

# A Sign of the Sabbath

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[ 0 : 00 ] ! If he goes along with us he goes along with us!

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If he goes along with us he goes along with us! If he goes along with us he goes along with us! If he goes along with us he goes along with us! All right, as our youth are dismissed, grades seven through 12, you're dismissed to our youth Bible study.

For the rest of you, invite you to turn to Luke chapter six. Luke chapter six, which is where our passage is going to be. We have now been for several weeks studying the miracles of Jesus. We've been in a variety of different gospels. We were in the gospel of John for a while, then the gospel of Mark. And then last week we shifted to the gospel of Luke and we will likely remain in the gospel of Luke for the next few weeks.

[ 1 : 53 ] And we'll finish the miracle series with the miracle of Christmas and the miracle of the incarnation. And about everybody that I've talked to has been like, that's the perfect ending to the series.

It's either that or go till Easter, one or the other. All right, so we'll end at Christmas. So that was suggested by you, Fred, I know. All right, Luke chapter six. Luke chapter six is where we're going to be this evening as we look at another one of the miracles of Jesus.

And so if you are able to stand, would you please do so as we honor the reading of God's word. Faith family, we are convinced that the word of God is the word of God.

It is breathed out by God with the very authority of God. And that's why we do this simple thing of standing and recognizing the authority of these words.

Luke writes under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, on a Sabbath, while he was going through the grain fields, his disciples plucked and ate some heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands.

[ 3 : 00 ] But some of the Pharisees said, why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath? And Jesus answered them, have you not read what David did when he was hungry?

He and those who were with him, how he entered the house of God and took and ate the bread of the presence, which is not lawful for any but the priest to eat and also gave it to those with him. And he, Jesus, said to them, the Pharisees, the son of man is Lord of the Sabbath. On another Sabbath, he entered the synagogue and was teaching.

And there was a man whose right hand was withered. And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath so that they might find a reason to accuse him. But he knew their thoughts. And he said to the man with the withered hand, come and stand here. And he rose and stood there. And Jesus said to them, I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or destroy it?

[ 4 : 21 ] And after looking around at them all, he said to them, stretch out your hand. And he did so. And his hand was restored.

And they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus. This is God's word.

Would you pray with me and pray for me tonight? And let's ask God to come in and talk to us about what the word says. So here we are, God. We want you to speak into our lives.

We're here because you have authority over us. And we would ask that God, by your word, that you would come now and that you would give us what our soul needs. And certainly in a time where there is so much confusion and there's so much running around and there's so much chaos and so much uncertainty, all the more we need to enter into Sabbath.

Breathe that over us, I pray, in Christ's name. And God's people said, amen, amen. You can be seated. His name was Antonio Salieri.

[ 5 : 35 ] He was born in Venice. He was an Italian composer of music and one of the pivotal figures in the development of 18th century opera.

Salieri was obsessed with his craft. He spent and devoted his life to writing classical pieces that were widely performed throughout Europe.

He was so obsessed with being the best musician that he was willing to literally do anything to achieve that.

In the movie *Amon Deus*, which won eight Academy Awards, there's a scene where Salieri was making a vow to God where he promised to give God everything he had, all that he was, if God would simply make him great.

While my father prayed earnestly to God to protect commerce, I would offer up secretly the proudest prayer a boy could think of.

[ 6 : 47 ] Lord, make me a great composer. Let me celebrate your glory through music and be celebrated myself.

Make me famous through the world, dear God. Make me immortal. After I die, let people speak my name forever with love for what I wrote.

In return, I will give you my chastity, my industry, my deepest humility every hour of my life.

Amen. He was a man obsessed. Obsessed with achievement. Obsessed with wanting to be the greatest composer ever.

And on one particular occasion, Salieri is invited to play for the emperor. And while the emperor enjoys his music immensely, someone else had been invited to play on that particular occasion that captured the attention of the emperor.

[ 8 : 08 ] His name? Mozart. And it was clear on that day, even to Salieri himself, that Mozart's skill was far superior than his.

And in realizing that Mozart had the very gift that he so desperately was trying to achieve, it drove Salieri to destruction.

In fact, he determined that he would work night and day to discredit Mozart. All because, listen, faith family, all because Mozart had a greatness that Salieri could never achieve.

now listen to me tonight. You and I need to be very, very careful about the Salieri complex.

Because you and I struggle with this, I think, more than we realize.

It's that feeling, it can even be an obsession to work, achieve, or live up to a particular standard. standard, and it may be very different for a lot of us.

[ 9 : 18 ] For some of you, it's a standard of living that you're seeking to obtain. Others of you, it might be a standard of beauty or attraction that you want to achieve.

It might be a standard of excellence in your work that you want to accomplish. It could be a standard of morality that you hope to live by. It could be a standard of obedience that you demand for your children.

It could be a standard of acceptance that you want from your peers. It might be a standard of righteousness that you hope to have before God.

And listen, listen, while I would never discourage anybody from having a drive in life, that's a good thing. I would warn us, I would warn myself of that endless working for a standard that we can never achieve.

That's a real danger in every one of our lives and it's exactly what's happening here in Luke chapter 6. You do realize the Salieri complex existed long before the 18th century, right?

[ 10 : 33 ] It actually goes back even to the first century, only then it wasn't the Salieri complex, it was known as the Pharisee complex. You know much about the Pharisees, how they were always trying to achieve greatness on their own.

They were always trying to live up to the standard of righteousness that was laid out in the law of Moses. And like Salieri, the Pharisees had dedicated their life to being the top of their craft, the best in their trade, stricter than anybody else in the South Metro and beyond.

And it's why every time they encountered the greatness of Jesus, they hated him. Every time they encountered the righteousness of Jesus, they wanted to do everything they could to discredit him.

And here in Luke 6, lean in for just a moment here, here in Luke 6, through a miracle, Jesus is going to show them and he's going to show us that the very thing the Pharisees wanted to achieve

can only be received in the person of Christ.

That the thing you're longing for so desperately can't be achieved by you, but can only be found in the person of Jesus.

[12:04] But before we get to the miracle, you notice that I read a section before the actual miracle. This is another two for one, but it's not two miracles, it's two stories.

And the reason why is because you actually have to understand the first story to understand the miracle. In fact, what I want to show you is how these two stories put back to back, they're actually structured in the exact same way, showing us that they go together, that they're to be understood as one.

Notice the structure here on the screen. You're going to have an occasion in both of them. And in both of these stories, the occasion is the what? The Sabbath.

Second is there'll be a location. One is going to happen in a grain field, the other one's going to happen in the synagogue. And there's going to be in both a, quote, violation. Something's going to happen that's going to make the Pharisees mad.

One is going to be plucking and eating. The other's going to be healing. And then there's going to be a question. In both of these stories, Jesus will ask a question to the Pharisees.

[13:14] The first one will be about David. The second one will be about the law. And then lastly, there's going to be a conclusion. Something shocking. Something amazing. Something drama filled.

One will be a statement Jesus will make. And the other will be a miracle he will perform. Do you see how these two stories go together? They parallel one another.

So we need to understand the first one before we understand the second one, which is where the miracle is found. Let's unpack the first story here in verse one.

On a Sabbath, while he's going through the grain fields, his disciples plucked and ate some of the heads of grain rubbing them in their hands. But some of the Pharisees said, why are you doing what's not lawful to do on the Sabbath?

And Jesus answered, have you not read what David did when he was hungry and those who were with him, how he entered the house of God and took and ate the bread of the presence, which is not lawful for any but the priest to eat and also gave it to those with him?

[14:17] And he said to them, the son of man is Lord of the Sabbath. I would summarize all of that with this one statement. Jesus makes a declaration about the Sabbath.

Jesus is saying something about the Sabbath and we need to understand that something if we're going to understand what the Sabbath really means.

Now, as I'm assuming many of you know, the Sabbath along with circumcision were the two defining features that would distinguish an Orthodox Jew.

Now, keep in mind that the Sabbath was something more than just the ancient Near Eastern version of Chick-fil-A. Okay? This is more than just we're off on Sundays or we're closed for business.

It went a lot deeper than that. It was a lot bigger than that. The Sabbath was their way of life. This is what set them apart from everything and everyone.

[15:15] everyone. Listen, it wasn't an off day. It was a holy day. Did you hear that? It's not just an off day. That's tend to how we think about the Sabbath.

It's more than that. It's a holy day. Look back in Exodus chapter 20 when this was commanded. Exodus 20 verse 8. 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 to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work. You or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant or your livestock or the sojourner who's within your gates.

Why? For, here's the ground, in six days the Lord made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that was in them and rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

The Sabbath was a big deal, faith family. It was a big deal. It imaged the rest that God took on the seventh day of creation. It reminded them of the rest God gave them when he delivered them from Egypt and brought them into the promised land.

[16:29] It reminded them, you are chosen by God. You are my covenant people. You are no longer slaves. You have been liberated and God has given his people rest.

That's how big of a deal this was. And it was meant to bless Israel, not be a burden to Israel. It was meant to refresh Israel, not to become a rule when God commanded the Sabbath.

But, notice this on the screen. The command, you shall not work, is too vague for hearts that are prone to work.

The command, you shall not work, is too vague for hearts that are prone to work. And by the way, that is not an indictment on God's law. Listen, that's an indictment on man's heart.

We are so works-based we are so, I gotta achieve, I gotta do, that when God says, rest, we don't know what to do with that.

[ 17 : 40 ] Tell me that doesn't preach in American culture when it's all about what we do and our achievement. Listen, rather than enjoying the gift of rest, the Pharisees, and we've already discussed this in a previous sermon, came up with 39 different categories, not 39 different rules, 39 different categories of rules that people couldn't do on the Sabbath.

Listen, I want you to hear this. This we'll preach. They tried to capture what God had intentionally left free. Think about that.

See, here's the problem with us humans. What God has intentionally left open and free and a gap, we fill it up with our own man-made stuff because we don't, we can't comprehend what freedom would be like to actually just rest.

No, no, no, God, that's not enough. No, it actually is enough because I gave the command. The problem is your heart that has to capture what God had given for the sake of freedom.

And one of those rules that the Pharisees had created in the Mishnah, the oral traditions, was you can't harvest on the Sabbath.

[ 19 : 00 ] You can't pick grain, you can't pluck grain, you can't harvest. So, when the Pharisees see the disciples plucking grain on the Sabbath, they immediately throw the penalty flag, right?

We have an unnecessary violation on the disciples. That's going to be about a 50-yard penalty, right? You guys are in violation of the law.

What are you doing? But of course, in reality, this isn't a violation at all, is it? Listen, these fishermen aren't fishing.

Matthew's not doing anybody's taxes. Jesus, they're not working, they're just eating, which was not forbidden by the law. In fact, in Deuteronomy 23, was allowed.

And so, Jesus, in seeing their response, how many just want to say, I love Jesus? Anybody with me? Like, I love watching Jesus in all of these moments, because he knows right what to say to stick it to him.

[ 20 : 11 ] Look at what he does. He responds with a heavy dose of sarcasm. Verse 3, Jesus answered them, have you not read what David did when he was hungry and those who were with him?

Now, you say, that doesn't seem sarcastic at all, but it is very sarcastic. Listen, come here, come here. Have you guys ever read about David? Have you ever read about David?

Do you know who these people are? These are the Pharisees. These are the Pharisees. They know David. Let me put this into context.

This is like asking a tax planner, have you ever heard of a W-2 form? This would be like asking a presidential historian, I don't know, have you possibly heard the name Abraham Lincoln?

This would be like asking somebody from Minnesota, have you ever heard heard of winter? Do you know anything about that? Of course, they've read David.

[ 21 : 15 ] They've memorized David. This was a story they'd heard multiple times when they were kids. They learned it at vacation Torah school.

They know this story. And Jesus is asking them, have you ever heard the story about David? David. Because what's clear, guys, is that you've heard the story, but you missed the point.

The story he's referring to is 1 Samuel 21. David is running. He's fleeing from Saul. He arrives in a place called Nob.

He goes to the temple. He's starving. He's hungry. He hasn't eaten or his men in a long time. and he asks for food. But the only food they have is the temple bread.

Well, according to the law, the only people that can eat that bread are the priests. So the law says you can't eat the bread.

[ 22 : 21 ] Guess what David does? He eats the bread. And not only does he eat the bread, he serves it to his men as well. And guess what?

God does not condemn David for that act. In other words, David's legitimate need superseded the law.

And what Jesus just did is he turned it on the Pharisees because now by condemning the disciples, you condemned David.

David. No wonder they hate him. Check mate. And by the way, a little sub note for those of you that like the little footnotes, Jesus hereby is also showing us that he's the greater David, right?

David took bread and fed his men. Jesus is taking grain and feeding his men. The greater David is here. Now, if Jesus hasn't made them upset enough by just questioning their knowledge of the Old Testament, he offends them even more.

[ 23 : 35 ] Look at verse 5. And he said to them, the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.

Oh, they are going nuts at this point. Like, what did he just say? What, what just came out of your mouth? Did you just say you are Lord of the Sabbath?

Faith family, that statement is what I like to call a game changer. This changes everything. This is the shocking drama that happens at the end of this story.

And it is such a significant statement because there are at least, maybe more, but at least two implications from the statement Jesus just made.

Here's the first. Notice it on the screen. If God gave the Sabbath and Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, then Jesus is claiming to be God.

[ 24 : 34 ] In other words, Jesus is saying the God that created the heavens and earth and rested on the seventh day, the God that issued the fourth commandment I am he.

I am Lord of the Sabbath. Here's the second huge implication is it means that true Sabbath is not found following the Mishnah, all of these oral traditions.

It's found in following the Messiah. It's not about principles you follow. It's about a person you follow. It's not about a day you observe. It's about a deliverer.

that you have put your faith in. Jesus has just changed the game. He has turned the Sabbath upside down and shown us what it really means.

You with me? That's the first story. Who wants the second one? We're doing it whether you want it or not. All right? Now, we might stop here and just say, Jesus, you can't go around making those kind of statements.

[ 25 : 44 ] You can't listen, listen. I know you created the heavens and the earth, but let me give you some advice. You can't go around saying, I'm Lord of the Sabbath unless you're going to back it up.

Do y'all know people like that, that talk a good game but don't ever back it up? I'm the best basketball player that's ever picked up a basketball but you never see him on the basketball court.

You know what I'm talking about? Jesus, you can't say things like this, like you're Lord of the Sabbath unless you have proof that you're Lord of the Sabbath.

Now you're ready for the miracle. Now you're ready for the second story. Do you see? You had to have all that to now understand what Luke gives us next.

Verse 7. On another Sabbath, so here's a thread that ties these together, he enters the synagogue and he's teaching and there's a man there who has a right hand that is withered.

[ 26 : 50 ] And the scribes and Pharisees watch him to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath so that they might find a reason to accuse him. But he knew their thoughts and he said to the man with the withered hand come and stand here and he rose and stood there.

So the scene shifts doesn't it? We now go from a grain field to a synagogue. It's still on the Sabbath, a different Sabbath, but the Sabbath police are still out.

This guy doesn't have any respect for the Sabbath. We have seen him violate it multiple times before. Do you remember the whole grain field incident? And so he's probably going to do it again.

In fact, for all we know, this man with the withered hand is a plant to trap Jesus. That certainly happens many times in the gospels where they try to trick him, but it doesn't really matter.

Here in the synagogue, we find a man whose hand has been withered. He has some kind of deformity. Likely all he has ever known in life is embarrassment, people staring, and then kind of looking away, and asking questions, what happened, how long have you had that condition, and this has been this man's life.

[ 28 : 12 ] And Jesus looks at him here in the synagogue and he says, come here, come here. Now listen, Luke tells us that Jesus does this because he knows the Pharisees are watching.

That's an important clue in the text. What does it mean? Are you with me? Listen, it means this act is not only an act of compassion on this man, it is an act of condemnation on the Pharisees. Jesus does this because he knows the Pharisees are watching. Look at verse nine. Here's the question that he asked. Jesus said to them, I ask you in light of this man, what is lawful on the Sabbath to do?

Is it to do good or to do harm? Is it to save life or is it to destroy life? In other words, let's answer the question right now. What's the real purpose of the Sabbath?

What is the Sabbath ultimately about? Is it a blessing or a burden? Is it to harm or is it to heal? And then Jesus turns to this man with the withered hand and says, stretch out your hand.

[ 29 : 32 ] Come here. Come stand here. It's okay. Hey, no, sit down. We don't know this person. He could be a shadow. Is it lawful on Sabbath to do good Or to do harm?

To save or to kill. This affliction does not threaten his life. It does not even affect his health. Lift it up. stretch it out. It's good, huh?

If he was supposed to be healed, God would have done it himself. Interesting point. Interesting point indeed. What's the point of this miracle?

What is at the heart of what Jesus is doing? Remember I've told you many, many times that miracles are signs. They're pointing you to something bigger.

[ 31 : 04 ] In other words, this has more to do with a withered hand. This is bigger than one man's deformity. Notice this on the screen.

Jesus is demonstrating in the synagogue what he declared in the grain field. Namely, he is the Lord of the Sabbath.

Do you want proof that he's the Lord of the Sabbath? Watch this man's hand be healed. Jesus not only talks a good game, he backs it up.

Amen? Notice this on the screen. By this miracle, Jesus is not breaking the Sabbath. He is bringing the real Sabbath.

He is showing us what true Sabbath is all about. Do you see how these two stories fit together? Do you see how one is declaring something about the Sabbath and then the other is demonstrating that very thing, that very truth.

[ 32 : 16 ] Now what does all this mean for us? Let me give us just three quick words of application and then we'll be finished. Here's the first. Faith family, I say this directly to your hearts tonight.

Jesus is where true satisfaction is found. Jesus is where true satisfaction is found. You say satisfaction, I'm not really sure I understand what you mean by that word.

Why did God rest? Listen, listen, why did God rest on the seventh day? Because it was finished. Because everything had been accomplished.

Because there was nothing more to do. Listen, because it was very good. In other words, God rested Sabbath, which is what Sabbath is based on, because he looked at everything and it was finished.

He was satisfied with his work. There was nothing else to be done. Are you with me? Why did the Pharisees never experience real Sabbath?

[ 33 : 26 ] Because they never thought it was good enough. Somebody say preach preacher. God rested because he looked at everything and it was finished.

It is good. It is very good. There is nothing more to do. The Pharisees never rested because it was never good enough. the Salieri complex that many of us this very evening struggle with.

That constant desire it's not enough it's not enough it's got to be more it's got to be more and listen faith family when you enter into real Sabbath the Sabbath that Jesus gives you'll no longer have that complex because you no longer are on this endless effort of achieving something you can never achieve in the first place you're able in God to rest it doesn't mean that you don't have drive it doesn't mean that you don't set goals it doesn't mean that you don't try to improve things of course that's the case there are six days of working right but you're not a slave in Egypt anymore you're not working for a slave master in Egypt where it's never good enough you're a son and daughter of the king and he has said of your life there's no condemnation for those of you that are in Christ Jesus you're already good enough in my son and so go try to win the game but if you don't win don't be crushed go and try to be the best employee at your job but if you don't get the employee of the month award don't be crushed work have goals but you don't have to be better you don't have to achieve that standard salary you can rest in the Lord of the Sabbath and then you'll be

satisfied truly truly and finally satisfied number two Jesus is where true restoration is found Jesus is where true restoration is found I made the comment just a few moments ago and throughout this series that miracles are signs of something greater listen to me listen to me this is not on the screen you might want to write it down though this man's hand is a picture of everyone's life think about that this man's hand is a picture of everyone's life we are all deformed in one way or another aren't you glad you came to church right

I mean all of our life has been broken by sin all of us are disfigured in some way all of us have things that wither have you not experienced things in life that were blossoming one moment and withering the next and the point here is listen Jesus is the only one that can restore your withered life he's the only one that can bring true healing true sabbath into your life it might be restoring that physical situation it might be just bringing healing to your soul and all the brokenness within but make no mistake the only person who's actually going to be able to bring the healing of sabbath is the lord of the sabbath so what's your withered hand this evening what is that thing that you need to come to

[ 37 : 25 ] Jesus with and say lord please give me sabbath in this area of my life third and finally is Jesus is where true salvation is found Jesus is where true salvation is found what did Jesus cry from the cross it is finished why because just as God rested on the seventh day because his work was finished sabbath Jesus cried out it is finished on the cross because the work of salvation was complete that righteousness and acceptance we all long for before God that we're all desperately trying to achieve in fact your drive to be accepted by friends may only be a cover up for your drive to be accepted by God your constant effort to be accepted by others or achieving certain things or looking certain way may be nothing more than the outworking of a deeper longing that you want

God to accept you and be pleased with you well the good news of the gospel is that has already been finished in Jesus Christ in other words faith family look at me the ultimate sabbath is salvation the ultimate sabbath is salvation why because you start to accept that there's nothing you can do to earn a righteous standing before God but by faith you receive the righteousness of someone far greater than Mozart the very righteousness of Christ he achieved for us what we can never achieve for ourselves he has made us right with God this is sabbath faith family this is sabbath it is being truly satisfied it is being healed and restored and it is experiencing salvation in Jesus Christ and I prayed earlier and I'm about done we are entering into one of the busiest craziest times of the year will you be someone who can rest through it all will you will I be the kind of individuals who will enter into sabbath when everybody else is going insane faith family the Pharisees just like Antonio Salivari lived their entire life trying to achieve something that had already been achieved by someone else and the result listen is the very people obsessed with the sabbath never found it tell me that's not sad the people obsessed with the sabbath never found it so

I don't know what standard you're trying to achieve and I don't know what righteousness you're trying to obtain but I know this the good news of the gospel and the best news in this world is this it is finished it is finished that is true sabbath and by faith you can enter in will you pray with me lord may it be may it be so in our lives and in our hearts I have no doubt that there are many in this room that this message was specifically for them that's why you brought them here it's why you have me preach this our hearts are restless we're on a constant never ending effort to try to achieve and be enough and do enough and look enough it's exhausting you don't work for sabbath it doesn't make any sense you don't work for sabbath you receive sabbath and

I pray that tonight we'd really get that and that we would lay our deadly doing down and yeah we may have goals and yeah we still have a drive and God I believe you're all about that but it's about coming to realize that it really is finished in our life that the work that you did in creation the work that you did on the cross the healing and restoration that you did that day in the synagogue is ours in Jesus so come Holy Spirit and breathe into our lives and speak into our lives Sabbath over whatever it is that we are so desperately trying to achieve ourselves in Christ's name I pray it amen amen