

The Motley Crew

February 10, 2010

The Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 12

The Questions

Read Matthew 12:1-14

1. Of what were the Pharisees guilty?
2. Have you ever stopped to think that Jesus had more trouble from the religious folks than He did from the pagans? What do you think?
3. Why God create the Sabbath? When and where is your Sabbath?
4. Does God care more about the spiritual condition of our heart or the outward observance of regulations?
5. What does it mean – mercy not sacrifice?
6. What does verse 10 say to you?
7. Did Jesus work on this Sabbath?
8. How do we deal with verse 14?

Read Matthew 12:15-21

9. I wonder how they felt to see Isaiah's prophecy being fulfilled in their presence?
10. Should you go to communion if you have weak faith?
11. How do we deal with verse 21?

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The Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 12

The Suggested Answers

Read Matthew 12:1-14.

Lord of the Sabbath

¹ At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. ² When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath."

³ He answered, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? ⁴ He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. ⁵ Or haven't you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple desecrate the day and yet are innocent? ⁶ I tell you that one [a] greater than the temple is here. ⁷ If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' [[Hosea 6:6](#)] you would not have condemned the innocent. ⁸ For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

⁹ Going on from that place, he went into their synagogue, ¹⁰ and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"

¹¹ 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? ¹² How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."

¹³ 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. ¹⁴ But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

Footnote

a. Or something; also in verses 41 and 42

Hosea 6:6. For I desire mercy, not sacrifice,
and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.

1. Of what were the Pharisees guilty?

This was condemnation of the acts of the Apostles in harvesting grain on the Sabbath, but the underlying intent was to get Jesus charged before the Jewish courts. This was applying the rules of man to take the place of God's Words, i.e., too much rabbinical law, and not enough Divine Law.

They did not object to taking the ears of corn, but to gathering, rubbing out the grains of wheat in the hand, and eating them on the sabbath. To understand their position, it must be noticed that after the Law had said that the Jews were "to do no manner of work" on the Sabbath, the "Tradition of the Elders" had laid down thirty-nine principal prohibitions, which were ascribed to the authority of the Great Synagogue, and which were called *abhoth*, "fathers," or chief rules. From these were deduced a vast multitude of *toldoth*, "descendants," or derivative rules. Now, "reaping" and "threshing" on the Sabbath day were forbidden by *abhoth*; and by the *toldoth* it was asserted that plucking corn-ears was *a kind of* reaping, and rubbing them *a kind of* threshing. *B. W. Johnson's Bible Commentary*. Similarly, John Lightfoot's *Bible Commentary*.

2. Have you ever stopped to think that Jesus had more trouble from the religious folks than He did from the pagans? What do you think?

Yes. They were afraid that Jesus was cutting in on their action. They liked being in power, as well as their means of livelihood. The same is true today; there are lots of pastors leaving the ministry, but not because of the pagans. Also, there are churches closing rather than changing. Beth noted that it is hard to put an established church on a "missional edge."

The pagans didn't have to unlearn any rules or regulations, but for the Jews, and especially for the Pharisees and Scribes, there was a lot to unlearn. As Jerry put it, it's hard to "unring the bell." There had been centuries of rabbinical error, which was hard to put aside.

3. Why God create the Sabbath? When and where is your Sabbath?

For man to rest, just as He rested on the Seventh Day. The term *sabbath* comes from the Hebrew root *abat*, which means "to cease, rest." The sabbath is the seventh day of the week, the day on which Jews, Christians and Muslims believe God rested after having created everything.

Exodus 20:8-11: "8 Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Mark 2:27-28. "Then he said to them, 'The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.'"

Partly, Sunday is for worship, which is rest for the soul, but mostly it is for rest for the body ... we need to stop and let the soul catch up. People "when and where" their Sabbath by afternoon naps, walks in the park, riding motorcycles, reading a book on the couch, going fishing, shooting arrows into the ground.

4. Does God care more about the spiritual condition of our heart or the outward observance of regulations?

The condition of the heart, which should serve to make our lives less legalistic and more pleasant

Our forms, rites and ceremonies are worthless before God unless we have kind and merciful hearts. *B. W. Johnson's Bible Commentary*.

Note Jesus' criticism of the Pharisees in verse 3. **“Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry?”** 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; and if they had, they could not but have observed the case of David, which Christ produces in vindication of his disciples.” *John Gill's Exposition of the Bible*.

5. What does it mean – mercy not sacrifice [Hosea 6:6]?

Jesus chose relationships over rabbinical rules, *every time*. “Sacrifice” was one-shot worship: buy the bird, give it to the priests for a sacrifice, and leave. But “Mercy” is a life-style; it is an on-going relationship of love of God as expressed in loving our neighbors as ourselves, or as John's Gospel put it: “As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” (John 13:34).

An persistent theme throughout the New Testament is Christ's compassion concerning the plight of His people: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing." Matthew 23:37.

... ye would not have condemned the guiltless--that is, Had ye understood the great principle of all religion, which the Scripture everywhere recognizes—that ceremonial observances must give way before moral duties, and particularly the necessities of nature—ye would have refrained from these captious complaints against men who in this matter are blameless. But our Lord added a specific application of this great principle to the law of the sabbath, preserved only in Mark: "And he said unto them, the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath" ([Mr 2:27](#)). A glorious and far-reaching maxim, alike for the permanent establishment of the sabbath and the true freedom of its observance. *Jamieson, Faussett and Brown*

6. What does verse 10 say to you?

(“Looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, they asked him, 'Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?'”)

They were trying to trick Jesus, again, only to have it thrown back into their face, again. The point is that it is okay to do some work on the Sabbath, but the main intent is for mankind to take its rest (as well as your manservant, your maidservant, your animals and the alien within your gates).

Under rabbinic law, it was unlawful to heal on the Sabbath: “It was forbidden to give an emetic on the Sabbath, to set a broken bone, or put back a dislocated joint.” *B. W. Johnson's Bible Commentary*.

“and they asked him, saying, is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day? and which was put, not for information sake, as willing to be instructed in this point; for **their determinations were, that healing was not lawful on such a day; nor were any means to be made use of for that purpose:** if a man received a cure accidentally, it was very well; but no methods were to be taken with intention.... There are several things they allowed might be done on the sabbath [to reduce pain]; but then they did not reckon them to come under the notion of healing. *John Gill's Exposition of the Bible*.

Of course, if a sheep fell into a ditch, all the Pharisees and Scribes would rush to save the animal; this was allowed under the Law.

[We took question 8 out of order.]

8. How do we deal with verse 14 (“But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.”)? This shows the condition of their hearts. They had just witnessed a miracle, yet they immediately “went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.” Doing Satan's work, they were.

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. **2** Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. **3** Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” **Hebrews 12:1-3.**

7. Did Jesus work on this Sabbath?

It wasn't work for Him.

Read Matthew 12:15-21

God's Chosen Servant

¹⁵ Aware of this, Jesus withdrew from that place. Many followed him, and he healed all their sick, ¹⁶ warning them not to tell who he was. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁸ "Here is my servant whom I have chosen,
the one I love, in whom I delight;
I will put my Spirit on him,
and he will proclaim justice to the nations.

¹⁹ He will not quarrel or cry out;
no one will hear his voice in the streets.

²⁰ A bruised reed he will not break,
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out,
till he leads justice to victory.

²¹ In his name the nations will put their hope." [a]

Footnote:

a. Isaiah 42:1-4

[Emphasis added at Pastor Eddie's request.]

9. I wonder how they felt to see Isaiah's prophecy being fulfilled in their presence?

I doubt that they noticed, even though they knew Isaiah better than the average Jew. They loved the rabbinic Law more than they loved God's commandments. If you have an agenda, your mind is usually closed.

A soul under Satan's power, and led captive by him, is blind in the things of God, and dumb at the throne of grace; sees nothing, and says nothing to the purpose. Satan blinds the eyes by unbelief, and seals up the lips from prayer. The more people magnified Christ, the more desirous the Pharisees were to vilify him. *Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary.*

10. Should you go to communion if you have weak faith?

Absolutely! We should go to get spiritually strengthened. "The bruised reed" mentioned in verse 20 is supported by Jesus, the very reed beaten down by a ton of rabbinical law. In Jesus, we are strengthened.

A bruised reed shall he not break. The reed, a hollow cylinder, if bruised has its strength destroyed. It thus becomes the symbol of the bruised spirit. The tender Savior will not break, but heal. **Smoking flax.** The wick of the lamp that had ceased to burn clearly. The violent would put it out and fling it away. The Lord does not use such violence with those disciples who give forth some light, even if it is imperfect. *B. W. Johnson's Bible Commentary*

Of course, we must first examine ourselves, and if we feel that we cannot take Communion, we should not do so.

11. How do we deal with verse 21 ("In his name the nations will put their hope.")?

While Jesus first came to save the Jews, over time His ministry expanded to include all. As such, "the nations will put their hope." He was given the power to make this decision: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me," (Matthew 28:18), and because of great His compassion, He chose to come to all of us with His saving message.

The story of the Canaanite woman in Matthew 15 is instructive:

21 Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. **22** A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession."

23 Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us."

24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

25 The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said.

26 He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs."

27 "Yes, Lord," she said, "but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

28 Then Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

We will begin Week One of the *40 Days Of Love* Spiritual Campaign on Feb. 24. The book, *Relationship Principles of Jesus*, (\$10) and workbook (\$5) will be available next week at the Launch on Feb. 17.

Week One: "Love Matters Most." Read Chapters 1-7 of *The Relationship Principles of Jesus* book and watch session one of the *40 Days Of Love* study. The "Schedule At A Glance" is reproduced at the bottom of this document.

Pastor Eddie took a few minutes to discuss some of the recommendations of the Jeremiah team. The next presentation will be on Feb. 21. Pray hard!

We closed with prayer.

Parallel Accounts

Disciples pick grain on the Sabbath		
Matt 12:1-8	Mark 2:23-28	Luke 6:1-5
<p>Lord of the Sabbath</p> <p>1At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. 2When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath."</p> <p>3He answered, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? 4He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. 5Or haven't you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple desecrate the day and yet are innocent? 6I tell you that one[a] greater than the temple is here. 7If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,'[b] you would not have condemned the innocent. 8For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."</p> <p>Footnotes:</p> <p>a. Matthew 12:6 Or something; also in verses 41 and 42</p> <p>b. Matthew 12:7 Hosea 6:6</p>	<p>Lord of the Sabbath</p> <p>23One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. 24The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"</p> <p>25He answered, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? 26In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions."</p> <p>27Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. 28So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."</p>	<p>Lord of the Sabbath</p> <p>1One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and his disciples began to pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands and eat the kernels. 2Some of the Pharisees asked, "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"</p> <p>3Jesus answered them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? 4He entered the house of God, and taking the consecrated bread, he ate what is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." 5Then Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."</p>

Man's hand healed on Sabbath

Matt 12:9-14

9Going on from that place, he went into their synagogue, **10**and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"

11He 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?"

12How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."

13Then 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. **14**But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

Mark 3:1-6

1Another time he went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. **2**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. **3**Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone."

4Then 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.

5He 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. **6**Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

Luke 6:6-11

6On another Sabbath he went into the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was shriveled.

7The 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. **8**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.

9Then 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?"

10He looked around at them all, and then said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was completely restored. **11**But they were furious and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus.

Jesus withdraws to the sea

Matt 12:14-21

14But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

God's Chosen Servant

15Aware of this, Jesus withdrew from that place. Many followed him, and he healed all their sick,**16**warning them not to tell who he was. **17**This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

18"Here is my servant whom I have chosen,
the one I love, in whom I delight;

I will put my Spirit on him,
and he will proclaim justice to the nations.

19He will not quarrel or cry out; no one will hear his voice in the streets.

20A bruised reed he will not break,
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out,
till he leads justice to victory.

21In his name the nations will put their hope."[\[a\]](#)

Footnotes:

- a. [Matthew 12:21](#) Isaiah 42:1-4

Mark 3:7

Crowds Follow Jesus

7Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed.

40 Days Of Love

Schedule at a Glance

<p>Pre-Launch Feb 3-17</p>	<p>Sign up to be a Host Home or to join a group on the Boards in the Lobby. New host sign-up opportunity. Host Training Feb 7 & 14 at noon in Room 205. <i>Relationship Principles of Jesus</i> book will be available for \$10; study guides are available for \$5.</p>
<p>Launch Feb 17</p>	<p>The beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday Worship marks the launch of the 40 Days of Love Spiritual Campaign!</p>

Groups will study the following topics each week:

<p>Week One Feb 20-26</p>	<p>"Love Matters Most" Read Chapters 1-7 of <i>The Relationship Principles of Jesus</i> book and watch session one of the <i>40 Days of Love</i> study with your small group.</p>
<p>Week Two Feb 27-Mar 5</p>	<p>"Love is Patient, Love is Kind" Read Chapters 8-14 of <i>The Relationship Principles of Jesus</i> book and watch session two of the <i>40 Days of Love</i> study with your small group.</p>
<p>Week Three March 6-12</p>	<p>"Love Speaks the Truth" Read Chapters 15-21 of <i>The Relationship Principles of Jesus</i> book and watch session three of the <i>40 Days of Love</i> study with your small group.</p>
<p>Week Four March 13-19</p>	<p>"Love is Forgiving" Read Chapters 22-28 of <i>The Relationship Principles of Jesus</i> book and watch session four of the <i>40 Days of Love</i> study with your small group.</p>
<p>Week Five March 20-26</p>	<p>"Love is Not Selfish" Read Chapters 29-35 of <i>The Relationship Principles of Jesus</i> book and watch session five of the <i>40 Days of Love</i> study with your small group.</p>
<p>Week Six Mar 27-Apr 2</p>	<p>"The Habits of a Loving Heart" Read Chapters 36-40 of <i>The Relationship Principles of Jesus</i> book and watch session six of the <i>40 Days of Love</i> study with your small group.</p>
<p>Week Seven April 3, 4</p>	<p>"Celebration Weekend" We celebrate God's Easter Love for us in sending His only Son to die for our sins.</p>

For Additional Study:

Online Resources

[Book of Concord in PDF Format](http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/LCMS/TrigBOC.pdf), The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
<<http://www.lcms.org/graphics/assets/media/LCMS/TrigBOC.pdf>> (2MB file)

These texts are in the public domain and may be copied and distributed freely. The source of these translations is *Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921).

A number of other Lutheran texts can be found in the Belief and Practice section of the website of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod: <http://www.lcms.org/pages/internal.asp?NavID=112>

John Gill's Exposition of the Bible.

<<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/gill/matthew12.htm>>

Matthew Henry's Complete Commentary.

<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/mh/matthew12.htm>

Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary

<<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/mhc/matthew12.htm>>

Jamieson, Faussett, and Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible.*

<<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/jfb/matthew12.htm>>

B. W. Johnson's Bible Commentary

<<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/johnson/matthew12.htm>>

Greek Interlinear Bible, http://www.scripture4all.org/OnlineInterlinear/Greek_Index.htm

Based on NA26/27. A word-by-word translation of the Greek New Testament.

John Lightfoot's Bible Commentary

<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/light/matthew12.htm>

J. W. McGarvey and Philip Y. Pendleton, The Fourfold Gospel or A Harmony of the Four Gospels (Cincinnati, The Standard Publishing Company, 1914)

<http://www.ewordtoday.com/comments/matthew/four/matthew12.htm>

The NET Bible. <<http://bible.org/netbible/>> A completely new translation of the Bible with 60,932 translators' notes. It was completed by more than 25 scholars – experts in the original biblical languages – who worked directly from the best currently available Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts. Excellent notes, citing both the Greek and Hebrew, as needed. Greek and Hebrew fonts available without cost.

[Harold H. Buls - Sermon Notes](http://www.pericope.org/buls-notes/index.html) <<http://www.pericope.org/buls-notes/index.html>> and a second collection, [Sermon Notes of Dr. Harold H. Buls](http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-bul.html)

<<http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-bul.html>>. Adapted from *Exegetical Notes, Series A, Festival Season Sundays, Gospel Texts*, by Harold H. Buls, Concordia Theological Seminary Press: Ft Wayne IN, 1980, pp.9-12.

W. Robertson Nicoll, *The Greek Expositor's Testament*. Vol. 1. (New York: George H. Doran Co., ca. 1910). Five volumes containing excellent notes on the Greek text and summaries of commentators. Available at Google Books (www.books.google.com) and the Internet Archive (www.archive.org; easier to find here than at Google Books).

Other Additional Resources:

<http://www.hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com/SPLC/Motley%20Crew%20Research%20Resources.html>

Other Resources

Barker, Kenneth L., ed., *TNIV Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006)

Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions. Readers Edition. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006)

Davies, Benjamin, ed., *Baker's Pocket Harmony of the Gospels* (Baker Book House, 1975). Formerly printed as *Harmony of the Four Gospels*.

Green, Jay P., ed., *The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament*. Vol. IV. Second Edition. (Hendrickson Publishers, 1985)

Halley, Henry H., *Halley's Bible Handbook*. New Revised Edition (24th Edition). (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1965)

The Lutheran Study Bible (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009).

Nave, Orville J., ed., *Nave's Topical Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1979)

New Bible Dictionary. Second Edition. (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1962)

NIV Archeological Study Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005)

Strong, James, ed., *The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990)