

Episode 6: Unlawful

Well, the two least likely disciples to work together have been sent on a rescue mission to find Mary! Matthew and Simon are searching the town of Jericho for Mary so they can bring her back to Jesus. Meanwhile, Mary has reverted back to her former life and is drinking and gambling in the local bar. Luckily, Matthew and Simon stumble upon Mary as they are arguing about where to find her. They cheer Mary up by pointing out the difference she has made following Jesus. She is helping Matthew learn about the Torah, Ramah how to read and she had helped the paralytic man get lowered through the roof. Encouragement when we are feeling down and distant from God is so important. Do you know someone who is struggling? Is there something you can do to help encourage them?

It was so easy for Mary to fall back into her old life. How easy is it for you to go back to our old sin? In order to follow Jesus we have to consistently, every day choose him. Have you ever found yourself backsliding? Going back to old sin? What can you do to choose Jesus daily?

Mary talked about how she felt broken and ashamed. But when she went back to the camp with Jesus and the disciples everyone was happy to see her. The women ran up to greet her, and Jesus welcomed her back. If you have ever turned back to sin, know Jesus will forgive you. Jesus wants your heart and knows that as humans we are not perfect and sin. But Jesus is the only way and going back to him is the most important thing.

Everyone is upset at the camp by the time Mary, Matthew and Simon get back because Philip returns with word that John the Baptist was arrested. Not only is everyone upset about John, but they are also hungry as they have run out of food. Jesus decides to take the disciples into a small-town synagogue. When Jesus enters the synagogue, he notices a man with a withered hand. Read the scripture below and underline the words of Jesus.

- Jesus heals the man with the shriveled hand.
 - **Mark 3:1-6 (ESV)** – ¹ Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. ² And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. ³ And he said to the man with the withered hand, “Come here.” ⁴ And he said to them, “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?” But they were silent. ⁵ And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. ⁶ The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

The Pharisees are getting mad because Jesus broke a Jewish law of doing work on the Sabbath. It makes me think how short-sided their thinking is. They are only focused on the breaking of the law and not the whole picture. This man's whole life is being changed because Jesus healed him. It doesn't matter that he healed him on the Sabbath, the big picture is that the healing occurred. How often do we get so caught up in our plans and our to-do list and schedule that we don't allow interruptions and change to happen. Have you had an experience where you were more focused on the rules, your schedule, your to-do list and missed the big picture of God working? Reflect below.

Well, when you're on a rule-breaking streak you might as well continue. Simon wasn't thinking and grabbed some grain and ate it because he was so hungry. All the disciples stop and look at him in astonishment. Simon realizes what he did, spits out the grain and immediately apologizes. It is against the Jewish rules to reap and harvest grain on the Sabbath. But Jesus, knowing everyone was very hungry, gave his approval for the disciples to eat the grain. However, like déjà vu, the Jewish leaders come up and yell at Jesus and disciples for breaking the rules again. Read below and circle the king Jesus references in his response to the Pharisees.

- **Matthew 12:1-3 (ESV)** – ¹ At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and to eat. ² But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath." ³ He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: ⁴ how he entered the house of God, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests?"

Jesus is trying to show the Pharisees how their laws are oppressing the people, they are following the law, but missing the heart of the people and needs of the Jews. Jesus points out how when in dire situations, or miraculous times, it is okay to break the man-made laws. David and his men were starving as they were being hunted by Saul as you see in

Bible Reference

The episode starts out with an Old Testament reference about David in the year 1008 BC in the town of Nob.

1 Samuel 21:1-6 (ESV) – ¹ Then David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech came to meet David, trembling, and said to him, "Why are you alone, and no one with you?" ² And David said to Ahimelech the priest, "The king has charged me with a matter and said to me, 'Let no one know anything of the matter about which I send you, and with which I have charged you.' I have made an appointment with the young men for such and such as place. ³ Now then, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever is here." ⁴ And the priest answered David, "I have no common bread on hand; but there is holy bread – if the young men have kept themselves from women." ⁵ And David answered the priest, "Truly women have been kept from us, as always when I go on an expedition. The vessels of the young men are holy even when it is an ordinary journey. How much more today will their vessels be holy?" ⁶ So the priest gave him the holy bread, for there was no bread there but the bread of the Presence, which is removed from before the Lord to be replaced by hot bread on the day it is taken away.

1 Samuel 21:1-6. The bread of Presence had 12 loaves, one for each tribe of Israel. Look up the following verses Genesis 49:1-28 and fill in the missing tribes below.

Note: these tribes differ from the sons of Jacob as Reuben was denied his blessing and instead it was given to Joseph's sons (Manasseh and Ephraim) and Levi is not given land as they are the priests.

1. Simeon
2. Judah
3. Zebulun
4. _____
5. _____
6. Gad
7. Asher
8. _____
9. Joseph
10. Manasseh
11. Ephraim
12. _____

Throughout the bible you will hear about the tribes of Israel. Knowing these tribes will help you better connect the Old and the New Testament. Jesus came from the tribe of Judah.

It's important to remember Jesus wants our hearts. He wants our heart to be for him and obedient to him, because he loves us. Keep your focus on Jesus, keep your heart set on God and love others.

When Mary and Ramah are looking for fruits and berries Mary quotes Psalm 20:7 Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.
