

Luke 6:1–49 – Radical Obedience and the Foundation of a True Disciple

Picking Grain on the Sabbath (vv. 1–5)

One Sabbath—specifically the second Sabbath after the first—Jesus and His disciples were walking through grainfields. As they walked, the disciples picked heads of grain, rubbed them between their hands to remove the husks, and ate them.

The Pharisees, ever watchful and quick to judge, pounced: “Why are you doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?”

Jesus responded with a history lesson and a principle: “Haven’t you read what David did when he and his men were hungry? He went into the house of God, took the showbread—lawfully reserved for the priests—and gave some to his men.” Then He added something shocking: “The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”

Personal Application: Jesus wasn’t just defending the disciples—He was confronting a legalistic mindset that put tradition over human need. Legalism crushes compassion. Jesus, our Sabbath rest (Hebrew 4:9), reminds us that meeting the needs of people matters more than rigid rule-keeping.

Healing on the Sabbath (vv. 6–11)

On another Sabbath, Jesus entered the synagogue and began to teach. A man with a withered right hand was there. The Pharisees watched carefully—not to learn, but to accuse. Would Jesus heal on the Sabbath?

Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said to the man, “Stand here.” Then He turned to the crowd and asked, *“Is it lawful to do good or to do evil on the Sabbath? To save life or destroy it?”*

No one answered.

Then Jesus said, “Stretch out your hand.” As the man obeyed, his hand was completely restored.

The religious leaders, instead of rejoicing, were filled with rage. They began plotting what to do with Jesus.

Personal Application: The man could have argued—“I can’t stretch it out; it’s withered!” But instead, he obeyed, and in that act of obedience, he received the power to do what he couldn’t do before. That’s the secret to Christian obedience: the power to obey comes as we step out in faith.

Jesus Chooses the Twelve (vv. 12–16)

Before choosing the twelve apostles, Jesus spent the entire night in prayer. The next morning, He called His disciples and chose twelve, naming them apostles.

Personal Application: Before making big decisions, Jesus prayed. If the Son of God depended on prayer, how much more should we? Every life-changing choice should be preceded by seeking the Father.

Healing the Multitudes (vv. 17–19)

Jesus came down and stood on a level place with His disciples and a large crowd from all over Judea, Jerusalem, and the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. They came to hear Him and to be healed. Power went out from Him, and He healed them all.

Note: Luke, a doctor, highlights that virtue—spiritual power—was flowing from Jesus, especially after a night in prayer. Prayer refueled Him for ministry. It does the same for us.

The Beatitudes and Woes (vv. 20–26)

Jesus then turned to His disciples and said:

- “Blessed are the poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.
- Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled.
- Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.
- Blessed are you when people hate, exclude, insult, and slander you because of Me. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy—for your reward is great in heaven. That’s how they treated the prophets.”

Then come the woes:

- “Woe to you who are rich—you’ve received your comfort.
- Woe to you who are full—you will hunger.
- Woe to you who laugh now—you will mourn and weep.
- Woe when everyone speaks well of you—that’s how they treated false prophets.”

Personal Application: Jesus flips the world's values upside down. What the world prizes—wealth, popularity, comfort—Jesus warns against. Faithfulness to Christ may bring suffering now, but great reward later. Will we live for now—or for eternity?

Love Your Enemies (vv. 27–36)

Jesus then gave some of the most radical commands in all of Scripture:

- “Love your enemies.
- Do good to those who hate you.
- Bless those who curse you.
- Pray for those who mistreat you.
- If someone strikes you on one cheek, offer the other.
- If they take your cloak, give your tunic too.
- Give to everyone who asks.
- Do to others as you want them to do to you.”

Personal Application: These commands are humanly impossible. That's the point. They drive us to depend on the Holy Spirit. As we will (determine and desire) to obey, God gives the strength to obey. He's not looking for perfect works—He's looking for willingness.

Judgment and Generosity (vv. 37–38)

- “Judge not, and you won’t be judged.
- Condemn not, and you won’t be condemned.
- Forgive, and you will be forgiven.
- Give, and it will be given to you—good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over.”

Spiritual Law: Whatever you sow, you’ll reap—whether it’s criticism or generosity, condemnation or mercy.

Blind Leading the Blind (vv. 39–42)

- “Can the blind lead the blind? Won’t they both fall into a ditch?
- A disciple is not above his teacher—but will be like him.
- Why do you see the speck in your brother’s eye, but ignore the plank in your own?
- First remove the plank from your eye, then help your brother.”

Personal Application: Self-examination must come before correction. Jesus isn’t saying never confront—He’s saying be humble, honest, and clean yourself up first. Hypocrisy undercuts authority.

Fruit and the Heart (vv. 43–45)

- “A good tree doesn’t bear bad fruit, nor a bad tree good fruit.
- Every tree is known by its fruit.
- A good person brings good out of their heart, but the evil person brings forth evil—for out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.”

Check Your Words: What you talk about reveals what fills your heart. Are your conversations full of gossip, fear, lust, or anger? Or do they reflect faith, love, truth, and purity?

The Wise and Foolish Builders (vv. 46–49)

Jesus closes with a piercing question:

“Why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I say?”

Then He gives a parable:

- The one who hears and obeys is like a man who dug deep and built on rock. When the flood came, the house stood firm.
- But the one who hears and does not obey is like a man who built on sand—no foundation. When the storm came, the house collapsed—and its fall was great.

Personal Application: Storms come to everyone. What you build your life on determines whether you stand or fall. Emotional highs, religion, or surface-level Christianity won't sustain you in the storm. Only deep obedience to Jesus can.

Prayer:

Lord, make us more than hearers—make us doers of Your Word. When we face Your commands that seem impossible, give us the courage to say, “I’m willing.” And in that moment, supply all we need to obey. Help us dig deep, build strong, and live lives that glorify You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.