

Luke 13:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.

Analysis

And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. Luke establishes the setting with deliberate simplicity. The Greek verb *ēn didaskōn* (ἦν διδάσκων, "was teaching") uses the imperfect tense, indicating continuous action—this was Jesus' customary practice. Despite growing opposition from religious leaders, He maintained His synagogue teaching ministry throughout Galilee and Judea.

The phrase "on the sabbath" (ἐν τοῖς σάββασι, *en tois sabbasin*) is significant because it sets up the conflict to follow. Sabbath healing controversies permeate the Gospels (Luke 6:6-11, 14:1-6; John 5:1-18, 9:1-16). Jesus deliberately heals on the Sabbath to expose the Pharisees' misunderstanding of God's law. The Sabbath was meant for doing good, not rigid ceremonialism. As Jesus declares in Mark 2:27, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath."

This brief verse introduces one of Jesus' most powerful demonstrations of kingdom priorities: mercy triumphs over ritual, compassion transcends tradition, and divine authority supersedes human regulations. The synagogue setting emphasizes that Jesus came not to destroy the law but to fulfill it—revealing God's true intention for holy days as occasions of liberation and restoration.

Historical Context

First-century synagogues served as centers of Jewish community life, functioning as houses of prayer, schools, and courts. Sabbath gatherings included Torah

reading, prophetic texts, and teaching from qualified rabbis or visiting teachers. Jesus' regular synagogue attendance and teaching (Luke 4:16-30) positioned Him within mainstream Jewish practice, though His interpretation of Scripture and exercise of authority increasingly provoked controversy. The coming Sabbath healing (vv. 11-17) would escalate tensions with religious authorities who prioritized tradition over compassion.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' faithful synagogue attendance despite growing opposition model commitment to corporate worship even in hostile environments?
2. What does Jesus' pattern of Sabbath healings teach about God's priorities for holy days and religious observance?
3. How can contemporary believers distinguish between honoring God's commands and falling into mere religious ritualism?

Interlinear Text

Ἦν	δὲ	διδάσκων	ἐν	μῇ	τῶν	συναγωγῶν	ἐν	τοῖς
he was	And	teaching	in	G1520	G3588	of the synagogues	in	G3588
G2258	G1161	G1321	G1722			G4864	G1722	
σάββατον								
the sabbath								
G4521								

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 4:23 (Parallel theme): And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

Luke 4:44 (Parallel theme): And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

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