

Introduction

Luke 9:51 is the foundation for our series in these weeks of preparation. As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. We have the same purpose Jesus had - building God's Kingdom one life at a time. In preparation for Easter Sunday, we are walking with Jesus to Jerusalem, as recorded in the gospel of Luke.

Jesus and Pharisees 01

Luke 6:1-5 NIV

One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and his disciples began to pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands and eat the kernels. Some of the Pharisees asked, "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" Jesus answered them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God, and taking the consecrated bread, he ate what is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." Then Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

Jesus and Pharisees 02

Luke 6:6-11 NIV

On another Sabbath he went into the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was shriveled. The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal on the Sabbath. But Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Get up and stand in front of everyone." So he got up and stood there. Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?" He looked around at them all, and then said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was completely restored. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law were furious and began to discuss with one another what they might do to Jesus.

Jesus and Pharisees 03

Luke 11:53-54 NIV

When Jesus went outside, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose him fiercely and to besiege him with questions, waiting to catch him in something he might say.

Jesus and Pharisees 04

Luke 13:10-17 NIV

On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, and a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, "Woman, you are set free from your infirmity." Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God. Indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, the synagogue leader said to the people, "There are six days for work. So come and be healed on those days, not on the Sabbath." The Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Doesn't each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?" When he said this, all his opponents were humiliated, but the people were delighted with all the wonderful things he was doing.

Jesus and Pharisees 05

Luke 13:10-17 NIV

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Jesus and Pharisees 06

Luke 14:1-6 NIV

One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched. There in front of him was a man suffering from abnormal swelling of his body. Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in the law, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?" But they remained silent. So taking hold of the man, he healed him and sent him on his way. Then he asked them, "If one of you has a child or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath day, will you not immediately pull it out?" And they had nothing to say.

More

Luke 14:7-14 NLT

When Jesus noticed that all who had come to the dinner were trying to sit in the seats of honor near the head of the table, he gave them this advice: "When you are invited to a wedding feast, don't sit in the seat of honor. What if someone who is more distinguished than you has also been invited? The host will come and say, 'Give this person your seat.' Then you will be embarrassed, and you will have to take whatever seat is left at the foot of the table! "Instead, take the lowest place at the foot of the table. Then when your host sees you, he will come and say, 'Friend, we have a better place for you!' Then you will be honored in front of all the other guests. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." Then he turned to his host. "When you put on a luncheon or a banquet," he said, "don't invite your friends, brothers, relatives, and rich neighbors. For they will invite you back, and that will be your only reward. Instead, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. Then at the resurrection of the righteous, God will reward you for inviting those who could not repay you."

Dreams, Plans and Expectations

Luke 14:15-27 NLT

Hearing this, a man sitting at the table with Jesus exclaimed, "What a blessing it will be to attend a banquet in the Kingdom of God!" Jesus replied with this story: "A man prepared a great feast and sent out many invitations. When the banquet was ready, he sent his servant to tell the guests, 'Come, the banquet is ready.' But they all began making excuses. One said, 'I have just bought a field and must inspect it. Please excuse me.' Another said, 'I have just bought five pairs of oxen, and I want to try

them out. Please excuse me.' Another said, 'I now have a wife, so I can't come.' "The servant returned and told his master what they had said. His master was furious and said, 'Go quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and invite the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.' After the servant had done this, he reported, 'There is still room for more.' So his master said, 'Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full. For none of those I first invited will get even the smallest taste of my banquet.'" A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, "If you want to be my disciple, you must hate everyone else by comparison—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple.

WHY SPEND TIME WITH YOUR ENEMIES, JESUS?

"I'm inviting them to the banquet too!"

Sermon in a Sentence:

Put down your dreams, plans and expectations to pick up Jesus' mission.

How does this apply to us?

Like the Pharisees, we have expectations

Like the guests at this dinner, we have plans Like the Pharisee hosting this dinner, we have dreams

Like the guest focused on a heavenly banquet we expect to be blessed

Like the crowds following Jesus many of us want his blessings at no cost

JESUS, WHY DO YOU HANG OUT WITH PEOPLE LIKE US?

"I'm still calling you to pay the high cost of following me. Whatever dreams, plans and expectations you may have, put them down and pick up my mission. Fill my house."

The decision is ours now.

Like the "friends" who said they'd come to the party but later made excuses, too many Christians allow their dreams, plans and expectations to keep them from following Jesus unconditionally. He tells us to put down our dreams, plans and expectations in order to pick up his mission of filling God's house with everyone who will come. Take a few moments now to think about how picking up Jesus' mission will change your life. Will you follow Jesus? With you pick up his mission now?