

## ***Bookends of the Gospels: Matthew 12 and John 9***

### *Matthews bookend*

In the chapter 12 of Matthew, it opens in verse 2 with the Pharisee religious rulers seeing Jesus pick heads of grain. The Law of Moses states that the poor could pick left over grain in a field. The law of Moses also states that you cannot work on a Sabbath day of rest. The religious rulers could see the law. Yet, they could not see the hungry. Matthew uses this whole chapter to open our eyes. We see hungry people and we see laws. There is a fine line between what seems right and what is right.

It's not that the Pharisees were wrong. God gave us laws so that we would protect others and ourselves. I get it. yet, Jesus went deeper into the heart of the law. They were made to protect us not rule us. The Pharisees where using the law the wrong way. This is all about blindness. It's equally all about the weight of judgement. We see something and we judge it. Is it good or bad? Is it right or wrong? Should I have it or not. We judge everything with our eyes.

The Sabbath rest day is very good. We all need rest from work. Yet, on a rest day, things do happen. A pipe bursts or a homeless man passes us by. Is it a rest day or a see more clearly day? I have fasted before. We abstain from food because God asks us to fast now and then. Why? It's the same as rest. When we fast, we tend to think. We tend to see our lives more clearly than when were busy. It's not about fasting. It's about seeing. Matthew 12 has a lot of story and words. Yet, I feel it's about seeing clearly.

Look at this chapter 12 of Matthew. We see grain, people picking, miracles, hurting people, and family. We don't see the law, Jesus as God, the Spirit, words, signs, and the intent of Gods plan. Yet, Jesus sees the reverse. He believes in the law. He honors the Spirit. He heals blind men. There are good words and clean houses. He sees all people as his family. Jesus saw beyond what we see.

### **What's it all mean?**

John 9 tells the story of a blind man. He was always blind. Jesus comes by and heals him. The religious rulers see the man and his sight. Yet, they can't see the benefit, miracle, or anything else that made this man better. They saw Jesus as an enemy and nothing more. Matthew 12 shows us that we see what we want to see. We will go beyond our laws to make the law all powerful. What would we do to make sure it is as it should be?

If Jesus heals someone on the rest day. Was he working? Did he break the law? In helping the men, should he have waited a day? Matthew 12:35 says *"The good person brings good things out of a good treasure, and the evil person brings evil things out of an evil treasure."* Picture your treasure as your heart. What do you covet? Matthew 12 is asking us that question. How far will we go to protect our desire? Will we lose sight of the things that matter most? Next week John 9 will answer that question. These are two great bookends of the gospels.