



NOTES FOR FURTHER STUDY

Supplemental Texts

Gen. 3:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11; Lev. 24:5-9; Due. 5:12-15; 23:25; Judges 20:26; 1 Sam. 7:6; 31:31; 2 Sam. 1:12; Esther 4:3, 16; Isa. 54:4-8; 58:3-9; 62:4-5; Jer. 2:2; 31:31-34; Ezek. 16:8-14; Dan. 9:3; Hosea 2:16-20; 1:13-14; Jonah 3:5; Matt. 6:16-18; 9:4; 12:1-14; Mark 2:18-3:1-6; 7:9-13; Luke 1:32-33, 67-79; 2:11; 9:22; 18:9-14; John 3:25-30; 7:23; 16:4-11; 2 Cor. 11:2-3; Gal. 5:6, 22-26; Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 5:24-32; Rev. 19:7-8; 21:2

Study Summary

In these passages we see the opposition to Jesus growing ever more hostile to Him and His ministry. Faced with questions of fasting and Sabbath keeping, Jesus makes clear that in Him God is doing a new thing, drawing in His people to understand His law in all its fullness. Rather than following in the footsteps of the Pharisees and teachers of His day, Jesus breaks the man-made laws of His time and points back to the true purpose for God's Law showing, as He does so, that He is the arbiter of a new way, one that does not do away with the old, but fulfills it.

Historical & Theological Background

Fasting: "Fasting was a familiar practice in the time of Jesus. The Jewish nation fasted on the Day of Atonement (Lv. 16:29) and also on four days in memory of the destruction of Jerusalem (Zc. 7:3, 5; 8:19), although it is not certain that the latter were universally observed. Individuals might fast at other times for a variety of reasons, especially as a sign of religious zeal in the sight of God. The Pharisees developed the practice of fasting twice weekly "in intercession for the nation as a whole." "Jesus does not reject fasting per se," but opposes "hypocritical fasting" "and declared superfluous the type of fasting that was understood as an expression of repentance and sorrow and was thought to serve as a preparation for salvation" for in Him the age of salvation has already come.

Sabbath: The Sabbath was a commanded day of rest (Ex. 20:8-11) meant to reflect our dependence on God and to rejoice in His salvific work. "All four Gospels make it clear that a chief point in the conflict between Jesus and the Jewish authorities concerned the right way to keep the Sabbath. The Jews took the Sabbath seriously" and "the rules for keeping it were certainly elaborate and repressive" as more stringent laws were added in an attempt to keep people from breaking the Sabbath. Jesus "did not simply argue that" "regulations should be relaxed and a more liberal attitude adopted; He said that His opponents had missed the whole point of this holy day." Going back to the focal points of Sabbath observance, Jesus fulfills its purpose in restoring creation and bringing life and healing. Jesus shows Himself to be "the Lord of the Sabbath" as He points to its deeper meaning and in His death and resurrection becomes our ultimate Sabbath rest. [citations taken from: *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament; Luke: An Introduction and Commentary by Morris; The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text by Marshall*]

DISCUSSION PRIMER

Do you take a day of rest during the week? While followers of Jesus take different stances on whether or not Sabbath observance is mandatory for the believer, the practice of this rest-day does connect to our deepest needs as creatures under the Creators care and provides opportunity to rejoice in the salvific work of Christ. It is a day for "play and prayer" (Eugene Peterson), for slowing down and enjoying God, His people, and His creation. In preparation for group take a Sabbath. Reflect on the importance of this spiritual practice for our lives in Christ.

TEXTUAL INVESTIGATION

LUKE 5:33-6:11

Big Idea: Our Self-Made Laws Become Excuses to Not Fulfill the Spirit of God's Law

Fallen Condition Focus: Becoming a Law Unto Yourself

- What is Jesus questioned about in 5:33? How does He respond (5:34)? What is the meaning of His parable about the bridegroom? (See Isa. 54:4-8 & 2 Cor. 11:2-3)
- What is the meaning of the parable about the new and old garments and the new wine and old wine (5:36-39)? What is Jesus comparing and contrasting?
- Why do the Pharisees get upset with Jesus' disciples (6:1-2)? What is the Sabbath? (See Due. 23:25 & HTB)
- What two focal points are given for Sabbath observance? (See Ex. 20:8-11 & Due. 5:12-15)
- Why does Jesus respond to their misgivings with a story about David (6:3-5)? What does it mean that Jesus is "Lord of the Sabbath"? (See 1 Sam. 12:1-6, Luke 1:32-33 & HTB)
- How does Jesus later confront the Pharisees (6:6-10)? In healing the man, how does Jesus fulfill the true purpose of the Sabbath?
- Why are the Pharisees so upset (6:11)? What do they plan to do? (See Mark 3:6)

Gospel Connection: See Jer. 31:31-34. Through Christ by the Spirit how do we now

TEXTUAL INTERSECTION: How does the text intersect with our lives?

- What "law" does the culture around us live by? What motivates people to make laws/measurements by which to judge others?
- What is fasting? What does it look like for Christians to practice fasting, Sabbath keeping, and other spiritual disciplines? (See Matt. 6:16-18 & HTB)
- What has been your experience with the spiritual disciplines? How do we balance a healthy pursuit of discipline while resting in the work of God? (See Phil. 2:12-13)
- Where do we see the same attitude as the Pharisees in the church? How does this posture cause us to fail to fulfill the spirit of God's law? (See Gal. 5:6)
- How does the work of Christ and the power and guidance of the Spirit free us to fulfill the spirit of God's law (See Gal. 5:22-26)
- What excuses might you be making to not follow God's law? Do you see the habits and postures of the Pharisees at work in any area of your life?

REPLICABLE QUESTIONS

Read **Luke 5:33-6:11** and explore together what the passage reveals about:

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| 1) The character and purposes of God? | 4) Our identity in Christ? |
| 2) The fallen human condition? | 5) Our obedience to Christ? |
| 3) The gospel of Jesus Christ? | 6) Our relationship to others |

TEXTUAL APPLICATION: "So, what now?"

Have each participant identify a personal take-away in light of this study. Is there . . .

- a command to obey? • a beauty to behold? • a mission to fulfill?
- a promise to claim? • a truth to believe? • an example to follow?
- a sin to repent of? • a service to render? • a person to tell?