

1) Calling sinners to repentance: 5:27-28

Each of the Synoptics place the call of Levi **AFTER** the Paralytic
And BEFORE the Sinner's party – thus identifying him with Sinners.

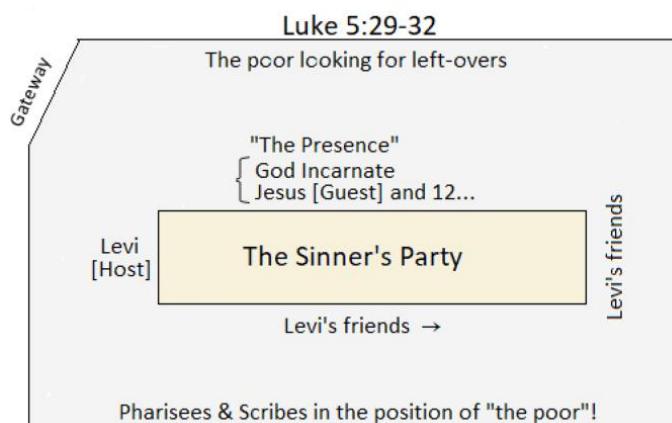
- Tax collectors were considered the lowest of public sinners because they worked for the occupying forces and so were seen as **TRAITORS** ...
- They taxed their own people – so were hated by all
- They were famous for extortion and doubling the taxes too!

* This tax collector took taxes from **THE FISHERMEN**, so it would be a great challenge to **them** to find **him** among the 12

e.g. What did it say about **them** (decent people!) to have one man known as a public sinner among their group travelling around the country?!

JESUS' ATTITUDE to MIXING SOCIAILY with SINNERS: The Party: 5: 29-32

Levi had lots of friends – all like himself. If Jesus had accepted **him** then the **others** were no different – so, the sinners invited **THE LORD** – the Forgiver of Sins – to come to their party.



- Remember that this would have been a big challenge to **The Twelve**. Levi was the Host at this table! **The Lord was his Guest**.
- The ubiquitous Scribes and Pharisees stand around – complaining! Why? To eat and drink at table was an expression of solidarity.

Jesus ate and drank with the Pharisees so, they do not **expect him** to come to such lowdown company as public sinners!

NB **In what capacity is Jesus present?** As 'one of the boys'? No!

- He is a doctor among the sick (5:31)
- He is the Saviour – of **SINNERS**, not **SAINTS**!

The Pharisees considered themselves saints and rejected Jesus altogether!!

Result: As a result of coming to this party Jesus – at the end of the Gospel – invites all repentant and converted sinners – to participate in his Messianic Banquet – **THE EUCHARIST** – where Jesus is not only **THE HOST**, but he is The Word, The Lamb for Sacrifice, The Bread of Life, the Priest, the Altar – our Living Food.

Church Level: The issue of table fellowship was great in the early church.
It wasn't easy to settle the Jewish/Gentile question.
Even Peter and Paul struggled with it: Gal 2:11-14

The Pharisees conclude that Jesus is no Messiah! Yet, if the Saviour is to save sinners he must go to where they can be found!

Discipline Among Disciples: 5:33-39 The Pharisees thought Jesus was too soft on his converts!

- they expected them to **FAST** and say **LONG** prayers (5:33)
- But the Doctor understood the sick and what they could take at the early stages of recovery.

But

- **Jesus revealed something new about himself here.**
This was the beginning of the Kingdom of God on Earth.
- **Jesus was the young Bridegroom.**
All his converts / disciples were the beginning of the preparation of His **BRIDE** – the Church.
- As the Bridegroom, he wanted them **TO REJOICE** at his Presence.
God is not a Kill-Joy, but the Author of Happiness.
- After his Death / Resurrection / Ascension would be the time for the Bride to fast / pray as you see in the Acts of the Apostles: (5:34-35)

THE NEWNESS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD: 3 Parables

- (1) New and old cloak: 5:36
- (2) New skins and old skins: 5:37
- (3) New wine and old wine: 5:38

- What Jesus is doing is completely **NEW**. It cannot be patched onto an outmoded system.
- The Mosaic Law has gone as far as it could – it cannot be stretched any further.
- The divine energy being released through Jesus and his Ministry would only be destroyed if forced into **a dying legalistic system**.
- The New Era of Grace needs a new setting to release God's Love into the Universe.

(NB) 5.39: Jesus knows that the Pharisees and other leaders who like the old wine (the old ways) for all kinds of reasons - won't want the New Wine;
People who are used to the old ways don't want to change. They may just leave it to others!

- This was good news to the sinners and outcasts – who would never be accepted by the legalism of the Pharisees.
- Pharisees were a separatist group who considered themselves "exclusive brethren".
- Jesus was offering the gospel to the poor of all Nations, all ages, all cultures, for all time.
- There was no compatibility between the Pharisees and Jesus in their thinking or teaching!
- **Jesus walks away** from the old wine and the worn out cloak because the vibrant Grace and Spirit of the New Wine required new expressions for its new life.

- To accept what Jesus was offering would require a radical change of heart – METANOIA
- “**a revolution in their thinking**” as Paul said in Eph. 4:23.

This type of change is only seen in the tax collectors, sinners, lepers and those in great spiritual need.

CHRIST IS THE ONLY WAY: 6:1-49

Jesus and the Authorities: 6:1-19

Luke chapter 6 brings a new development in Jesus' Ministry. As a faithful Jew Jesus had gone to the Synagogues with his message that the Scriptures were now fulfilled with his coming.

Jesus is the Emmanuel, God-with-us, Incarnate in our midst. He is the Messiah, the Holy One of God etc....

But the New Wine didn't fit into the old wine skins of Judaism (5:39), so the leadership of Israel – here in the person of the scribes and Pharisees – began to oppose Jesus seriously. They followed him and his apostles trying to trip him up:

First: The incident in the cornfield: 6:1-5

Second: Man with withered hand: 6:6-11. Vs. 11 says that “they were furious with Jesus and began to discuss how to deal with him”, which means that they decided to kill him!

Deut 23:25 reads “when you came into the standing grain of your neighbour, you may pluck the ears with your hand; but you shall not put a sickle to your neighbour’s standing grain.”

- The apostles were NOT doing something forbidden by the Law!!

The Pharisees were fanatical regarding rules for the Sabbath. They had made up 613 rules for the Sabbath alone.

They set themselves up as watchdogs to make sure everyone kept these laws even though most of them applied to priests only!

The Sabbath day was ‘holy’ – which means that it was set aside for God and for family only. It was a day off from worldly affairs. Cf. Ex 20:8-11; Deut 5:12-15

Work was forbidden – even cooking food! Cf. Jer. 17:21-23: “Bring no burden...”

Here Jesus is setting down the marker that Christians are free from the Pharisaic interpretations of the Sabbath.

He wants to show the fundamental purpose of the Law. It is his word that is authoritative for us (6:1-11).

The Sabbath conflict happens in two stages: a) 6:1-5 and b) 6:6-11.

- a) 6:1-5 deals with working on the Sabbath to obtain food
- b) 6: 6-11 deals with the question of doing good and saving life on the Sabbath
- c) Therefore, it focuses on Jesus' Lordship and its implications.



Therefore, Jesus responded to them on their own terms – as he had done in the Synagogue in Nazareth when he challenged the whole congregation.

The issue is that human life takes precedence over the Sabbath observance.

This unit compares Jesus with King David in 1 Sam 21:1-6 which was important in the Pharisees interpretation of the Law! Why? David was the Lord's Anointed one!

David went into the temple, took the 'showbread' – the bread offered to God – then **he took the loaves – ate the loaves – and then gave them to his disciples, his army...**

Here, Luke points us to the Eucharist later in Lk 20:19 when Jesus "takes, gives thanks, blesses and gives..."

Jesus is both son of David and his Lord (5:9,12), Son of God, Messiah, and King. Therefore, he is Lord (Master) of the Sabbath (6:5). This will be discussed in detail in Lk 20:41-44; (Lk 1:68-75)

Again, Jesus shows his mastery of God's Word and God's Will. **He is the Authoritative interpreter of God's Word / Will**

Foiled by Jesus' argument and infuriated by his claims, the Pharisees seek an occasion to accuse him.

MAN WITH WITHERED HAND: 6:6-11: The stage is set to trap Jesus

This is another case where Jesus showed his mastery of God's Word.

- The Scribes and Pharisees were **watching** Jesus to see if he would **CURE** a man on the Sabbath. Healing was considered a **FORBIDDEN** work!
- So, the man was "planted there" by the opponents of Jesus in order **to test** Him!!
- Jesus was teaching God's Word, but they were not listening to it.
- Jesus read their thoughts, because the opposition had not yet come out into the open. He was determined to **bring** it into the open. Cf. Lk 2:35
- Satan likes to work in the shadows pretending he is not there.
- Jesus wanted the truth out in the Light of God's Day so that the Holy Spirit could expose the evil and darkness that was hidden. Cf. John 3:19-21

Result: The poor man who **was** the 'plant' in the Congregation now becomes the Homily for the Saviour!

God's Word: Jesus demanded a response from his opponents.

Does the **Word of God teach** that **ON THE SABBATH DAY:**

- (1) you should do good or evil?
- (2) you should save life or destroy it?

(NB) The Word of God **never** permits us to do evil or to destroy life on **any** day.

(NB) The Sabbath is God's Day of Rest, but from eternity **God** has done good and given life on that day!
How?

- 1) He sustains the Universe in being
- 2) children are born, and people die every day of the week!

* To be **like** God is to do good and give life (physical, emotional and spiritual life).

GOD'S REST: God intended the man to rest his hands on the Sabbath so that he could take up his daily work refreshed the following day. He never intended the Sabbath to prolong a disability that prevented all work!

Jesus' action: Jesus, who had stretched out his own hand to heal a leper in 5:13, now commands the disabled Man to stretch out his hand.

 (NB) It was the authority of the Word of God that healed him

 (NB) But Jesus did no work. Work was defined as "carrying a weight a distance"

 * Speaking was allowed on the Sabbath Day!

 * Preaching and illustrating God's Word was also allowed!

 So Jesus beat them at their own game and showed them how poor their interpretation of Scripture was.

 (NB) Of course, it was well known that if one of their animals fell into a hole on the Sabbath Day that they would save it! (animal = money!)

 - it was also well known that they would NOT help a pregnant woman whose life was in danger (they could always get a new wife!) (Matthew 12:9-14) deals with this!

Result: vs 11 They were Furious at a man being healed!
 They intended using this man to bring Jesus down!

- They go off to look for a way "**of dealing with Jesus**"
- (NB) Jesus did good and gave life on the Sabbath, just as The Father does from all eternity.
- They plotted evil and wanted to destroy Jesus on the Sabbath!
- So, "**the secret thoughts of many hearts are revealed**" (Cf. 2:34-35)

JESUS BEGINS TO FORM THE NEW ISRAEL: 6:12-19

Introduction: Luke now presents the foundation of the New Israel:

- a) Whose leaders will be formed later in 8:1-56.
- b) And whose leaders will be sent out on mission later in 9:1-50

- 1) It opens with the election of the Twelve: 6:12-16
- 2) Then Jesus lays down the New Life for his followers: 6:17-49
- 3)
- 4) This is followed by a cure revealing the faith of the Gentiles: 7:1-10
- 5) Then Jesus raises a Jewish boy from the dead: 7:11-17
- 6)
- 7) Discussion on the relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist: 7:18-35
- 8) Finally, a unit showing the connection between Salvation faith and love.