



SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS – MARCH 19, 2023

Sermon Title: Love Above Law
Sermon Series: ‘Out of the Depths’
Scripture: Matthew 12:1-12
Preacher: Rev. Glyn Norman

Theme/Concept: Love, grace, kindness triumphs over law and legalism. It is God’s kindness that leads us to repentance.

Icebreaker: (if with a small group) Have you ever experienced a situation where you felt that doing something ‘wrong’ was the right course of action? Why did you make that decision?

Reflections on the sermon: What were your main take aways from the sermon?

Background Scripture – Matthew 12:1-12 (New International Version)

12 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 the priests on Sabbath duty in the temple desecrate the Sabbath and yet are innocent? ⁶ I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. ⁷ If you had known what these words mean, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice,’ 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 bring charges against 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 person than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.”

Reviewing the Scripture:

1. Why do you believe that the Pharisees confronted Jesus about the disciples' actions? (Matthew 12:1-2)
2. What was the first illustration that Jesus gave the Pharisees regarding the legality of the disciples' actions? (Matthew 12:3-4) (1 Samuel 21:1-6)
3. State and explain the second example that Jesus gave regarding the legality of actions on the Sabbath. (Matthew 12:5)
4. What does Jesus ultimately tell the Pharisees about the legality of his disciples' actions? (Matthew 12:6-8) What did Jesus mean by his statement in verse 6?
5. How does Jesus proclaim his deity in verses 6-8?
6. What does Jesus mean when he says in verse 7, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice'? (See also Matthew 9:12-13, Hosea 6:6, 1 Samuel 15:22, Micah 6:6-8)
7. After confronting Jesus about his disciples picking and eating heads of grain on the Sabbath, what was the next way that the Pharisees tried to ensnare Jesus? (Matthew 12:9-10)
8. How did Jesus respond to the Pharisees regarding what is lawful to do on the Sabbath? (Matthew 12:11-12) What example did Jesus give to make this point? (Matthew 12:11-12)

Going deeper:

1. What do we learn from this passage about how God views deeds of necessity, service to God or acts of mercy on the Sabbath?
2. In what ways was the Sabbath made for man's benefit? In what ways was it made for God's glory?
3. Do you honor the Sabbath? In what ways? Do you feel any benefits from the ways you honor the Sabbath? If so, what benefits have you experienced?
4. In light of the Matthew 12:1-12 Bible passage, are there any changes you plan to make to how you spend your Sabbath? Please explain.

5. Matthew 12:1-12 shows that the disciples faced scrutiny because of their association with Jesus. To your knowledge, have you faced scrutiny as a follower of Jesus? How?
6. What did you learn from the sermon regarding the importance of our attitude as compared with legal obedience? (See also 1 Samuel 16:7)

Closing prayer:

Dear Lord-

You knew, Father, that we could never follow enough rules to earn favor with you. Thank you for this Bible passage that reminds us that love is greater than legalism. You show this to us all the time by your grace but most of all, by the merciful gift of your son as a sacrifice for our sins. Help us to show that same love, grace and kindness to others that you have shown to us.

In Jesus name, amen.