CORNERSTONE CONNECTIONS
JUNE 07 2025

Scripture Story: Matthew 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 6:6-11.
Commentary: *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 29.

front and center



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key text

"Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, 'Stand up in front of everyone.' Then Jesus asked them, 'Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?' But they remained silent."

(Mark 3:3, 4, NIV)

flashlight

"In the healing of the withered hand, Jesus condemned the custom of the Jews, and left the fourth commandment standing as God had given it. 'It is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days,' He declared. By sweeping away the senseless restrictions of the Jews, Christ honored the Sabbath, while those who complained of Him were dishonoring God's holy day" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 287).

what do you think?

When I get angry, I react . . .

Slowly and thoughtfully Immediately out of impulse

1 2 3 4 5 6

Where are you on the spectrum? What are the positives and negatives of this kind of response?

What makes me angry?

____ Individuals lying to protect their interests.
____ Underprivileged being neglected.
____ Children being mistreated.
____ People you trust betraying your confidence.
____ Callous people making jokes at the expense of others.

did you know?

The strict rules that Jewish leaders made for Sabbath observance were intended to preserve the sanctity of the Sabbath, but failed to reveal the greater purpose of the day of rest. For example, did you know that if a wall collapsed on someone it was lawful to clear only enough debris to see if the individual were alive or dead? If alive, you were allowed to help the person—if dead, you had to leave them until sundown.



INTO THE STORY

"Going on from that place, he went into their synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to bring charges against Jesus, they asked him, 'Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?'

"He said to them, 'If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.'

"Then he said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other. But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus."

"Another time Jesus went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, 'Stand up in front of everyone.'

"Then Jesus asked them, 'Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?' But they remained silent.

"He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus."

"On another Sabbath he went into the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was shriveled. The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath. But Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to the man with the shriveled hand, 'Get up and stand in front of everyone.' So he got up and stood there.

"Then Jesus said to them, 'I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?'

"He looked around at them all, and then said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' He did so, and his hand was completely restored. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law were furious and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus."

(Matthew 12:9-14; Mark 3:1-6; Luke 6:6-11, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

Compare the three perspectives of the same event and note how the stories are different and how they are similar.

What words and phrases do Mark and Luke use that Matthew leaves out?

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What words or phrases does Luke use that Mark and Matthew leave out?

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What words or phrases does Mark alone use?

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What criteria does Jesus use for Sabbathkeeping? How does Jesus' question "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?" change the way you look at Sabbath?

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Consider Jesus' question: "If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable is a man than a sheep!" What is the central point of this exchange?

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How would you describe the reaction of the Jewish leaders to what Christ does in the synagogue?

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What would you say is the primary purpose of the Sabbath according to this story?

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punch lines

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy" **(Exodus 20:8-11, NASB).**

"Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who holds it fast, who keeps the Sabbath, not profaning it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil" **(Isaiah 56:2, ESV).**

"Then Jesus said to them, 'The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, and not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord, even over the Sabbath!' " **(Mark 2:27, 28, NLT).**

"Keep my Sabbaths as holy rest days, signposts between me and you, signaling that I am GOD, *your* God" **(Ezekiel 20:20, *The Message*).**

further insight

"The object of God's work in this world is the redemption of man; therefore that which is necessary to be done on the Sabbath in the accomplishment of this work is in accord with the Sabbath law."—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 285

Sabbath

Read Luke 13:10-17 and Mark 3:1-6.

The fourth commandment of God's unchangeable law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath" (The Sabbath, Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, no. 20). Read and respond to the voting question in the *What Do You Think?* section of this week's lesson. What makes people angry reveals what is important to them. Think about the kinds of things that you feel strongly enough about to get angry. In Luke 13:10-17, a similar story is told about a woman who was healed in a similar way, yet it is the synagogue leader who gets "indignant." Compare what makes Jesus upset in Mark 3:1-6 with what makes Jewish leaders angry in Luke 13:10-17, and see if you can identify what is most important to Jesus, and what is most important to the Jewish leaders. Think about what is most important to you—the kinds of things you choose to get angry about.

Sunday

Read Mark 2:27, 28.

Read the *Into the Story* section and use the questions in the *Out of the Story* section to guide your study. This week's lesson gives you three perspectives of the same event (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). Mark is the writer, but he is writing Peter's words, which is why the stories have a lot of emotion. Luke's perspective offers a lot of details that convey information. Matthew seems to have a special message for Jewish people when he tells the story. Which perspective do you identify with most? Why? If you were to write your own perspective, what would be your emphasis? What do you think is the central issue in this story?

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Monday

Read Mark 3:3, 4.

The *Key Text* to memorize this week comes from Mark 3:3, 4. As you imprint this story on your mind, how does it relate to the way you approach the Sabbath? What are the most important reasons you have for keeping the Sabbath? Whom do you know that models Sabbathkeeping the way Jesus kept it? What are some of the activities they focus on and what do they avoid?

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Tuesday

Read Isaiah 56:1, 2.

Read the quote from *The Desire of Ages* in the *Flashlight* section and consider what it would be like to honor God by just doing good on the Sabbath. Throughout the storied life of Christ, the religious leaders are preoccupied with "what not to do," which distracts them from experiencing God's power in their life. While some focused on *what not to do*, Jesus remained fixated on what should be done. How does changing your emphasis from what not to do to what you should do change your perspective on the types of activities you might engage in? How can the counsel in today's reading help us focus on what we should be doing?

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Wednesday

The *Punch Lines* in this week's lesson are reminders of how central the Sabbath is to the Christian experience. As you read these verses, which passage speaks to you personally today? What new insights about the Sabbath do you see as you read these passages? Number the verses listed in the *Punch Lines* section according to the order you would read them in a Bible study to someone who is learning about the Sabbath for the first time. Which verse would you start with? Which passage would close your study? Why did you arrange them in that order?

Thursday

Read Jeremiah 29:11-13.

This week's lesson is not solely about the Sabbath; it is about the importance of people, misguided thinking, and human nature. But the Sabbath was intended to keep us connected to God and to His children in such a way that we would never forget who we are and where we are going. Jesus taught that the Sabbath is about "doing good" and "saving lives." What kinds of things could you do this Sabbath that would expand the beauty of the Sabbath in your experience? Consider how you might involve a family member or a close friend in your endeavors this week.

Friday

Read Isaiah 66:22, 23.

Reflect on the Sabbaths that have been most meaningful for you. What kinds of activities and experiences come to your mind as you think about those special Sabbaths? In today's reading, we are reminded that Sabbath will be part of our lives throughout eternity, as it was before sin entered the world (Genesis 2:1-3). Imagine what Sabbath will be like in heaven and consider how that could begin on earth with you today.

this week's reading*

The Desire of Ages (or *Humble Hero*), chapter 29.

* A special adaptation of *The Desire of Ages*, entitled *Humble Hero*, has been created just for you by the White Estate and Pacific Press® Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: www.cornerstoneconnections.net. By following this plan you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.