

Luke 6:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.

Analysis

And the scribes and Pharisees watched him (παρετηροῦντο, paretērounto)—the Greek carries the sense of malicious surveillance, watching closely with hostile intent. They weren't seeking truth but **an accusation against him** (κατηγορίαν, katēgorian), legal grounds for prosecution. The question **whether he would heal on the sabbath day** reveals their hardened hearts—they anticipated Jesus would show mercy, and they prepared to weaponize compassion against him.

This demonstrates how religious externalism corrupts the soul. They transformed the Sabbath, meant as a gift of rest and worship, into a trap for the Son of God. Their watching (τηρέω, tēreō) contrasts with keeping God's commandments—they kept the letter while violating the spirit.

Historical Context

The scribes (γραμματεῖς, grammateis) were Torah experts and legal scholars; Pharisees (Φαρισαῖοι, Pharisaioi) were the separatist party zealous for oral tradition. Together they formed the religious establishment. Their Sabbath regulations permitted saving life in emergencies but prohibited healing non-life-threatening conditions. They would later accuse Jesus before Pilate using similar surveillance tactics (Luke 23:2, 10), showing this was their consistent method—watching to destroy rather than learning to worship.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How can religious observance become a means of condemning grace rather than celebrating it?
2. Are you watching Jesus to learn from him, or to find fault with how he works in ways that challenge your traditions?

Interlinear Text

παρετήρουν δὲ αὐτοῦ οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ
watched And against him G3588 the scribes and G3588
G3906 G1161 G846 G1122 G2532

Φαρισαῖοι εἰ ἐν τῷ σαββάτῳ θεραπεύσει ἵνα
Pharisees whether on G3588 the sabbath day he would heal that
G5330 G1487 G1722 G4521 G2323 G2443

εὗρωσιν κατηγορίαν αὐτοῦ
they might find an accusation against him
G2147 G2724 G846

Additional Cross-References

Mark 3:2 (Parallel theme): And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.

Luke 20:20 (Parallel theme): And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

Luke 13:14 (Parallel theme): And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.

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