

Title: The Merciful Lord of the Sabbath

Text: Luke 6:1-11

Date: October 12, 2025

Proverbs 3:4 tells us that if we hold fast to God and to his word, *"we will find favor and good success in the sight of God and of man."* So, if you have your copy of God's word with you this morning and I hope you do, please turn to Luke 6. We're going to be looking at verses 1-11 this morning, which is an important passage that weaves together two major themes that have been threaded throughout this gospel so far, the themes of authority and compassion.

The first and most obvious theme that we've been seeing consistently week in and week out since the beginning of this gospel is that of Jesus's authority. Jesus is the son of God, the promised Messiah, the king of the world. And this theme has been present in almost every passage of Luke's gospel, especially since the beginning of chapter 4, where we've seen that Jesus exercises his divine authority consistently and repeatedly over spiritual, physical, and moral realms. He commands demons to flee, illnesses to depart, sins to be forgiven, and his word is always obeyed. Jesus has divine authority.

But the second theme that we've started seeing rising to the forefront of this gospel is how Jesus uses that authority, and that is in mercy and compassion. Yes, Jesus is sovereign, but he is the saving sovereign of all, who exercises his saving power in mercy upon all those who humbly acknowledge their need for him. Jesus had mercy on Peter's mother-in-law. He had mercy on everyone in Capernaum who was ill. Jesus had mercy as he stretched out his hand and touched the leper. He had mercy as he forgave the paralyzed man of all of his sins and told him to jump up and rise on his feet and go out. He had mercy as he called Levi, the tax collector, to follow him, and he had mercy as he sat down and called all of Levi's friends to repentance in faith as well. So, Jesus has authority, but he has chosen to exercise it at this time, not in severe judgment, but in sovereign mercy to all who come to him humbly in faith.

And as we're going to see this morning, it is this mercy and compassion that set Jesus apart from the other spiritual leaders of his day. And I want you to think about this morning already at the very beginning of this message that it is this mercy and compassion that sets us as his followers apart as well. One of the most important characteristics of a believer of someone who is living under the saving authority of Jesus Christ is that they are marked by tender mercy. The Lord says in Hosea 6:6, *"I desire mercy and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings."* And as we're reminded by the prophet Micah in Micah 6:8, as we saw this morning, *"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?"* This is how the gospel glorifies God in our day.

You follow the doctrine of any other religion to its nth degree you will not find tender mercy at the heart of it, but you follow the gospel to its end and there you see the very heart of Christ, which is a heart of

mercy towards sinners. The passage before us today teaches us that those who are under the saving authority of Jesus Christ will both show mercy and love compassion, just as Jesus did. It is mercy and compassion that set Jesus apart and it is mercy and compassion that is to set us apart as well. We're going to see that mercy joined together with Christ's authority this morning in today's passage as we see Jesus's Sabbath authority declared in verses 1-5, followed by Jesus's Sabbath authority demonstrated in verses 6-11. So, we have a very simple outline this morning as we see Jesus's mercy play out through his Sabbath authority first declared and then demonstrated.

So, with that in mind, if you're able, please stand with me out of reverence and respect for the word of God as I read our passage before us today from Luke 6:1 on into verse 11. Our author, Dr. Luke, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, writes these words for us today,

Luke 6:1, "On a Sabbath, while he was going through the grainfields, his disciples plucked and ate some heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands. But some of the Pharisees said, 'Why are you doing what is not lawful to be done 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 priests eat, and also gave it to those with him?' And he said to them, 'The son of man is lord of the Sabbath.'"

"On another Sabbath, he entered the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there 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 to destroy it?' And after looking around at them all he said to him, 'Stretch out your hand.' And he did so, and his hand was restored. But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus."

This is the word of God whose mercy has come to us that we might live in the delight of his law.

Let's pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you so much for the opportunity this morning to center it on your word. We thank you for the reminder of that closing song. That there is a flaming torch that has been handed down through the generations and that has been handed to us this morning. Father, as we consider the glory of the gospel, we pray that you would preserve it in our midst as we preach the glory of Christ. And I pray, Father, that your word by your spirit would find free course in the hearts and minds of the people here today. That it would be deeply implanted, that it would save souls, and that it would sanctify us for heaven. Show us once more again afresh this morning, Father, the glory of our savior.

We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

You may be seated.

So, Luke weaves together the theme of Christ's authority and the theme of Christ's mercy here in this passage by providing for us an account of when Jesus' merciful Sabbath authority was declared. That's in verses 1-5 here of Luke 6. And our author, Luke, informs us here in chapter 6:1, that *"On a Sabbath, while he was going through the grainfields, his disciples plucked and ate some heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands."* Now this act, as we look at it first, might seem innocent enough. After all, eating some heads of grain from a field that you're walking through is perfectly permissible by Old Testament Mosaic law.

Deuteronomy 23:24-25 makes that gracious provision that if you were traveling and you became hungry on the way, you could pluck off some grain with your hands and eat it as long as you didn't bring a sickle and, you know, pillage the countryside as you're going on your journey by stealing from your neighbor. And so, the issue here is not what Jesus' disciples are doing. The issue is when they're doing it. Jesus is bringing something new to some old wine cloths here.

At the beginning of verse 1, as it states, all of this happens on what? The Sabbath. See, God tells the nation of Israel in Exodus 34:21, *"Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest."* Now, there were exceptions to this given in the Old Testament law, like performing acts of worship in the temple, or performing acts of mercy if your neighbor's cows are stuck in a ditch or something or performing acts of necessity to preserve or sustain life. But as a rule, you weren't supposed to do any ordinary type of provisional, profit-seeking work on the Sabbath. Isn't that a great idea? Don't work. Trust in God's provision for you and take a day off. Take the day off to worship God's glory with his people, and delight in God's gifts with thanksgiving. Focus for one day on restoring your spirit, relaxing your body, refreshing your relationships. Enjoy creation and what God has made. Go for a hike, go for a swim, ride your bike, if you had that in first century Israel. Just kidding. It was a basic command, right? Whatever you do, refresh yourself, and don't work.

This is why God's people were commanded not to work on the Sabbath day. It was to demonstrate their trust and their rest in God's continual, faithful provision for them. Unfortunately, by the time we come to Jesus' day, first century Judaism had warped that very simple command and added 39 further pharisaical restrictions to it. And what's interesting is that one simple instruction, out of one simple instruction, they make 39 restrictions. Even the Jews started to recognize by the time Jesus comes along that this is getting a little bit ridiculous. As the mission of the Jewish text of tradition states around this same time, the rules about the Sabbath are like mountains hanging by a hair, for the scripture is scanty, but our rules are many. Even though they understood, even they understood that they had hung a whole lot on something that the scriptures barely talk anything about. And what's interesting is that 5 of those 39 mountainous pharisaical Sabbath restrictions, including exclusions on travel, exclusions on reaping, threshing, winnowing, and preparing food.

And now, in one fell swoop, Jesus' disciples are not only traveling on the Sabbath by going through this grain field, but also according to the pharisaical restrictions, they had also reaped, threshed, winnowed by plucking some grains of heads and rubbing them together to eat. And beyond that, in the eyes of the Pharisees, they had prepared a meal on the Sabbath day by eating that grain. And so there you have it.

Traveling, reaping, threshing, winnowing, and preparing food, a five-fold violation of rabbinic Judaism all at once, in one fell swoop.

Well, anyway, what we find out in this passage is that the Pharisees freak out about this. Don't ask me how they knew that Jesus' disciples were doing this in the middle of the grain field. I mean, maybe there's something logical like they saw them still eating grain when they came to their destination, but I'd like to imagine the Pharisees hiding in the grain field, watching them, and popping up out of nowhere like they'd just been into Farmer Maggot's crops. But either way, what's clear is that these Pharisees had been keeping a close eye, a creepily close eye on Jesus and his disciples, so that the moment that they saw this, verse 2 says, *"But some of the Pharisees said, 'Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?'"* And I'm sure their faces just flushed with pride in that moment, as they knew that they had finally exposed Jesus and his followers as lawbreakers. Let's see them get out of this one. What you are doing is not lawful, they claim.

But I want to ask you this morning, to what law are these Pharisees referring? To the law of scripture? No. Rather, to the law of their own traditions, which they have exalted by this point, to the very same level as the clear words of scripture itself. Did the scriptures actually say anything about plucking grain and eating it and denouncing that? The answer is no. In fact, the law made provisions for it. And all that Exodus 20:8 and following says regarding the Sabbath is to worship the Lord, honor him, and set it apart as holy to him, right? Enjoy him in the day of freedom that he has given you and rest. That's all that the scripture said.

And yet here, the Pharisees are hyper fixated, not on the scriptures, but on their unique application of the scriptures and insisting that if you're to be faithful before God, your applications must look like theirs. The Pharisees were hyper fixated on the extra biblical outward forms of religion more than on what scripture actually says, which is what all religious sinners outside of Christ do to placate themselves before a holy God. They start focusing. They know, they feel guilt because of their sins. And rather than getting their guilt dealt with by approaching a merciful and compassionate God, they try to deal with their guilt by making themselves seem more holy and righteous than they are. They start focusing on outward external extra biblical standards like style, form, dress, deportment to distract themselves from the true condition of their heart before God.

Well, at least I'm not like other men, as Jesus is going to say later in Luke 18 is what these Pharisees think. And what would they say? Why I tithe twice a week. I give money to the poor. Or what sometimes you might hear, I wear these clothes. I listen to only this music. I eat or drink only these foods. I observe these days. Therefore, I am holy before God. And it never stops there, by the way. It always leads to, and why aren't you more like me? Because the standards no longer scripture, it's now what? These rules I've created. Why aren't you more like me? You need to wear these clothes. You need to listen to this music. You need to even drink these foods. You need to observe these days. And then you'll be holy. Friends, what does that have to do with true holiness and the true state of your heart before God? Absolutely nothing.

As J.C. Ryle once put it, it bears witness to a sad state of one's soul when they observe, and place things ordained by men as of greater importance than the things ordained by God. Friends beware of falling into that state of mind that the Pharisees are in this moment. Where the first and the only thing that you look at and are concerned about in the lives of others is their outward shadow of religion and not the inward substance of their heart before God. Are they repenting of their sins? Are they believing in Christ? Are they living holy lives of love for God and love for their neighbor? These are the things to which our attention ought to be directed and our concerns ought to be applied.

But here, you see the Pharisees doing the exact opposite. Rather than being concerned with following the simple pattern and priority of sound teaching as revealed in God's word, they leave the Bible behind and declare that their standards are the only faithful reflections of God's law to which everyone's consciences must be bound. While Jesus, ever the great advocate of his disciples, as his disciples are being accused of this, he steps right in to answer the objections of the Pharisees in verses 3-4 when he says this, *"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 priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him."* Now, the bread of the Presence, just so you know, was a collection of 12 unleavened loaves that were arranged in two neat rows of six on a golden table in the tabernacle. On each Sabbath, these loaves would be taken out from the previous week and new loaves for the coming week would be taken in. And this bread was ceremonially holy. According to Leviticus 24:5-9 it could only be eaten by priests, as Jesus says. But in 1 Samuel 21:1-6, we come to an account where David and his men, who are famished due to fleeing Saul, who's trying to kill him, they go to Ahimelech, the priest, and they plead with him for bread to eat. But there was no bread there at the tabernacle except for the bread of the Presence that had been removed from display. Once the priest determines that David and his men are ceremonially clean, he gives them the holy bread, and David and his men enjoy this hidden feast of the bread of the Presence in the tabernacle.

Now, why does Jesus bring this story up here? What's the point? Well, the point is this, showing mercy and compassion is far more important than observing any type of external ritual or ceremony. That's the point. See, David and his famished men ate the bread reserved only for the priests, and God never rebuked him for it. Ahimelech, the priest, understood that mercy and compassion towards someone who is starving is more important than any religious observance or ceremony. The Pharisees didn't get that at all. They were all about the external form and had lost sight of the heart of it all. That's why over in Matthew, Jesus says this in Matthew 12:7, *"If you had known what it means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would have not condemned the guiltless."* And so, Jesus shows these Pharisees if a priest of God could lawfully suspend a Sabbath regulation that is biblical in order to show mercy to David's starving men, then surely the Son of God can lawfully suspend a Sabbath regulation that is extra-biblical in order to show mercy to his hungry followers as well.

If a symbolic ceremonial law that God made could be overlooked for the sake of mercy and compassion, then surely for the sake of mercy and compassion, an extra-biblical restriction that man-made could be overlooked as well. As Jesus says in the parallel account in Mark 2:27, *"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."* Right? The Sabbath was actually intended as a day in which you do good, in

which you do good not only for yourself but for others as well. It was a day set aside for the public worship of God and the public good of others, especially those among the household of faith. And then after Jesus gives this logical argument from the greater to the lesser, he then says outright in verse 5, I think just to rile them up real good, *"he says to them, 'The Son of Man is,' what? 'lord of the Sabbath.'"* Now, I think Jesus just escalates the conflict here.

First, he confronts them with this title, the Son of Man. It was a title he's already used in the previous chapter. This was the messianic title drawn from Daniel 7:13, the title that conveyed his absolute divine authority and universal dominion. And so, Jesus says to those Pharisees, the ultimate interpreter of the law is not you, it is the Son of Man, the one who has divine authority. In fact, the Lord who ordained the Sabbath is the Son of Man. And by the way, the Pharisees knew exactly what play to authority Jesus was making here because back in chapter 5:24, if you remember, Jesus said outright that he was the Son of Man there with divine authority and then he proved it by causing that paralytic man to leap up fully healed.

And so, Jesus here is throwing down the gauntlet. I'm the Son of Man. I've just proved it, if you remember, in your presence by commanding the lame man to walk. You all saw it. I'm the one who clearly possesses divine authority. Therefore, it's not you who interprets and is in charge of the Sabbath. It's me, I am over the Sabbath. I am Lord of the Sabbath. And I say, Jesus says, enough of your unmerciful regulations. Enough of your burdensome extra biblical requirements. Enough of that. That has nothing to do with the truth of God's word. As Jesus says in Matthew 11:28, as he confronts the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, *"Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* Jesus doesn't pull any punches. This is his declaration of Sabbath authority. He's the bridegroom. Everything has changed. And it's not like Jesus is all bark and no bite here. Everything that he declares, he can do.

And so, after we see Jesus's Sabbath authority declared, we see next Jesus's merciful Sabbath authority demonstrated in verses 6-11. So, notice, verse 6 says, *"On another Sabbath,"* so this is describing another Sabbath event. *"On another Sabbath, he,"* that is Jesus, *"entered the synagogue and was teaching,"* as was his constant priority, the kingdom of God, as he's teaching, *"a man was there whose right hand was withered."* Now, that is withered and useless, Dr. Luke indicates, most likely because of some form of paralysis. Verse 7, *"And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him,"* and that word there means to examine closely.

So, they were watching him like a hawk to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath. Why? Is it because they wanted to see if he was the son of God so that they might believe in him? No. They wanted to see if Jesus would heal on the Sabbath so that they might find a reason to accuse him, literally to bring charges against him. So, the Pharisees were seeking to make a legal case against Jesus by collecting evidence against him. Now, again, there was no biblical restrictions against healing on the Sabbath, but the Pharisees had all those extra-biblical restrictions, and one of those, believe it or not, was not to heal someone on the Sabbath. They considered it a form of work.

So, the Pharisees want to see in this moment whether Jesus will heal on the Sabbath or not, because if he does, then they can accuse him as a Sabbath breaker and sentence him to death according to Exodus 31:14. And I just want you to think about the situation here for a moment, because I don't think we often appreciate the irony here. These Pharisees knew the power of God was on Jesus, did they not? They literally create a trap based on a presupposition that he is able to heal this man. That blows my mind.

You know what that shows? They knew exactly who Jesus was, and they still hated him. They knew in a very real sense, even if not a full sense, they knew in a very real sense that he was the divine Messiah, and yet all they want to do is indict him as a Sabbath breaker. Show us your divine power so that we can call you a blasphemer. And they try to lay a trap for Jesus that presupposes not only his power, but his mercy, that if he saw someone there in need, he would be moved to heal them. Well, these unmerciful, unbelieving Pharisees, they were about as lost as loss can be, trying to turn Jesus' own divine power and mercy against him. Rather than seeing someone in need and having their hearts drawn towards him, they wanted Jesus to show the same type of hatred towards that man with the withered hand as they were showing right then.

And so often I think a lot of Christians can fall into that same spirit as well, as we are surrounded by people who might not be dealing with withered hands, but withered souls. And rather than having our hearts move towards them in compassion, often our hearts are moved towards them in cruelty and judgment and self-righteous indignation. Well, Christ is not like this at all. He is a compassionate Savior. But these Pharisees hate him, truly as Jesus is going to say later on in John 15:25, *"They hated me without a cause."* But verse 8, it says, *"But he knew their thoughts."* He knew this was a setup. And you got to ask yourself, how does he know this? The answer is because he's God. That's how.

What an advantage, though their devious plan was invisible to everybody else there Jesus knew exactly what they were thinking and plotting. What they were thinking in secret, Christ will expose in the open. And we're going to see Jesus return to that same theme later in the book of Luke. And so, he stops his teaching, *"and he said to the man with the withered hand, 'Come and stand here.' And he rose and stood there."* So, Jesus takes this man with a withered hand and makes him stand center stage with his dried-up hand hanging useless at his side. I mean, Jesus has everyone's attention at this moment.

Verse 9, *"And Jesus said to them, 'I ask you, is it lawful,'"* you experts in the law, *"is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?"* Jesus is asking them a mercy question. And he flips the script on them by trapping them. Notice Jesus points out that there's no middle ground here, there's no third option. You're either actively doing someone good, or you are passively doing someone harm. You're either actively saving a life, or you're passively destroying it. There's no neutral ground when it comes to ministry. It's like a lifeguard who just stands there as a man is drowning in death in front of him. If that lifeguard is not actively trying to save that person's life, he is passively destroying it. By refusing to show compassion, you are, in fact, choosing to show cruelty. And this is just earth-shattering when you consider the widespread implications of this, at physical level and at a spiritual level.

Believer, when God brings someone across your path with a genuine physical need, you are either going to show compassion by doing something for them, or you're going to show cruelty by retreating from them. There's no middle ground, as Jesus shows. It's like what Jesus teaches later with the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:29-37. Jesus asked the question, who loved his neighbor? Was it the priest and the Levite who did nothing, or was it the Good Samaritan who did something? Right, it was the Samaritan. Those who did nothing showed cruelty. Those who did something showed compassion. There's no middle ground.

It's like what we saw just recently on Wednesday nights from James 2:15-16, *"If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to him, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving him the things needed for the body, what good is that?... For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy."* You are either actively doing someone good, or you're passively doing someone harm. And that doesn't apply just to physical matters. It applies to spiritual matters.

I want you to know that if there is a loved one that you know that has not trusted in Christ, and you have not shared the truth of Christ with them because you want them to love you, I want you to know you are hating them. There is no middle ground. You're either doing good or you're doing harm to those around you. So, brothers and sisters, let us make it our ambition to be of some eternal good in the lives of those around us. See, these Pharisees who showed no compassion to the paralyzed man, who showed no compassion to Levi and his crowd of sinners, who showed no compassion to the man with the withered hand, those Pharisees actually showed that they themselves were unredeemed and far removed from the saving mercy of God.

As 1 John 3:17 says, *"If anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, and yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?"* And again, 1 John 4:20, *"If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he's a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen."* Jesus is showing the Pharisees and us in this passage that when God brings someone in need across your path, their need is physical or their need is spiritual, we must show compassion to them or else we are showing cruelty. How convicting and what a reminder, what a reminder to do some spiritual good for those around us today and every day. Because if we're to be like Jesus, we must respond to the needs of those around us. We must not passively show cruelty, but actively show Christ and his compassion. And we know what Jesus teaches here is God's will because he receives God's full endorsement of the message.

Look at what Jesus says or what Jesus does in verse 10. It says, *"And after looking around at them all he said to him, 'Stretch out your hand.' And he did so, and his hand was restored."* Just like that, Jesus didn't do any incantation, he did no movements, he didn't even do a touch, right. Just the commanding word of Jesus to stretch out your hand and boom, his hand was healed. Infinite creative power exercised just like that. And that's all it took. And by the way, I want you to know that that's all it takes. By God's grace, stretching out your hand to Jesus and you will be saved. As scripture says, *"Come look to me all the ends of the earth and be saved.... Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved."* I'm sure there were gasps as the crowd saw the man reach out and begin flexing his limp fingers in amazement.

And I would think that the next verse should say, and the Pharisees and the scribes were cut to the heart and believed in Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. I mean, Jesus's divine power and compassion has just been combined right in front of their faces. And yet, verse 11 says this, and yet they were what? *"Filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus."* Jesus, Jesus's new wine couldn't be poured into their old wine skins. What I have is good, I'm looking for nothing else. And the other gospels tell us that starting at this moment, they began to plot on how to destroy Jesus.

Literally in the Greeks, it says they were filled with madness. That is, they were so angry, they lost their minds. They passed beyond the realm of rational thinking. They became like animals. And that is exactly what happens to all those who turn their back consistently on the glory of Christ. They are given up and darkened in their understanding. They are driven into a furious, unreasonable thoughtlessness because of their cruel unbelief, their cold religiosity, and their hidden sinful hypocrisy that had just been exposed. And yet Jesus gives them the truth anyway because he is a God of authority and compassion.

And in that moment, he shows the vast difference that exists between him and them. So, is there a difference in matters of mercy between those who are redeemed and those who are not? Yes, absolutely there is. As much of a difference as between the Pharisees and Jesus, as much as a difference as between old wine skins and new wine, where there is a true union with this Christ, there is always true mercy. It's no wonder that when you study history, you discover that some of the greatest voices for the abolition of slavery belonged to Christians, like William Wilberforce. It's no surprise that those who cared the most for the poor were Christians, like William Booth. It comes as no surprise that the honor of women finds its roots in the action of Christ and of Christianity itself. It comes as no surprise that even our current day, those who stand up for the unborn, are Christians.

It's because they're marked by something. They're marked by the compassion of Christ. True faith always has a merciful heart. True Christians who have experienced the mercy of Jesus are compelled to pass it on. They choose to do something in heartfelt compassion rather than doing nothing in heartless cruelty. When they see those in need, they see themselves. When they see those who are physically poor, they think about how they were spiritually poor, and they try to meet that need. When they see someone dead in their trespasses and sins in hatred of Christ, they recognize I too once hated him. And they don't keep their mouth shut. And they don't keep their hearts closed. They give out of the richness that they've received in Christ. This is the first characteristic that Jesus shows us in the Gospel of Luke is at the very heart of his followers, it's compassion.

Oh, brothers and sisters in our world today, where everyone is marked by hatred and cruelty and harshness, being marked by the tender mercy the reaching mercy of Jesus. As Jesus has already shown us, find those who do not know him, sit down across from them in love and call on them to repent and believe in Christ. Disciples who follow Jesus care about sinners and the hurt that sin brings. They come alongside them in compassion, and they point them away from their sins and towards Jesus who is gentle and merciful in heart.

We need to be those kinds of disciples in our day. We need to be the type of people who understand what Christ means when he says, *"I desire mercy and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."* We as believers must live under the authority not of our own set of rules and moral expectations, we must be those who are marked by living under the authority of our saving sovereign Jesus Christ, living beneath his words and in his mercy, compassionately calling sinners, not to external conformity, but to repentance. Just as Jesus in his great mercy called to us. May God give us grace to be these type of followers of Christ in our day for his glory.

This is the word of God from Luke 6:1-11, which I consider a great privilege to have been able to share with you today, which I now commit to your further study and your faithful obedience until Christ, the Lord of all compassion and power, returns for his own.

To that end, let's pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank you so much for reminding us once again this morning of the authority and compassion of Jesus. We thank you for this because it is in him that is our hope, in his authority and in his compassion. Father, we know that Jesus is Lord over all, that he is the one appointed to be the judge of the living and the dead, that one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to your honor and to your glory. He is the one who rules over all. And Father, we just rejoice that his authority is matched with his compassion, for he has given in his great mercy a day of salvation for sinners.

Father, I pray that if there's someone here today who has not trusted in Jesus, who has been trying to live according to their own rules, their own laws, their own righteousness, cast down that idol in their hearts and minds today, Father. Break their hearts over their sinfulness so that they might run to Jesus, the only righteous one, and find in him their salvation and forgiveness. And Father, I pray for the rest of us. Help us to understand what saved us. Help us to remember that. And help us to be people of the gospel, to seek first your kingdom and your righteousness in the relationships around us so that others might know the tender mercy of our God. Oh, Father, help us to be faithful in telling the truth and faithful in loving those who need to hear it. May you be honored, may your son be honored above all, in this way,

We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

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