

August 9

Making Idols out of God's Laws

Behold, all of them, their works are vanity and nothing.
Their molten images are wind and confusion. – Isaiah 41:29

[Matthew 12:1-21, toward Galilee] At that time, Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the grain fields. His disciples were hungry and, *as they went*, began to pluck heads of grain and to eat rubbing them in their hands. But the Pharisees, when they saw it, said to him, “Behold, your disciples do what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.”

But he said to them, “Haven’t you read what David did, when he *had need and* was hungry, and those who were with him; how he entered into the house of God *when Abiathar was high priest*, and ate the show bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for those who were with him, but only for the priests? [1 Samuel 21:3-6] Or have you not read in the law, that on the Sabbath day, the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are guiltless? But I tell you that one greater than the temple is here. But if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,’ [Hosea 6:6] you would not have condemned the guiltless. *The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. Therefore, the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.*”

He departed there, and went into their synagogue on another Sabbath that he entered into the synagogue and taught. There was a man there, and his right hand was withered. The scribes and the Pharisees watched him to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against him. They asked him, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?” that they might accuse him.

He said to them, “*What man is there among you, who has one sheep, and if this one falls*

into a pit on the Sabbath day, won't he grab on to it, and lift it out? Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day.” *But they were silent.*

Then, *when he had looked around at them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their hearts*, he knew their thoughts and told the man, “*Rise up, and stand in the middle.*” He arose and stood. And he said to the man “*Stretch out your hand.*” He stretched it out; and it was restored whole, just like the other. But the Pharisees went out, and conspired with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him. Jesus, perceiving that, withdrew from there. Great multitudes followed him; and he healed them all, and commanded them that they should not make him known: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying,

“Behold, my servant whom I have chosen;
my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased:

I will put my Spirit on him.

He will proclaim justice to the nations.

He will not strive, nor shout;

neither will anyone hear his voice in the streets.

He won't break a bruised reed.

He won't quench a smoking flax,
until he leads justice to victory.

In his name, the nations will hope.”

[Isaiah 42:1-4]

[Luke 6:1-11, Mark 2:23-3:6]

1. When, like a Pharisee, do you enforce rules? When should you not enforce them?
2. How does Isaiah 42 relate to Jesus commanding people not to make him known?
3. Jesus, I make “molten images” and other idols out of my own works and rules, please...