

Luke 6:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

Analysis

And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath. Jesus concludes His argument with a stunning claim. The conjunction **And** (καὶ, kai) connects this statement to the David example—because David's need superseded ceremonial law, and because a greater than David is here, the **Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath** (κύριός ἐστιν τοῦ σαββάτου ὁ νιὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, kyrios estin tou sabbatou ho huios tou anthrōpou).

The Son of man (ὁ νιὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ho huios tou anthrōpou) was Jesus's favorite self-designation, appearing 80+ times in the Gospels. It derives from Daniel 7:13-14, where 'one like the Son of man' receives eternal dominion from the Ancient of Days. The title simultaneously emphasizes Jesus's humanity (He is truly human) and His messianic authority (He is the prophesied divine-human King). Jewish listeners would recognize the Daniel allusion and its staggering claim to divine authority.

Is Lord also of the sabbath (κύριός ἐστιν τοῦ σαββάτου, kyrios estin tou sabbatou)—the word *kyrios* (κύριος) means lord, master, owner, possessor. Jesus claims authority over the Sabbath itself. Not merely permission to interpret Sabbath law, but sovereign lordship over it. Since God instituted the Sabbath (Genesis 2:2-3, Exodus 20:8-11), claiming lordship over Sabbath is claiming divine prerogative. The *kyrios* of the Sabbath is the same *kyrios* who created it. Jesus asserts His deity subtly but unmistakably.

The word **also** (καὶ, kai) is significant—the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath in addition to being Lord of other things. His authority is comprehensive, not limited. Mark 2:27-28 adds crucial context: 'The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.' The Sabbath serves humanity; humanity doesn't exist to serve Sabbath. Jesus, as Creator (John 1:3, Colossians 1:16) and Redeemer, has authority to determine Sabbath's proper use. His interpretation supersedes Pharisaic tradition. The Pharisees must have bristled—this carpenter's son claims authority over God's holy day. Yet Jesus speaks truth: He is YHWH incarnate, Lord of all.

Historical Context

The Sabbath (Hebrew שַׁבָּת, Shabbat, from שָׁבַת, shavat, "to cease, rest") was instituted at creation (Genesis 2:2-3) and codified in the Decalogue (Exodus 20:8-11). It commemorated both creation rest and exodus deliverance (Deuteronomy 5:12-15). By the first century, Sabbath observance had become a defining marker of Jewish identity, especially under Gentile rule. Strict Sabbath-keeping distinguished Jews from pagans and demonstrated covenant faithfulness.

However, Pharisaic tradition had transformed Sabbath from delight to burden. The Mishnah's tractate Shabbat details 39 categories of forbidden work, with countless subcategories. Debates raged over minutiae: Could you spit on Sabbath (might move dust, resembling plowing)? Wear dentures (carrying a burden)? Eat an egg laid on Sabbath (the hen 'worked')? Such legalism missed Sabbath's purpose: celebrating God's provision, resting in His care, and enjoying fellowship with Him and community.

Jesus's Sabbath healings and this grain incident challenged this system. He healed on Sabbath repeatedly (Luke 6:6-11, 13:10-17, 14:1-6, John 5:1-18, 9:1-41), provoking murderous opposition (Mark 3:6, John 5:18). His claim to be 'Lord of the Sabbath' was revolutionary: the Sabbath's Lord can interpret it authoritatively. Early Christians eventually shifted from Sabbath (Saturday) to the Lord's Day (Sunday, Revelation 1:10), celebrating resurrection and new creation. Paul taught that Sabbath regulations are no longer binding (Romans 14:5-6, Colossians 2:16-17). Christ Himself is our Sabbath rest (Hebrews 4:1-11)—we cease striving

for righteousness and rest in His finished work. The Sabbath controversy reveals the heart of the gospel: works-righteousness versus grace, tradition versus truth, legalism versus love.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does Jesus's claim to be 'Lord of the Sabbath' reveal about His identity and authority?
2. How does the principle 'the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath' apply to Christian observance of the Lord's Day today?
3. In what ways is Christ Himself our Sabbath rest, and how should this transform our understanding of Christian obedience?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἔλεγεν	αὐτοῖς	ὅτι	Κύριός	ἐστιν	ό	υἱὸς	τοῦ
And	he said	unto them	That	Lord	is	G3588	the Son	G3588
G2532	G3004	G846	G3754	G2962	G2076		G5207	
ἀνθρώπου	καὶ	τοῦ	σαββάτου					
of man	And	G3588	of the sabbath					
G444	G2532		G4521					

Additional Cross-References

Mark 2:27 (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org