

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

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| παρετήρουν | δὲ | αὐτοῦ | οἱ | γραμματεῖς | καὶ | οἱ |
| watched G3906 | And G1161 | against him G846 | G3588 | the scribes G1122 | and G2532 | G3588 |
| Φαρισαῖοι | εἰ | ἐν | τῷ | σαββάτῳ | θεραπεύσει | ἵνα |
| Pharisees G5330 | whether G1487 | on G1722 | G3588 | the sabbath day G4521 | he would heal G2323 | that G2443 |
| εὕρωσιν | κατηγορίαν | αὐτοῦ | | | | |
| they might find G2147 | an accusation G2724 | against him 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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