

A TRAP BACKFIRES

Luke 14:1-6

The leaders of the Pharisees were more interested in trapping Jesus, than they were in upholding truth, doing what is right, or helping the oppressed.

ISRAEL'S REJECTION OF MESSIAH AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ARE PRESENTED AS JESUS TRAVELS TOWARD JERUSALEM. 9:51-19:27

Since the principal movers in the rejection are the Pharisees, Luke uses several incidents involving Pharisees to show the nature of their rejection (14:1-16:31).

REVELATION OF PHARISAIC ATTITUDE 14:1-24

An invitation to a Pharisee's house provides the background to reveal the Pharisaic attitude. Their actions reveal that they're more interested in trapping Jesus, than in discovering truth, doing what's right, or helping the oppressed 14:1-6

A Pharisee invites Jesus to his house to eat. WHY? 14:1

"They're watching Him closely!"

"Watching" is used for espionage.

He's under surveillance.

Their goal: to trap Jesus.

Jesus accepts the invitation,
but never loses sight that He's in enemy territory.

They aren't inviting Him out of sincere appreciation.

They aren't inviting Him to learn from Him,
or to commit themselves to Him.

They invite Him to see if He'll do what He's supposed to do! – to see if He plays the game by their rules.

In fact, He's really there because they already know He won't play by their rules and they're out to get Him!

They're formally courteous, but their hearts are hostile.

He still takes advantage of the invitation to communicate what they need to hear.

What do you know? It just happened that there's a sick man – suffering inside the Pharisee's house – on the Sabbath.

Now how did he happen to be there?

14:2

Root < hydro = water (hydro-pikos) = "dropsy" => generalized edema

Excess tissue fluid in the system because a major part of the body is blocked or shut down.

Due to the malfunctioning of a critical part (e.g., heart, liver or kidneys), the tissues fill with fluid.

Painful/swollen => Generalized enough it can look and feel pretty bad.

Whatever was causing it would probably kill the man.

The Pharisees use this man's affliction for their own purpose.

They sit there and watch him suffer – no compassion or desire to have Jesus help him.

They know Jesus well enough to know

He won't sit watching him suffer long.

It doesn't take a lot of genius to realize that this is a trap.

SO JESUS ASKS THE RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES WHAT HE SHOULD DO? WHAT'S THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE?

14:3

"O.K. guys, here's your chance! Tell me what YOU want me to do!"

DO THEY WANT HIM TO HEAL THE MAN OR NOT?

The ironic thing: the teachers He asked couldn't heal any day.

They aren't capable of doing it.

Their answer: SILENCE!**14:4a**

Instead of using the opportunity for instruction or to defend truth,
 they refuse to answer the question! They remain silent.
 Seiss aptly observes: "It was not that they so loved God's appointments, or that they were so devoutly concerned to obey them; but anxiety for a bludgeon to break the head of Him whose pure teachings were undermining their falsehood and tyranny.

It wasn't God, but greed;
 not righteousness, but honour, place, and dominion;
 not concern for Moses and the prophets,
 but for themselves and their own consequence.

On the occasion before us, there was a marked concern about honours and place. This was the inspiration of their assumed sanctity, and all their superior orthodoxy was only a sham for pride and lust of power."

Again Jesus heals the man.

14:4b

**They're more concerned about the trap
 than about the man's condition.**

**Jesus is more concerned about the man's condition
 than about the trap.**

*Jesus doesn't let their hardness of heart and perverted motives stop
Him from doing what is right!*

They're accountable for their own deeds and attitudes.

He doesn't run, but neither does He attack.

He doesn't flaunt it.

He doesn't fight.

He just does what He needs to do about the situation.

He heals the man, and then gets him out of there.

Their response was their problem.

We—often let pressure force us away from what we know is right.

—often respond in anger and attack the critics

Jesus did what had to be done—no matter what they might think about it.

They have to deal with their own issues.

We can't deal with the issues of others

After doing what He has to do, Jesus confronts them with the problem in their own attitude.

He exposes them—in an attempt to shake them out of it!

He really wants them to see what they're doing,

BUT, they aren't interested in doing right, or helping the oppressed.

They just want to hang on to what they have!

**They're more concerned about their possessions (animals), than about
the sick and afflicted among their people.**

Our Lord unveils their attitudes—and contrasts them with His own.

14:5

They have no love for the man in pain. He's of no value to them.

**THEY WOULD IMMEDIATELY MOVE TO PULL THEIR OWN SON
 (WHOM THEY LOVE) OR AN OX (WHICH THEY VALUE) OUT OF A
 WELL ON THE SABBATH —they have a personal interest in them.**

How do **WE** react when someone we love
 or something we value's in pain?

They didn't wait for the Sabbath to end to deal with that emergency!

This would be an emergency which could not wait!

But a suffering person, *in whom they had no personal interest*,
could wait for their silence to end and the Sabbath to terminate.

The son is loved.

The ox is valuable.

**They'll move immediately
to save something loved or of value to them.**

**BUT – They don't want Jesus to take action for the person in pain because
they don't love or value the man.**

They only care about *their* loved ones
or those who can make a profit *for them*.

**Jesus acts as in the case of a son or an ox
because He loves and values the person.**

Acts of mercy, or preservation of life, are permitted on the Sabbath.

They don't care about pain of the sick – they have no personal interest. They're willing
to stand by and allow the sick to suffer, as long as it serves their purpose.

Jesus waits no longer for them.

He does what's needed, heals the man, and sends him away.

Instead of using their position to earn prestige and personal advantage for themselves, *true religious
leaders dedicate themselves to serving those in need and allow God to repay them*.

Notice the logical conclusion:

They chose to be silent when He asked their advice.

14:6

After He's through, they have nothing to say.

Their mouths are closed.

No adequate response is possible.

TWO INDICATORS THAT THEIR HEART ISN'T RIGHT:

- 1. They go through the required ritual,
but they don't care about the man in pain.**
- 2. They bow to the Lord at the right times, they invite Him into their
home – but they don't give Him their heart.**

In fact, they're out to get Him.

*One of the things that concerns me about the risk of the religious, is that we, like
the Pharisee, invite God into our homes to see if He's going to do what God's
supposed to do – rather than invite Him into our home to give Him our lives.*

Is that where we are?

Are we just going through religious motions

– to see if God will do what God is *supposed* to do?

Or, have we come to give Him our lives?

To place ourselves in His hands and let Him live His life out through us?

Do we love or value those around us?

Gilliam's survey report on the evangelized and our own report.

***Do we care enough about others to help them in their pain or to seek to
save them from ETERNAL destruction?***

Will we move IMMEDIATELY to prevent their destruction?

What will that concern cause US to do?