



READ LUKE 6:1-11

Jesus was teaching on the Sabbath when he saw a man with a crippled hand. The religious leaders were watching Jesus to see if he'd heal the man, hoping to catch Jesus breaking the Sabbath law. Jesus knew what they were up to, and asked them what suited the Sabbath best: helping people, or leaving them helpless? Jesus healed the man, and the religious leaders fumed.

REMEMBER: Luke 6:9

What kind of action suits the Sabbath best?

MORE THOUGHTS

Read this article from theologian Rob Bell, particularly where it refers to seasons and time: relevantmagazine.com/god/deeper-walk/features/23640-why-advent

Better yet, listen to this \$2 download: marshill.org/shop/first-sunday-of-advent-the-moment-before-the-moment-rob-bell/

What do Bell's examples of hammers, snare drums, and refrigerator buzzing reveal about the Sabbath law? Is this a new way to look at periods of work and rest?

Does this give you a new lens through which to view "the law"? Is our God trying to make us comply with rules in order to test our obedience? Or is our God pointing to the natural rhythm that's built into creation, a rhythm that produces life? What is the difference? And what does that difference reveal about God?

NEXT WEEK: Luke 7:1-17

! SURPRISE

DAY 1: What is the Sabbath law? What is it for? Is the old tradition of not working on the Sabbath about complying with rules, or is it about something else entirely?

! SURPRISE

DAY 2: Do you think we've turned a gift from God – the Sabbath – into a burden? Have we done that to any other of God's gifts? Why?

♥ LOVE

DAY 3: Will God love and affirm you more if you follow the commandments than if you don't? Are the commandments a test to pass, an obstacle to overcome, a task to be completed? Or do they serve a different function? What is that?

! SURPRISE

DAY 4: Who enforces these rules? Is it someone's job to call out anyone not obeying the law or the moral code in the Bible? How does that work? Who has that authority? Whose interpretation of the law or the moral code is the right one? How do we know?

! SURPRISE

DAY 5: Are the religious leaders looking for a definitive black-and-white rulebook? Why? Does that make it easier to know who is living inside the law and who is not? Does that make it easier to indict others? What happens when living a Christ-centered life is not so clear-cut? What happens when there is a lot of gray area, and we have to make difficult decisions? Do we prefer certainty? Why?

➡ PROGRESS

DAY 6: Are there religious laws you need to break in order to love others? Does your personal experience with other people always match the code of conduct described in the Bible? Why does Jesus break religious law in order to help someone in need? Does that give us any insight into the heart of God?

! SURPRISE

DAY 7: Do you ever lose sight of God when you try to follow the law? Do the rules that religion imposes on us, that we impose on each other, keep us from seeing an inclusive, loving and grace-filled God? Do Christians use these rules as weapons with which to fight each other? Why?