

Pharisee Question 3: Jesus, can you do good things in the wrong way?

Matthew 12:9-13

Leaving there, He went into their synagogue. A man was there whose hand was withered. And they asked Jesus, "Is it lawful and permissible to heal on the Sabbath?" They asked this so that they might accuse Him and bring charges into court.

But He said to them, "What man is there among you who, if he has only one sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable then is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful and permissible to do good on the Sabbath."

Then He said to the man, "Reach out your hand!" The man reached out and it was restored, as normal and healthy as the other. But the Pharisees went out and conspired against Him, discussing how they could destroy Him.

Jesus asks them, *What's most important to you? If you lost a sheep, wouldn't you save it?*

Basic principles in this episode:

- Jesus attention – was on others, not Himself
- Man is worth far more than a sheep. Jesus is saying the Pharisee would save sheep because it benefits yourself, but not a man, solely for their religious traditions
- God's timing is everything! He delights in the ***Let me show you*** times!

Pharisee Question 4: Jesus, can you show us a sign?

Matthew 12:38-42

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign (attesting miracle) from You proving that You are what You claim to be." But He replied and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation that is morally unfaithful to God craves and demands a miraculous sign; but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah; for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will stand up as witnesses at the judgment against this generation, and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and now, something greater than Jonah is here. The Queen of the South (Sheba) will stand up as a witness at the judgment against this generation, and will condemn it because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon; and now, something greater than Solomon is here.

Matthew 16:1-12

Now the Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Jesus to get something to use against Him, they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven which would support His divine authority. But He replied to them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and has a threatening look.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but cannot interpret the signs of the times? An evil and morally unfaithful generation craves a miraculous sign; but no sign will be given to it, except the sign of the prophet Jonah." Then He left them and went away.

When the disciples reached the other side of the sea, they realized that they had forgotten to bring bread. Jesus said to them, "Watch out and be on your guard against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." They began to discuss this among themselves, saying, "He said that because we did not bring bread." But Jesus, aware of this, said, "You men of little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves that you have no bread?"

Do you still not understand or remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you picked up? Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many large baskets you picked up? How is it that you fail to understand that I was not talking to you about bread? But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the false teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Gideon and the Midianites (Judges 6:12-...)

The Angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, "The Lord is with you, O brave man." But Gideon said to him, "Please my lord, if the Lord is with us, then why has all this happened to us? And where are all His wondrous works which our fathers told us about when they said, 'Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?' But now the Lord has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian."

The Lord turned to him and said, "Go in this strength of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?" But Gideon said to Him, "Please Lord, how am I to rescue Israel? Behold, my family is the least significant in Manasseh, and I am the

youngest and smallest in my father's house." The Lord answered him, "I will certainly be with you, and you will strike down the Midianites as if they were only one man."

Gideon replied to Him, "If I have found any favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who speaks with me. Please do not depart from here until I come back to You, and bring my offering and place it before You." And He said, "I will wait until you return."

Gideon prepares a sacrifice that the Lord consumes with fire (19-24).

Gideon destroys the Baal altar and Asherah Pole and rebuilds God's altar (25-27)

Judges 6:30-

Then the men of the city said to Joash, "Bring out your son, so that he may be executed, because he has torn down the altar of Baal and cut down the Asherah which was beside it."

But Joash said to all who stood against him, "Will you plead for Baal? Will you save him? Whoever pleads for Baal shall be put to death while it is still morning. If Baal is a god, let him defend himself, because someone has torn down his altar."

Basic principles in this episode:

- Signs come to those who trust.
- God's lessons are revealed – at the right time – His timing!
- When God reveals Himself, He is inviting you into His plan.
- Trust in His plan is always difficult – but encourages others.
- God shapes you into His image – developmentally – progress, advance, expand, mature

Ephesians 4:12-32

Why is it that he gives us these special abilities to do certain things best? It is that God's people will be equipped to do better work for him, building up the Church, the body of Christ, to a position of strength and maturity; until finally we all believe alike about our salvation and about our Savior, God's Son, and all become full-grown in the Lord – yes, to the point of being filled full with Christ.

¹⁴ Then we will no longer be like children, forever changing our minds about what we believe because someone has told us something different or has cleverly lied to us and made the lie sound like the truth. Instead, we will lovingly follow the truth at all times – speaking truly, dealing truly, living truly – and so become more and more in every way like Christ who is the Head of his body, the Church. Under his direction, the whole body is fitted together perfectly, and each part in its own special way helps the other parts, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

¹⁷⁻¹⁸ Let me say this, then, speaking for the Lord: Live no longer as the unsaved do, for they are blinded and confused. Their closed hearts are full of darkness; they are far away from the life of God because they have shut their minds against him, and they cannot understand his ways.

They don't care anymore about right and wrong and have given themselves over to impure ways. They stop at nothing, being driven by their evil minds and reckless lusts.

²⁰ But that isn't the way Christ taught you! If you have really heard his voice and learned from him the truths concerning himself, then throw off your old evil nature – the old you that was a partner in your evil ways—rotten through and through, full of lust and shame.

²³ Now your attitudes and thoughts must all be constantly changing for the better. Yes, you must be a new and different person, holy and good. Clothe yourself with this new nature. Stop lying to each other; tell the truth, for we are parts of each other and when we lie to each other we are hurting ourselves. If you are angry, don't sin by nursing your grudge. Don't let the sun go down with you still angry – get over it quickly; for when you are angry, you give a mighty foothold to the devil.

²⁸ If anyone is stealing he must stop it and begin using those hands of his for honest work so he can give to others in need. Don't use bad language. Say only what is good and helpful to those you are talking to, and what will give them a blessing. Don't cause the Holy Spirit sorrow by the way you live. Remember, he is the one who marks you to be present on that day when salvation from sin will be complete.

³¹ Stop being mean, bad-tempered, and angry. Quarreling, harsh words, and dislike of others should have no place in your lives. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God has forgiven you because you belong to Christ.