

A Consequence of Wrong Intentions

International Bible Lesson

Luke 6:1-11

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“Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?” (Luke 6:9—KJV).

“Then Jesus said to them, ‘I ask you, is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to destroy it?’” (Luke 6:9—NRSV).

Some people go to church for the wrong reasons. When some of the scribes and Pharisees went to the synagogue on the Sabbath to hear and see Jesus, they went looking for things they could condemn and use against Him. Jesus knew why they came; they had not come to learn more truth or to worship God. He knew He could not teach them anything; they had closed their hearts and minds to Him. Jesus also knew that a man with a withered hand who needed healing had come to the synagogue, but he had not asked Jesus to do anything to help him. Jesus knew that if He helped this man the religious leadership would try to use His good deed against Him. Because they should have come to the synagogue to praise God, Jesus could have lectured those whose intentions were wrong. He could have taught, “It is lawful to do good and save life every day of the week. It is unlawful to do harm and destroy life any day of the week. When you plan to harm me, especially on the Sabbath, you are breaking the law of God.” Rather than say this, Jesus asked a commonsense question that any reasonable person would answer by saying, “It is always lawful to do good and save lives.” After these religious leaders refused to answer Him, Jesus healed the man with four simple words: “Stretch out your hand.” Those who were there for the right reasons witnessed the power of Almighty God; however, the religious leadership left with angry hearts.

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Thinking Further

1. Whose law did Jesus’ disciples break on the Sabbath?
2. What are some of the bad things that can happen when people make religious laws for people to obey that are not according to God’s laws?
3. How did Jesus use the Bible when He replied to the Pharisees criticism of His disciples?
4. How did Jesus use common sense or logical reasoning when the Pharisees tried to find ways to accuse Him of violating their religious laws and traditions?
5. In what way did the Pharisees break God’s law after Jesus healed the man with the withered hand?