

TURN ABOUT IS FAIR PLAY!

Luke 6:12-26

TRADITION!

Dramatic musical "Fiddler on the Roof" repeatedly beats on us with the issue of tradition. Set in an orthodox Jewish community, the play points to the legalistic authoritarian role of tradition.

Evidence of Jesus' authority 4:31-5:16 – Authority over demons, sickness, and nature

Opposition to Jesus' authority 5:17-6:11

As Jesus demonstrates authority, opposition increases.

The crowds following Him provoke jealousy and opposition from Israel's leaders

Jesus' Authority over sin challenged 5:17-26 5:21

Jesus' Authority over men (sinners) challenged 5:27-32 5:30

Jesus' Authority over tradition challenged 5:33-39 5:33

The confrontation over fasting demonstrates that *Jesus' message is so distinct from the legalistic traditions of the self-righteous that the two will never be harmonized*

They believe religious observance must be sober.

It's not suppose to be fun to worship God. So they complain.

Jesus' disciples are having too much fun!

Only O.T.-prescribed fast is related to the day of Atonement.

It focuses on sorrow over sin, which breaks fellowship with God,
and looks forward to God's future dealing with sin.

Israel established a series of fasts, focusing on sorrow due to the captivity.

In Zech., when they ask God about the 4 fasts,

He tells them to do whatever they want with their fasts.

He didn't establish them.

God's fasts deal with sin (cause of their suffering!); not with sorrow over hard times!

Now they have established fasts for everything! – Two per week!

They even develop a way to look sad, so everyone will know they're fasting.

It's a big show. A farce!

Jesus doesn't go along with them.

His disciples *enjoy* serving God!

That's not fair. Serving God isn't suppose to be fun!

4 ILLUSTRATIONS:

1. Presence of the bridegroom 5:34-35

Jesus came to make life a wedding feast, not a funeral!

If you know the bridegroom, you share his joy.

This isn't the time for sobriety and fasting. It's a time for joy!

2. Patching old clothes with new cloth 5:36

Jesus didn't come to patch up the old forms; He came to bring new ones.

A new garment is needed.

Don't try to mix new with old – grace with cold religious ritualism

3. Storing new wine in old skins 5:37-38 – a similar message

New "wineskins" are needed for His message – the old could never contain it.

If unfermented wine is put in old wineskins which have lost their elasticity,
the reaction will burst the skins – both the skins and the wine will be lost.

Christ didn't come to renew the old forms. He came to give new life.

4. Preference for the old wine 5:39

They reject the new life Jesus brought – they prefer the old.

Traditionalists are always saying, "The old is good!"

They can't accept the new, life-giving teaching of Jesus.

The normal rule is wine gets better with age.

Problem: fermentation never stops– After sitting too long it gets putred.

When does wine go from "best" to "too much?"– they can't distinguish! They

don't want fresh wine because "Old is better!"

They don't realize the old has already spoiled.

So they refuse the new, life-giving wine Christ brought.

Jesus' authority over the Sabbath challenged 6:1-11 6:2

Two incidents:

1) A legalistic interpretation causes a confrontation over eating grain while passing through the fields on the Sabbath 6:1-5

Sabbath isn't Sunday– Sabbath is the 7th day; Sunday is the 1st day.

Celebrated by church because resurrection occurred on 1st day.

Paul: "Days have nothing to do with salvation." (Gal. 4:1-11; Col. 2:8-17)

Pharisees make Sabbath a burden, rather than a blessing, as God intended.

They add so many restrictions that they make obedience impossible.

It's almost amusing to read the list of regulations laid out in the Talmud.

Our Lord disregards these man-made rules.

God made Sabbath to be a delight, a source of gladness and help, not a burden, not a list of rules to trip us up every time we turn around!

We need rest. We need to worship our Creator.

Those who refuse to take a day off; who insist on using everyday to earn a buck miss a blessing God intends us to enjoy.

Those who use the day for *self* rather than to worship *God* and encourage *others* miss an opportunity God intends for spiritual development.

This isn't the case with Jesus' disciples. He never justifies either attitude!

What did Jesus' disciples do that was illegal–

– according to the O.T.? – according to traditions of Pharisees?

It's legal to eat from neighbor's field as long as you don't use a harvesting instrument or fill a container– or, by extension, to do it on the Sabbath

To the Pharisees, the disciples broke the law:

Talmud: "In case a woman rolls wheat to remove the husks, it is considered as sifting; if she rubs the heads of wheat, it is regarded as threshing; if she cleans off the side-adherences, it is sifting out fruit; if she bruises the ears, it is grinding; if she throws them up in her hand, it is winnowing."

Barclay: By plucking the corn they were guilty of reaping; by rubbing it in their hands of threshing; by flinging away the husks of winnowing; and the very fact that they ate it showed that they had prepared food on the Sabbath.

The self-righteous leaders opposed Jesus–He claimed a more important mission and greater authority than their traditions. 6:5

What did David's example teach them?

Lev. 24:9 => 1 Sa. 21:1-6

David's case was clearcut as far as the law was concerned:

No one but priests were to eat the shewbread– David did it.

No Jew condemns Israel's great king. He's the Lord's anointed!

Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath– that's a claim to be God!

If He's Lord of the Sabbath, then He's free to use it as He pleases.

At times God's work is more important than strict legalistic interpretations of the law. – No one stood up to David 6:3-4

Man is more important to God than ritual observance.

God's anointed – Messiah – certainly is!

Sabbath was given for man's good – NOT to strap him but for good – for rest, for worshipping God.

Anything that distracts from God's purpose should be secondary.

Sometimes people get caught in forms; we forget the substance.

Pharisees are so caught with tradition they lose sight of the purpose. The Pharisees aren't concerned about worshipping God.

They just want to be sure everyone goes through the right motions!

2) **Christ heals man with shriveled hand on the Sabbath 6:6-11**

Where is he? What's the significance of the place?

Pharisees aren't impartial observers. They want to accuse Him. 6:6-7

The self-righteous oppose Him – He places higher priority on delivering the afflicted than on observing legalistic traditions. 6:9

Legalists prefer to leave him in his condition than heal him on the Sabbath.

They rescue wounded animals, why not a person? Matt. 12:11-12

He gives them a chance to answer question about what He's going to do. The great teachers of Israel have no answer.

They're more interested in trapping Jesus, than in determining truth.

They want to kill Him.

Jesus raises the issue: is it better to do something good or something evil on the Sabbath? Is it better to save life, or to take it on the Sabbath.

Jesus performs no work on the Sabbath. He simply speaks a few words.

SEPARATION OF JESUS' FOLLOWERS 6:12-49

CALL OF THE TWELVE 6:12-16

As the nation demonstrates its rejection of Jesus, He concentrates efforts on His followers.

Two responses again seen: some reject; some believe

He selects twelve from among many *disciples*

to become commissioned co-workers, called *apostles* (6:12-49).

JESUS' TWELVE DISCIPLES ==> APOSTLES

Disciple is a learner – one following a teacher; wanting to learn from him.

Not necessarily accepting the word of the teacher

Not necessarily having authority.

Apostle is a sent one.

Authority is essential to the concept. Christ passes His authority to the 12.

His choice of twelve was made **after praying all night** to know God's will (6:12-16).

Even Jesus doesn't do anything this significant without talking to His Father about it!

INSTRUCTION OF THE TWELVE 6:17-49

Having called twelve, Jesus begins to teach them what their ministry will be like.

His example 6:17-19 Jesus' example teaches His followers that:

Their ministry's a ministry to all, not just those who can repay them. (Pharisees).

He first teaches them this lesson by example, then by verbal instruction.

He continues to attract crowds because of power to free them from oppression.

Those who HEAR Him, receive the blessing Jesus came to bring them.

His teaching 6:20-49 Directed to His disciples.

The basis for blessing 6:20-26

People who are satisfied with unjust world conditions in the present age will never be satisfied with life in God's kingdom.

If we understand Jesus to be pro-poverty and anti-joy, we miss the point.

He's dealing with a basic conflict in priorities and attitudes.

Jesus' teaching: *the present age and the kingdom of God are in conflict*.

The source of happiness is not the temporary, physical values the world recognizes, but rather, trading them in for higher values, the kingdom of God.

Our Lord establishes a distinct set of values. He reverses the standards.

What the world values is meaningless and produces an empty existence.

Satisfaction doesn't come from material goods.

True wealth isn't based on money, nor on the world's goods.

True hunger doesn't come from lack of food.

True joy doesn't come from happy circumstances and external laughter.

True popularity isn't what comes from the crowd's applause.

Jesus' followers were **POOR**. They left everything to follow Him.

"Poor" in Luke are dependent on God.–recipients of "good news." 4:18

They're satisfied in spite of poverty; they're heirs of a better inheritance.

Likewise the apostles who **HUNGER** and **WEEP** because of their commitment to follow Jesus will eventually be filled and laugh.

In spite of **REJECTION**, they'll be happy because of their heavenly reward and their identification with the prophets who also suffered.

His disciples, and others like them, who suffer in the present age, will be satisfied in the kingdom of God.

Life is difficult for believers in that time.

They don't have much hope that things will get better.

Many think happiness comes from *possessions, pleasure and popularity*.

Jesus describes happiness in opposite terms of what they expect.

In contrast with disciples who give up everything to follow Jesus, some refuse to give up anything: the rich, well-fed, those who laugh and who are popular.

People who are content in the present age will suffer later.

Woe comes to the rich, not because they're wealthy, but because they choose *present* gratification over *future* blessing.

When *all* people speak well of us, something is wrong.

We aren't taking a stand for the truth.

BLESSED		CONDEMNED	
NOW	FUTURE	NOW	FUTURE
Poor 20	Rich Possess the Kingdom	Rich 24	Nothing left to get Already have it all
Hungry 21a	Satisfied	Satisfied Well-fed 25a	Hungry
Weep 21b	Laugh	Laugh 25b	Mourn and weep
Hated Ostracized Insulted Spurned 22	Reward in heaven Identified with faithful prophets	Popular All speak well of you 26	Identified with false prophets
THOSE <u>CONTENT</u> NOW . . . WILL <u>SUFFER LOSS</u>			
THOSE <u>UNHAPPY</u> NOW . . . WILL <u>BE BLESSED</u>			

If we're satisfied with status quo,

something's wrong with our walk with God.

Faithful followers of God will never be satisfied with life in the world.

We'll always be hungry and thirsty for something different.

What are WE looking for in life?

Gray and Adams Commentary: A servant living in an old castle heard cries of distress from a cliff that overlooked a mighty foaming river. Someone was being swept along by the rushing current. The servant jumped from rock to rock, to a place where a tree had fallen halfway across the stream. He crept along its trunk. Stooping down, he caught the sinking man. He pulled him to the bank and revived him. The man was a neighboring baron who gratefully offered him a handful of gold for his courageous deed. The servant humbly refused, pointing to the castle where he lived, saying, "My master is able to reward me."