

THE BIG IDEA: We'll either be filled with criticism of others or compassion for others.

The Take-Off

Have you ever googled odd laws? These are usually laws that are still on the books legally but have never been removed and therefore are rarely (if ever) even enforced.

Here are a few:

- In Texas, it's against the law for anyone to have a pair of pliers in his or her possession.
- In Miami, it is forbidden to imitate an animal.
- In New York, it is against the law for a blind person to drive an automobile.
- In Memphis, Tennessee, a woman is not to drive a car unless a man warns approaching motorists or pedestrians by walking in front of the car that is being driven.
- In Florida, it is against the law to put livestock on a school bus.
- In Virginia, chickens cannot lay eggs before 8:00 a.m., and must be done before 4:00 p.m.
- In NC, it's illegal to sing off key, for dogs and cats to fight, and for a rabbit to race down the street.

Dumb laws, and while all of them are real, can you imagine the outcry if law enforcement decided to start arresting and prosecuting people for breaking them?

Especially that one about warning people of an approaching woman driver! There's no husband dumb enough to break that one!

And yet, in our passage today we're going to see the continued clash between the religious leaders and Jesus.

Let me remind you that is a clash of old vs. new, or power vs. authority

We saw in chapter 5 that Jesus had already answered the question of who he was - he was God

We've seen throughout Luke already that Jesus has no trouble picking strategic times to challenge people's gods, and here in Luke 6, Jesus picks the Sabbath as the issue to highlight the struggle

Now, we're not going to go into it, but the Sabbath is real, and it used to be on Saturday. Then, after the resurrection, the church made a move to Sunday. It's still an issue today, but the fact that people make it an issue actually helps to prove what we're going to talk about today because Colossians 2:16 says not to make it an issue.

So what we're going to see in these 11 verses is a very simple statement, and it's this week's Big Idea: **We'll either be filled with criticism of others or compassion for others.**

Let's read the account, and then we're going to ask and answer 2 questions.

1. What fills us with criticism? Legalism

- a. I do a lot of posting on social media about religion, and rarely in a positive way
- b. Legalism and religion - bad religion - go hand in hand
- c. There is a good religion - a pure religion - and James 1:27 describes it
- d. But the bad religion that legalism grows out of is what happens when men and women put themselves in charge of trying to make people right
- e. There's a quote on your note sheets from Tullian Tchividjian (pronounced cha-vi-jin) that sums up legalism: earning God's love through change instead of allowing God's love to change us.
- f. This kind of religion - legalism - is marked by rules: 613 laws that by the time of Jesus had produced a heartless, cold and arrogant brand of religion.
- g. In his book, Fan the Flame, Joseph Stowell found 10 tragic flaws with the system. Here are just 4 of them: accountability to God was replaced by accountability to men, it created a judgmental spirit, it was strictly external, and it was rejected by Christ.
- h. The end result of legalism is that we are filled with criticism of others and even of Jesus.
- i. Luke 6:1-5
 - They followed Jesus and the disciples to catch them doing something wrong
 - They accused them of something that they knew David had done (they would have read the account)
 - They were openly critical of others
 - Jesus did a mic drop when he said he was Lord of the Sabbath
- j. That didn't matter, because on another Sabbath they were looking for a way to accuse him
- k. I'm sure no one has ever gone to church looking to find something to criticize!
- l. Notice verse 7 - the vile end result of legalism and criticism: they hoped Jesus would heal so they could attack him! They wanted to use a good thing in a bad way!

2. What fills us with compassion? The Lordship of Jesus

- a. We know that we'll either be filled with criticism or compassion, so if legalism fills us with criticism, then what fills us with compassion?
- b. The Lordship of Jesus.
- c. We won't lord it over others when Jesus is Lord over us.
- d. We can't claim to be Christians and not actually BE like Jesus - he was full of compassion.
 - Matthew 9:36; 14:14; 15:22; 20:34
 - Mark 6:34; 8:2
 - Luke 7:13
 - Hebrews 4:15
- e. Even here in verse 9 we see the compassion Jesus had for this man with a shriveled hand
- f. Matthew 20:25-28 shows how our servant leadership is in contrast to the culture's selfish leadership

The Landing

The question is, what are you full of?

We'll either be filled with criticism of others or compassion for others.

Just to make sure we understand how polar opposite those 2 are, let me highlight one differences.

- Compassion makes a way for people; criticism gets in the way of people
- Compassion opens arms; criticism crosses arms.
- Compassion looks past mistakes; criticism looks for mistakes.
- Compassion lifts up; criticism weighs down.
- Compassion helps with issues; criticism creates issues.
- Compassion sees the person; criticism sees the problem.

You can only be full of one, and I think it's clear which one is the most effective.

But the only way to be full of compassion for others is by allowing Jesus to be the Lord of you!

That means your rules, your preferences, your desires get laid at his feet.

The Pharisees learned that Jesus was Lord of the Sabbath, and we need to learn that Jesus is Lord of our preferences, as well.

It's ok to have them; it's not ok to worship them (which is what we do when we make them more important than Jesus) I'm challenging this house to make Jesus Lord, and as a result, to be a tribe full of compassion for others more than criticism of others.

Let's pray.