regulations could be superceded by greater needs. Saving the lives of David and his men was, in the sight of God, more important than allowing only priests to use the bread. According to Matthew, Jesus added this important point, "If ye had known what this meaneth, I desire mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless" (Matt. 12:7).

The Son of man is lord of the sabbath.—He who had ordained the Law at Sinai had authority over it, not the critics of Jesus. And that ended the discussion for a time.

*Healing on the Sabbath**Scripture*

6:6-11 And it came to pass on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man there, and his right hand was withered. 7 And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath; that they might find how to accuse him. 8 But he knew their thoughts; and he said to the man that had his hand withered, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. 9 And Jesus said unto them, I ask you, Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, or to destroy it? 10 And he looked round about on them all, and said unto him, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored. 11 But they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

Comments

and there was a man there, and his right hand was withered.—The setting is the familiar sabbath-synagogue scene. But this is different. All the elements of a trap baited with a sick man are present. Those who considered themselves to be the rightful teachers were jealous of Jesus popularity. They were ready to spring their trap. Let this "Teacher" dare to perform a work of healing on the sacred sabbath, and they would destroy Him!

It is characteristic of Luke to mention the fact that it was the man's *right* hand that was withered. The beloved physician would be interested in such details.

that they might find how to accuse him.—Their purpose was clear: They were interested in destroying the influence of Jesus with the people. Make them believe that He was breaking the sabbath, and they would return to their former teachers, the scribes and Pharisees. *But he knew their thoughts.*—Perhaps human intelligence could have seen through their trap. His enemies certainly thought of Him only as a man. But He was the Son of God, and God knows the reasoning of man's heart. Jesus knew what was in man (John 2: 25). The Pharisees had not said anything up to this point, and were not aware that Jesus knew what they were plotting. They were soon to find out both the strength and the courage of the One whom they were seeking to destroy.

According to Matt. 12:10, the Phisees asked, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath?" It is difficult to say at what point their question was asked, but probably not before He had asked them, "Is it lawful to do good or harm on the sabbath?"

Rise up and stand forth in the midst.—One can't help wondering what effect this order from Jesus had on those who had planned to trap Him. Were they delighted that their scheme was going so well? Did they in the least suspect that He was aware of their evil purpose? Were they surprised by His courage as He accepted the challenge to heal the man?

What did the people think? Were they aware of what was going on? Were they glorying in the wisdom and courage and mercy of the Prophet who had arisen in their midst?

Let those who picture Jesus as a weakling ponder the boldness of His action. He could have avoided the clash with the time-honored leaders; He could have waited until the crowd was gone; but He didn't. He said, "Stand here in the midst." He wanted all to see exactly what He was doing. Everything was out in the open. What a contrast to the secret conniving of the Pharisees who were bent on destroying the Son of God!

And he arose and stood in the midst.—It is highly improbable that the man had the slightest idea of what was about to happen to him. It is also highly improbable that he knew anything of the plot of the Pharisees to use him to get rid of Jesus. A physical handicap like that may have made him timid, but at the command of the Teacher, he stood up where all could see him.

Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good, or to do harm?—Jesus was in complete command of the situation. He knew what His opponents had in mind; He knew what He was going to do. He wanted all who present on that sabbath day to see through the evil plot of the Pharisees.

He asked, "Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good, or to do harm?" There could be but one answer to the question: "To do good, not harm, on the sabbath." His enemies were planning the most evil deed: to kill the Son of God!

"To save a life, or destroy," that was the real issue before them. The people must have been moved by the logic of Jesus and by His mercy. In their hearts they must have answered, "Save a life."

But the second part of the question, "or destroy it?" Whose life?

That of the man with the withered hand? Or was it His own life, for He knew that they desperately wanted to destroy Him.

He looked round about on them all.—Jesus had upset their trap; He was now ready to expose their wicked plot. He knew what they were thinking; did they see what He was about to do? Mark 3:5 says, He looked round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardness of their hearts.

John describes Him in Rev. 1:14 as the one whose eyes were as a "flame of fire." Did something of that flame show in His eyes that sabbath day in the synagogue while wicked men dared Him to heal the man with the withered hand? Did they dare look Him full in the face? Did the people see the wrath of the Righteous Judge as Jesus stood by the man He was about to heal? Or did they see in His face the mellow light of mercy for all who turn to Him?

Stretch forth thy hand.—The man did so, and his hand was restored. It was as simple as that. Instantly, this one who had not been able to use his withered right hand—we do not know for how long—stretched it forth in demonstration of the power of Jesus to do good on the sabbath, to save a life, not destroy it.

they were filled with madness.—Their fury knew no bounds. Their cleverly arranged trap had been turned against them. They couldn't answer the logic of Jesus, for before their very eyes stood the man whose withered hand had been restored.

There was but one thing left: They would destroy Jesus. They talked the matter over among themselves. Their only question was, "What shall we do with him?" "They took counsel against him, how they might destroy him" (Matt. 12:14).

Jesus Selects the Twelve Apostles

Scripture

6:12-16 And it came to pass in these days, that he went out into the mountain to pray; and he continued all night in prayer to God. 13 And when it was day, he called his disciples; and he chose from them twelve, whom also he named apostles: 14 Simon, whom he also named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip and Bartholomew, 15 and Matthew and Thomas, and James *the son* of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot,

16 and Judas *the son* of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

he went into the mountain to pray.—In His prayer life, Jesus presents an example for His disciples to follow. He prayed before choosing the twelve; He prayed after the feeding of the five thousand; He prayed during His baptism. He prayed publically; He prayed alone. His private prayers sometimes lasted all night long; invariably, His public prayers were brief.

He prayed all night to God just before choosing the twelve. We are not told what He said. We only know something of the significance of the issues involved. On the shoulders of these men was to rest the responsibility of carrying on the work of preaching the gospel in all the world. The success of His earthly mission would depend on them. Some of them were weak. One would deny that he had ever known such a person as Jesus. Another would betray Him into the hands of His enemies. What better way to ponder the problems of preaching the gospel in all the world than to pray to God? Did that night seem long to Him, or did the morning light find Him still grateful for the privilege of talking to His heavenly Father? This we do know, when the night was over He was ready for the great decision.

he called His disciples; and he chose from them twelve.—Some of these men had been following Jesus from the beginning. John tells the story of Andrew bringing his brother Simon to Jesus. Luke has already mentioned their becoming fishers of men. Now they are to be formally selected from the many disciples and designated apostles.

An apostle is one who is sent on a mission. The apostles of Christ were selected by Him and sent by Him to carry the gospel into all the world. Later, He chose Paul to be an apostle also. See Acts 9:3-6; 22:7-21; 26:12-18. Matthias was chosen by the Lord to take the place from which Judas fell away (Acts 1:24-26).

The apostles were equipped to carry out their worldwide mission by being baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5, 8; 2:1-4). Paul also had all the rights of an apostle, although he was not of the original twelve (II Cor. 12:12).

Others such as Barnabas and James the Lord's brother were referred to as apostles because of having been sent out by the church (Acts 13:1-3). They, of course, were not baptized in the Holy Spirit, for that was limited to the twelve on the Day of Pentecost.

The writer of Hebrew says, "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, even Jesus" (Heb. 3:1). He can be called "apostle" because the Father sent Him. Understanding the use of the term depends on the one doing the sending. Christ sent the twelve and Paul; the church sent out some for special duties; God sent the Christ.

Simon, whom he also named Peter.—Peter is named first in all four of the lists of apostles (Matt. 10:2-4; Mk. 3:16-18; Lk. 6:14-16; Acts 1:13). The fact that he is mentioned first has led some to assume that he is head of the apostolic group. No such idea is presented in the Scriptures, for prominence is not preeminence. Exactly the same authority was given to all the apostles that was given to Peter (Matt. 16:19; 18:18). Jesus said to all of His apostles that in the regeneration—this Christian age when men are being made new creatures through obedience to the Word—the apostles were to sit on *twelve* thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28).

For the account of changing Simon's name to Peter, see John 1:42. But Jesus continued to address him as Simon. See Matt. 16:17; Lk. 22:31; John 21:15.

Among the outstanding things for which Peter is remembered are: (1) the good confession (Matt. 16:16); (2) the tragic denial (Lk. 22:54-62; and (3) the powerful sermon on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40). He wrote two epistles to strengthen his brethren in Christ.

and Andrew his brother.—Andrew was one of the two disciples of John the Baptist who heard him speak of Jesus saying, "Behold the Lamb of God." John 1:35-42. The first thing he did after becoming convinced of the truth of John's statement was to find his own brother Simon and say, "We have found the Messiah." He will always be remembered for the fact that he brought his own brother to Jesus. In his quiet way, Andrew must be considered as an effective worker for Christ even though the prominence of his brother sometimes overshadows him.

When Philip was confronted with the problem of the Greeks who wanted to see Jesus, he sought the help of Andrew, not Peter, in deciding what to do. John adds the significant statement: "Andrew cometh, and Philip, and they tell Jesus" (John 12:22).

James and John.—Mark says that Jesus nicknamed these sons of Zebedee "Boanerges" which means "Sons of thunder" (Mark 3:

17). Their wanting to call fire from heaven to burn up a Samaritan village might suggest a reason for this name. See Lk. 9:54. They were selfishly ambitious and often made the other disciples jealous. See Matt. 20:20-28. At one time they actually sent their mother to ask Jesus to let her two sons sit one on the right hand and one on the left hand in His kingdom—evidently thinking of His kingdom as an earthly one like that of David or Solomon.

There is some reason to believe that James and John were cousins of Jesus. A comparison of the names of the women who were present at the crucifixion of Jesus suggests this possibility. See McGarvey and Pendleton, *The Fourfold Gospel*, page 225. If they were cousins of Jesus, their request for special consideration in His kingdom becomes a little more understandable even if less admirable.

These two and Peter formed what is sometimes called "the inner circle" of Jesus' disciples. He often took them with Him while leaving the others behind. They were with Him at the raising of Jairus' daughter (Lk. 8:51); the Transfiguration (Lk. 9:28); and in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:37). But it is possible that He kept them closer because they needed to be watched more than the others.

James was the first of the apostles to suffer martyrdom (Acts 12:1-2). For a reference to John's death, see John 21:21-23.

John was prominent in the work of the church in Jerusalem. See Acts 3:1; 4:13. He wrote the Gospel of John, the three epistles, and the Revelation. (Some do not accept this view of the authorship of the books commonly believed to have been written by John the apostle).

Philip and Bartholomew.—Except for their place in the list of the Twelve and, in Philip's case, the mention made in John 12:22, little is known about the work of these disciples. See also John 1:43 and 6:5-7.

Matthew and Thomas.—As to Matthew, see comments on Lk. 5:27-32. Thomas who was called Dydimys—the name means "Twin"—is generally thought of as "doubting" Thomas, a charge that cannot be supported by the recorded facts. He was, in fact, a great believer. But he was not one to accept evidence until he had investigated it. When Jesus told him to put his finger in the print of the nail in His hand, Thomas said, "My Lord and my God." John 20:24-29.
James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot.—James is sometimes identified with James the less (Mk. 15:40).

Simon whom Luke calls the Zealot is called the Cananean by both Matthew and Luke.

Judas the son of James and Judas Iscariot.—Such names as Judas, Simon, and James were quite common. It is difficult to clearly identify some of those who bore these names. But Judas Iscariot forever bears the stigma of the one who betrayed his Lord.

Jesus Teaching the Crowds

Scripture

6:17-19 And he came down with them, and stood on a level place, and a great multitude of his disciples, and a great number of the people from all Judaea and Jerusalem, and the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; 18 and they that were troubled with unclean spirits were healed. 19 And all the multitude sought to touch him; for power came forth from him, and healed them all.

Comments

and he came down with them.—Matthew describes a similar incident, but clearly states that when Jesus saw the multitudes He went up into the mountain and sat down. Then His disciples came to Him and He taught them (Matt. 5:1-2). Is Luke just giving another version of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-6-7)? The similarities are many and striking, but the differences must be accounted for. Luke says that Jesus came down to a level place (perhaps on the mountain), but Matthew says that He went up into the mountain. Matthew presents eight beatitudes; Luke gives four beatitudes and four woes. And there are other differences.

While it is possible to view these as two accounts of the same incident, it seems more likely that Luke tells about another occasion when Jesus taught the multitudes using much of the material He had used before. This would account for the differences. What of the similarities? Surely Jesus repeated these basic truths many times in the course of His teaching ministry. It is natural to suppose that He would change the message to suit the needs of the audience. While these matters are interesting, we should not become so involved in trying to answer the problems that we lose sight of the lessons taught.

and a great number of people.—The report about Jesus' activity

spread throughout the whole country from Judea to Tyre and Sidon (Matt. 4:24-25).

to hear him and to be healed.—People came to hear Jesus and to be healed of their diseases. The demon possessed were healed also, *all the multitudes sought to touch him.*—He could have spoken the word and they would have been healed, but the touch of His hand gave them added assurance. The power went forth from Him and healed them all.

The Beatitudes and the Woes

Scripture

6:20-26 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed are ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. 21 Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. 22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. 23 Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy: for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in the same manner did their fathers unto the prophets. 24 But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation. 25 Woe unto you, ye that are full now! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you, ye that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep. 26 Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets.

Comments

he lifted up his eyes.—A speaker normally looks at his audience, but Luke seems to suggest something more when he says that Jesus lifted up His eyes on the disciples. He saw them as men who needed the lesson He was about to give. There were blessings for some but woes for others. All of them must have been aware of the importance of what He was about to say as He swept the audience with His eyes.

Blessed.—Only from the context can the rich meaning of the word be grasped. See it in Psa. 1:1 "Blessed is the man"—and there follows the description of the fortunate man who meditates on the Word of God day and night. Jesus spoke of those who were so fortunate as to cause others to long for the same blessed state.

"Happy" seems very limited as a word to carry all that is implied by the word Jesus used.

ye poor.—What did the poor of His audience think when He congratulated them and called them fortunate? Usually the poor are to be pitied. "Poor in spirit" seems to refer to humble people. But Jesus said, according to Luke, "blessed are ye poor." It is possible that He intended to speak to those who were literally poor. It was a common thing for the poor to be mistreated by the rich. See James 2:6. Jesus came to preach good tidings to the poor (Lk. 4:18). It can mean the poor in spirit and also the poor in material goods. The principles of the gospel if applied would banish poverty from this world. See Paul's word to the poverty stricken Macedonians in II Cor. 8:1-9.

ye that hunger now.—In the fourth beatitude as Matthew reports it, Jesus spoke of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Are we to read this concept into Luke's account? Is it possible that Jesus was speaking to those who were actually feeling the pangs of hunger? We do know that He was aware of the physical needs of His people also, for He fed them on loaves and fishes. But more than that, He provided for their spiritual sustenance by giving them the Bread of Life. See James' word about those who lack daily food (James 2:15). So often those who lack daily food also lack the food that satisfies the soul.

for yours is the kingdom of God.—The poor are to be comforted in that they may have a rich blessing for their souls in this life. But in addition to that, the kingdom of God—heaven itself—belongs to them. There will be no poverty there, even though "the poor ye have with you always" in this world.

Wherever the Word of Christ has been fully accepted, the hungry are filled both literally and figuratively. The answer to the needs of the world is not the doctrine of materialism but the gospel of Christ. The gospel in the hearts of men will cause them to share the produce of the world with the needy and also the Bread of Life that will abolish spiritual poverty. See II Cor. 9:10-15.

that weep now: for ye shall laugh.—According to Matthew, Jesus said, "they that mourn shall be comforted." Is this a reference to the grief of this life or to those whose godly sorrow leads to repentance? Luke seems to place emphasis on the issue of the present first and the future last. Those who weep now shall laugh in heaven, for there will be no tears there.

when men shall hate you.—Peter and John gave an example of the proper attitude for Christians under persecution. They preferred the approval of God rather than men. See Acts 4:19-21.

your reward is great in heaven.—It is possible that all these rewards are heavenly. Jesus said, "In this world ye have tribulations; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world (John 16:33). See also Phil. 3:20-21; II Pet. 3:11-13; Rev. 21-4-5.

But woe unto you that are rich.—Not the possession, but the misuse of riches is condemned. The one who worships gold rather than God justly comes under this condemnation. See James 1:9-11 for the correct view that puts the riches of heaven above the temporary riches of this life.

ye have received your consolation.—Some men prayed to be seen of men, and when men saw them and spoke of them as religious people, they were paid in full. When one makes riches his goal, he must settle for the consolation that riches bring, but he should remember what the Lord said about the time when riches fail. See Lk. 12:20-21; 16:11.

full now.—The emphasis is on "now." Some people are perfectly satisfied with physical food and have no thought for the food of the soul. Many who ate the loaves and fishes merely wanted more of the same and were not interested in the Bread of Life. "Ye shall hunger" seems to look to the time when those who have contented themselves with material riches will realize that they should have given some attention to the spiritual life.

that laugh now.—The laughter of the wicked will become the cries of the lost. James says, "Clean your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts ye doubleminded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into heaviness" (James 4:8-9).

Neither Jesus nor James prohibit Christian joy and laughter. There is no record of Jesus having laughed, but He did join in the festive occasions of the people. If He did laugh, it certainly was not at some filthy joke. Much of what passes for humor today illustrates what Jesus was talking about. The "jesting" which Paul forbids is of the same sort—a well turned phrase that suggests evil and causes some to laugh at the filth of the world. Christian people ought not to be guilty of such a thing.

when all men speak well of you.—We are not to assume that a good reputation was not to be desired, for God's people are "to take

thought for things honorable in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12: 17). But Jesus was speaking of those who flattered the false prophets in order to be in their favor. The fathers of the Jews had been guilty of this very thing. But Jesus was not influenced by the flattery of men. For example, He wasn't moved by their efforts to make Him their king. Those who prefer the approval of Christ to that of men will find that they may have to pay dearly for their loyalty to the Lord (II Tim. 3:12).

Regulations for Conduct

Scripture

6:27-38 But I say unto you that hear, Love your enemies do good to them that hate you, 28 bless them that curse you, pray for them that spitefully use you. 29 To him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek offer also the other; and from him that taketh away thy cloak withhold not thy coat also. 30 Give to every one that asketh thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. 31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. 32 And if ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? for even sinners love those that love them. 33 And if ye do good to them that do good to you, what thank have ye? for even sinners do the same. 34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? even sinners lend to sinners, to receive again as much. 35 But love your enemies, and do *them* good, and lend, never despairing; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be sons of the Most High: for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil. 36 Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful. 37 And judge not, and ye shall not be judged: and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: release, and ye shall be released: 38 give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.

Comments

Love your enemies.—Some of the things that Jesus said must have seemed difficult if not impossible. "Love your enemies." But they hate you and curse you and spitefully use you! They strike you on the cheek and even take away your property. How can you love them? The answer lies in the meaning of "love." Jesus did not say

"Have the same feeling toward an enemy as you have for a friend." Love, according to this context, requires one to bless one's enemies and pray for them and do good to them. Turn the other cheek, when one strikes you. If he takes your garment—it could be done by law Ex. 22:26—give also the one that he could not legally take.

These directives are difficult, but not impossible to comply with. In essence, they suggest God's love for the world, and Jesus' attitude toward those who mistreated Him. On the cross He prayed, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

Paul defines love in I Cor. 13:4-8. Love suffers long and is kind. We can be kind to an enemy. And strangely, an act of kindness may sometimes change an enemy into a friend.

as ye would that men should do to you.—This suggests that it might be easier to be kind to an enemy—love him—if we would put ourselves in his place. An honest effort to understand the other person's viewpoint might help to remove the enmity. This rule was based on the law and the prophets (Matt. 7:12). Jesus went a step farther in His teaching to the apostles when He said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you." See John 13:34. Peter also said, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently" (I Pet. 1:22).

and ye shall be sons of the Most High.—Jesus illustrated the issue of love for enemies by the fact that God sends the rain on the good and the bad alike (Matt. 5:43-48). Then He said, "Ye therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." Men say, "That's a worthy goal, but impossible of attainment." But did Jesus give a command that can't be obeyed? What does "be perfect" mean? In this context it means complete or mature. Just as the Father sent the rain on the good and the bad—there are no others—so His children are to love their friends and their enemies; and that is perfect in the sense of completeness, for there are no others.

Jesus did not mean "sinless" when He said, "Be perfect." As long as we live, we can—although we ought not to—commit sin (I Cor. 10:12).

The sermon that Luke reported was slightly different from the one Matthew reported. According to Luke, Jesus said, "Ye shall be sons of the Most High, for He is kind toward the unthankful and

evil." Then Jesus said, "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."

And judge not.—This is expanded in verses 41-45 and in Matt. 7: 1-5. Jesus was speaking of hypocritical judging. But He also said that you can tell false prophets by their fruits. On another occasion He said, "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgments" (John 7:24).

And why not judge? "For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again."

Four Concise Statements

Scripture

6:39-45 And he spake also a parable unto them, Can the blind guide the blind? shall they not both fall into a pit? 40 The disciple is not above his teacher: but every one when he is perfected shall be as his teacher. 41 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's ye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? 42 Or how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me cast out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy brother's eye. 43 For there is no good tree that bringeth forth corrupt fruit; nor again a corrupt tree that bringeth forth good fruit. 44 For each tree is known by is own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. 45 The good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and the evil *man* out of the evil *treasure* bringeth forth that which is evil: for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

Comments

Can the blind guide the blind?—A solemn warning not to follow blindly those who are not qualified to lead. Jesus applied this to the Pharisees (Matt. 15:12-14; 23:16).

The disciple is not above his teacher.—As long as one is following his teacher, he will not get beyond the teacher. When he is fully taught—knows all the teacher can impart to him—he will be as his teacher.

Jesus was speaking of the people who were being corrupted by

the teachers they were following. They could scarcely be expected to rise above their leaders—scribes and Pharisees.

It is different when it comes to Jesus, the Teacher. He taught the truth. What a goal for a disciple of His to be fully taught and to be like Him!

Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam that is in thine own eye.—Jesus had drawn a verbal cartoon for His audience. The lesson was so plain no one could miss it. The man with a large timber in his eye couldn't possibly remove a speck from his brother's eye. But we try it over and over today!

For each tree is known by its own fruit.—Conduct indicates true character just as fruit shows the true nature of the tree that bears it.

out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.—What is in the heart will come out in the speech. See Matt. 15:18-20. Let him who would glorify the Lord in his speech fill his heart with the truth of God's Word. See Psa. 119:11; 19:7-14; Phil. 4:4-9.

The Necessity of Obedience

Scripture

6:46-49 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? 47 Every one that cometh unto me, and heareth my words, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: 48 he is like a man building a house, who digged and went deep, and laid a foundation upon the rock: and when a flood arose, the stream brake against that house, and could not shake it: because it had been well builded. 49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that built a house upon the earth without a foundation, against which the stream brake, and straightway it fell in; and the ruin of that house was great.

Comments

And why call ye me Lord, Lord.—See Matt. 7:22-23. Jesus called for sincerity and honesty in all human relationships. Hypocritical judging was forbidden. Those who followed Him were to have their heart in it. Unless you say it by your life, there is no use to call Him Lord with your mouth.

heareth my words and doeth them.—James said, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22). Failing to do so results

in self-delusion. Jesus' graphic illustration of the two houses—one built on solid rock and the other with no foundation—shows the folly of failing to obey His word.

Special Note

THE SABBATH

A. The Jews and the sabbath.

1. It is first mentioned in Ex. 16:26.

2. Was it observed as an eternal principle by Adam? The fact that Gen. 2:2-3 states that God rested on the seventh day and hallowed it, leads some to assume that it was given to Adam and all his posterity. This view contradicts Moses' statement that no other nation—not even their fathers—had this law of which the sabbath law was a part (Deut. 4:8; 5:1-3; 4:13). Moses mentioned the sabbath when he gave the account of the creation because the Jews were keeping it when he wrote. God had given it to the Jews because it was on the seventh day that He had rested from His work.

3. Why was it given to the Jews? The seventh day, rather than any other day, was given because on it God had rested (Ex. 20:11). It was given to commemorate the deliverance of Israel from Egypt (Deut. 5:15).

4. What is the relation of the sabbath to the Old Covenant? The first important fact to remember is that the Old Covenant was the Ten Commandments of which the sabbath was the fourth (Ex. 34:28; Deut. 4:13). A second and equally important fact is this: The New Covenant supplanted the Old and the sabbath is nowhere found as a part of the New. See Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:6-13; II Cor. 3:2-18; Gal. 4:21-31.

B. Jesus and the sabbath.

1. Why did He, as His custom was, observe the sabbath? He was born under the Law to redeem those under the Law (Gal. 4:4). At the time of His birth, His parents complied with the Law of Moses (Lk. 2:22-24). When the leper was cleansed, He commanded him to comply with the Law (Matt. 8:4). During His ministry, when asked what to do to have eternal life, He pointed to the Ten Commandments as the answer (Mk. 10:17-22). On the Day of Pentecost, however, when Peter spoke by the Holy Spirit, he said, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins"

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(Acts 2:38). This is the directive in connection with the New Covenant.

2. What proof is there that He never broke the Law, although he was charged with sabbath-breaking?

The Jews complained that He broke the sabbath when He healed the lame man at Bethesda, but He defended His action by saying, "My Father worketh until now and I work" (John 5:18). A year and a half later, He referred to this incident and reminded the Jews that they carried out the law of circumcision even on the sabbath (John 7:21-24). When two laws were in conflict, the lesser was suspended at the point of conflict. Then why condemn Jesus for making a man completely whole on the sabbath?

He appealed to common sense when He asked, "Is it lawful to do good or bad on the sabbath?" (Matt. 12:9-12) No one dared say that His miracles of healing were bad. He pointed out the inconsistency of their complaints against Him, for they were in the habit of loosing the ox or the ass and leading it to water on the sabbath. See Luke 13:15. Does this indicate that the law had been relaxed to some extent? See Num. 15:32-36. Again, He answered the complaint of the Jews by reference to their history, specifically, an incident that involved David. See Matt. 12:2-8. It was mercy and not sacrifice that pleased God.

C. The Christian and the sabbath.

1. Was it the appointed day of meeting of the church? The first day of the week, and not the sabbath, was the day of their meeting. See Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2.

2. Why did the apostles go to the synagogue on the sabbath? They went to preach the Gospel. See the account of Paul preaching in the synagogue on the sabbath in Antioch in Acts 13:14-52. They did some things as Jews which they refused to let others bind on Gentile Christians—for example, circumcision (Gal 2:3-5). At Cenchreae Paul kept the provisions of a Jewish vow (Acts 18:18) and later in Jerusalem he was prepared to make certain Jewish offerings (Acts 21:17-31). He did these things as Jewish customs, not as Christian obligations (Rom. 14:5-6).

3. Was the sabbath changed to the first day of the week? No. What about Constantine? He had nothing to do with it. The New Testament was written long before his time, and it indicates that the early church gathered on the first day of the week, not the sabbath (Acts 20:7).

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4. Are Christians commanded to "keep the first day of the week as a holy day" and refrain from working on that day? That provision related to the sabbath, not the first day of the week, the Lord's day. On the first day of the week, Christians were to assemble, break bread, preach the Word, and present the offering; but every day of the week was a holy day for them.

5. Is the Lord's day the first day of the week? The expression is found only in Rev. 1:10. Acts 20:7 indicates that the first day of the week was the day of meeting for the church.

6. What, then, is the significance of the sabbath to the Christian? It is a type of rest in heaven. See Heb. 4:9.

Summary

In this chapter Luke gives a condensed statement of some of the most interesting and important events in the Galilean ministry of Our Lord. He completes his report on a series of complaints against Jesus. The two mentioned in this chapter are based on Jesus' supposed breaking of the sabbath. He tells of the selecting of the Twelve and the teaching of the multitudes. The lessons Jesus taught on that occasion are similar to those of the Sermon on the Mount as presented by Matthew.

The complaints about working on the sabbath are based on two different types of work. One was, according to the Jews, actual work on the holy day, for the disciples of Jesus pulled off the heads of grain and rubbed them in their hands to get the grain. But Jesus pointed out that they hadn't been reading the Bible or, if they had, they hadn't understood the meaning of David's action when he used the bread that according to law was for priests only and gave it to his men to keep them alive. The Son of Man who explained this Scripture to the Jews is also Lord of the sabbath and allowed His men to gather the grain for food on that holy day.

The other work was the merciful work of healing a man with a withered hand. Jesus knew what they were thinking, so He told the man to stand up in the midst of the group where everyone could see him. Then He commanded him to stretch forth his hand, and it was restored. The senseless fury of the complainers asked only, "What can we do to get rid of Him?"

Selecting the twelve apostles was one of the most important tasks in the ministry of Jesus. He spent all night in prayer before making the choice. Luke gives their names and tells something

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about some of them, closing his report with Judas who became the traitor.

After choosing the twelve, Jesus came down with them and stood on a level place where a large crowd from Judea and Jerusalem and even from Tyre and Sidon had gathered. They had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases.

The lesson began with the four Beatitudes and the four Woes. Then Jesus spoke of conduct toward enemies and others. In four brief statements of truth, He warned against following blind guides, false teachers, hypocritical judging, and conduct that is like trees producing corrupt fruit.

He closed the lesson with a warning about the necessity of true obedience. He warned against calling Him "Lord, Lord" and not doing what He said. He showed them what this meant by the illustration of the two houses, the one built on rock, the other had no foundation.

Questions

1. What are the five complaints against Christ as given in chapters five and six?
2. On what issue were the two presented in this chapter based?
3. What was the original law about work on the sabbath?
4. What are the two types of work about which the complaints were made?
5. How does Jesus' reference to David justify His disciples conduct?
6. What did Jesus say about His own relation to the sabbath?
7. What was unusual about the presence of the man with the withered hand in the synagogue on that sabbath when Jesus was present?
8. For what were the Pharisees hoping?
9. How was the issue brought to the test?
10. What did Jesus tell the man to do? Why?
11. What question did Jesus ask?
12. What did He do just before He told the man to stretch forth his hand?
13. What effect did the miracle have on those who were hoping to find a cause to condemn Jesus?
14. What did the enemies of Jesus plan to do?
15. What did Jesus do before selecting the Twelve?

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16. What are some of the facts about the prayer life of Jesus?
17. How long did Jesus pray on that occasion?
18. What is an apostle?
19. Why was Jesus called the Apostle?
20. What principle is to be observed in explaining the use of the word "apostle"?
21. In what sense did Paul refer to James the Lord's brother as an apostle?
22. Was Peter's authority as an apostle different from that of the other apostles?
23. What is known about Andrew?
24. Why did Jesus call James and John "Sons of thunder"?
25. What may be said of the three who are commonly thought of as being the "inner circle of apostles"?
26. What of the two named Judas?
27. What are some of the difference between Matthew's account of the Sermon on the Mount and Luke's report of the lessons Jesus taught after selecting the Twelve?
28. Why did the people want to touch Jesus?
29. What four classes are called blessed?
30. What is the distinction between them and the ones mentioned in the Beatitudes of Matt. 5:1-12?
31. On what four classes are the woes pronounced?
32. What did Jesus mean when He said, "Beware when all men speak well of you"?
33. How can you love your enemies?
34. What rule of conduct toward others did Jesus give?
35. Is it possible to obey Jesus' command about love?
36. What did He mean by the reference to blind guides?
37. What did He mean by saying that a disciple is not above his teacher?
38. What kind of judging did He forbid?
39. Why did He say that a tree is known by its fruits?
40. What did He say about calling Him "Lord, Lord"?
41. How did He illustrate the necessity of obeying His word?