



**SUMMER-TIME DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS**

**Carstairs-Bancroft United Church**

*August 16, 2023*



Photo: Our Daily Bread

## GOOD TROUBLE FOR GOD

*How much more valuable is a person than a sheep!*

Matthew 12:12

**READ Matthew 12:9 - 14**

One day, a sixth-grade student noticed a classmate cutting his arm with a small razor. Trying to do the right thing, she took it from him and threw it away. Surprisingly, instead of being commended, she received a ten-day school suspension. Why? She briefly had the razor in her possession—something not allowed at school. Asked if she would do it again, she replied: “Even if I got in trouble, . . . I would do it again.” Just as this girl’s act of trying to do good got her into trouble (her suspension was later reversed), Jesus’ act of kingdom intervention got Him into good trouble with religious leaders.

The Pharisees interpreted Jesus’ healing a man with a deformed hand as a violation of their rules. Christ told them if God’s people were allowed to care for animals in dire situations on the Sabbath, “How much more valuable is a person than a sheep!” (Matthew 12:12). Because He’s Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus could regulate what is and isn’t permitted on it (vv. 6–8). Knowing that it would offend the religious leaders, He restored the man’s hand to wholeness anyway (vv. 13–14).

Sometimes believers in Christ can get into “good trouble”—doing what honors Him but what might not make certain people happy—as they help others in need. When we do, as God guides us, we imitate Jesus and reveal that people are more important than rules and rituals.

**By Marvin Williams**

### **PRAY & REFLECT**

**Dear Jesus, please keep me from rituals that prevent me from loving others.  
Amen**

How can you show kindness to others? Why should you be willing to get into good trouble for God?

### **SCRIPTURE INSIGHT**

The Pharisees hounded Jesus over every particular of the law. In Matthew 12, they questioned why His disciples had plucked a few heads of grain and ate them on the Sabbath (vv. 12). The religious leaders wanted to uphold the law above everything else, but Christ pointed out that the law as his Father intended it pointed God’s people to mercy and compassion, not condemnation.

Jesus quoted Hosea 6:6: “I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.” Even in the Old Testament, God wanted His people to love Him and each other (Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 6:45). But the Pharisees missed it so dramatically that they started plotting to put Jesus to death soon after His Sabbath teaching (Matthew 12:14). Yet it would be Christ’s death “plotted by the Pharisees” that would bring freedom from the law and pour out God’s mercy on all those who believe.

– By **Jed Ostoich**

*Used with permission*