



Following Jesus in His Mission Matthew 12:1-21

The world is messy place, full of tensions, sickness, injustice, and broken relationships. People are suffering and in pain, but what is the solution? In this story, Jesus confronts the people in power and declares that he is the solution to the problems of humanity, and we are also invited to be a part of God's redemptive and healing work in our world. If true, this is very good news!

Hearing the Word

1. Read [Matthew 12:1-21](#) and list characteristics of the Pharisees. How did their focus on traditions and technicalities affect their relationships with others?

What are ways that we communicate attitudes and behaviors like those of the Pharisees? Do you see this attitude in healthcare, the church, or other organizations?

2. How did Jesus provide compassionate care for the people he encountered, including the disciples, the disabled man and the Pharisees?
3. In verse 7, Jesus quoted from Hosea 6:6: "I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings." Summarize how Jesus demonstrated this Scripture.

The Word of God shaped Jesus' values and actions. How can we allow God's Word to shape our expressions of mercy and justice, and our attitudes and behavior?

Identify ways you can follow Jesus' example of advocacy and care for people in your family, healthcare setting, church, or community.

4. In [verses 17-21](#), Jesus claims to be the fulfillment of God's chosen servant promised many years earlier in [Isaiah 42:1-9](#). Describe the identity and characteristics of the servant. How can these verses help to define characteristics of Christ's disciples?
5. What difference does it make that the servant knows he is chosen, loved, and brings delight to God (v. 18)?

Reflect on the extent to which you feel chosen, loved, and delightful to God. How can an awareness of your worth to God become more of a reality in your life?

6. Describe the images of "a bruised reed, a smoldering wick" (v. 20). Identify times you may have felt like a bruised reed or a smoldering wick. What difference does it make to know Jesus' qualities in vs. 19-20?

Responding to the Word

Through our relationships and our work in healthcare, the church, and community organizations, we can bring God's mercy and justice to disenfranchised and vulnerable people. Give examples of carrying out Jesus' ministry that you have seen

How can you live out your unique role as a representative of Jesus in the world, including in healthcare and through your church?

Prayerfully listen to what God has been saying to you in this passage, and identify some actions you will take.