

## The Gospel of Luke

### Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath: Scripture vs. Tradition

Luke 6:1-5<sup>1</sup>

Suggested Memory Verse: Isaiah 64:4

1. **The Setting** (v.1)

Sabbath observance was the established weekly reminder of God's covenant with Israel (Ex 20:8-11). In addition to Jesus twice cleansing the temple of the money changers (John 2:11-12; Matt 21:17-23), many confrontations between Jesus and the religious leaders took place on the Sabbath day (cf. Luke 4:16; 6:2, 6-7; 13:10; 14:1)

2. **Jesus is Accused of Sin** (v.2)

A. **The Law According to Scripture** (Ex 20:8-11)

The Sabbath was to be a day set apart from the other days of the week as a holy convocation (Lev 23:3) of complete rest (cf. Ex 35:2-3) from all work for all people and animals. It was to be observed year round (cf. Ex 34:21), and there were stiff penalties if it was not observed (Ex 31:15; 2 Chron 36:20-21).

B. **The Law According to Tradition**

The Sabbath laws of tradition, which the Pharisees took great pride in observing, extended the explicit Biblical principle and examples into a myriad of specific applications. Violating any of these traditional applications was seen as a violation of the command of God. The religiously devout went to great lengths in order to not violate these rules.

3. **Jesus Justifies His Actions** (vs.3-4; Matt 12:3-8)

Not all activities that could be construed as 'work' are restricted on the Sabbath.

A. **Acts of Necessity** (Luke 6:3-4; cf. 1 Sam 21:3-6)

B. **Acts of Worship** (Matt 12:5-6)

C. **Acts of Mercy** (Luke 14:5; Matt 12:7)

4. **The Purpose of the Sabbath** (Mark 2:27)

The Sabbath was made for man, but man was not made for the Sabbath. With this understanding in mind, proper application of the fourth commandment becomes clearer.

5. **The Lord of the Sabbath** (v.6)

Jesus now explicitly claims to have all authority to determine what is and is not acceptable behavior on the Sabbath, and in doing so makes a clear claim of deity.

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<sup>1</sup> Parallel gospel accounts for this passage can be found in Matthew 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28.