

June 25, 2017

The Opposition Illustrated

Matthew 12:1-4

- Matthew presents six episodes that illustrate the types of opposition to the Mission of the Kingdom.

First Episode (*v. 1-8*)

- Jesus exposes the misapplication of the Sabbath by the Pharisees.
- Why did God command them to remember and keep the Sabbath? (**Ex. 20:8-10**). This and all the commands were given after God called them “My firstborn son” (**Ex. 4:22**).
- In keeping the Sabbath, they were acknowledging their dependence upon the provision and protection of God.

***Rom 12:1** ...a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which [was their] spiritual worship...*

- This Law was God’s grace means of fostering the joyful fellowship that He desired with His people. But the Pharisees ad turned it into a legal burden.

- In their misplaced zeal to obey the Law, the Pharisees had gone *beyond the Law*, adding their own regulations.

- Jesus cited two Old Testament Scriptures to reveal and refute their false teachings:
 - As God's anointed Messiah, Jesus rightly administered God's Law by explaining that He was greater than King David who was not judged for eating the Bread of the Presence (**1 Sam. 21:1-6**) which belong only to the priests (**Lev. 24:5-9**).

- In **verse 6-8**, Jesus explains God's original purpose in the 4th Commandment:
 - Jesus is greater than the Temple.

 - God's purpose was not man's sacrifice but the mercy that was the result of the sacrifice (**Hosea 6:6**).

- The Sabbath was given to deal with man's sin, by calling man to turn their focus away from themselves (repentance) to trust and obey God (**Rom. 12:1-2**), in order to *receive mercy* (**Heb. 4:16**) from God.

- As God rested from His work of creation (**Gen. 2:2**), so also Jesus has rested from all His work of re-creation:

Heb 1:3 *After making purification for sins, He sat down [rested] at the right hand of the Majesty on High... 10:12 ...when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, He sat down at the Right Hand of God...*

- God calls us to enter his rest:

Heb 4:10 ...whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from His...

Matt. 11:28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you [My] rest...

- Jesus can promise this rest because He has won the battle over our souls in Gethsemane and paid the price at the cross. Jesus has become our Sabbath Rest.
- This command extends “throughout their generations” (**Ex. 31:16**).

Second Episode (v. 9-14)

- Jesus answers the Pharisees’ question about what is lawful to do on the Sabbath by healing a man with a withered hand.
- Jesus answered their question with His own: Would they do the work of rescuing a sheep from a pit on the Sabbath which *their* law allowed?
- Jesus was revealing their inconsistency.
- Jesus showed that God’s purpose for the Sabbath was to bless His people.