



when is helping against the rules?

Children's Story

Cycle C, Proper 16

Title: When is helping against the rules?
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Text: Luke 13: 10-17
Theme: Helping needy people is so important; we can even do it on days that are set aside for God.

Wondering Questions:

- I wonder how the woman got to be so bent over.
- I wonder what all the Sabbath rules were.
- I wonder what it was like to get helped and have people get angry about it.
- I wonder how we can know when it's all right to break a rule like Jesus did.

Gathering Activity:

Good Morning. How is everyone feeling today? The Scripture passage today talks about a woman who cannot stand up straight. Have you ever crawled through a tunnel where you had to stay bent over? How did that feel? Please stand up and bend over and stay that way while I ask you some questions. If you could not ever stand up straight, how might that feel? Do you think that your muscles might get sore? What other problems might you have? Do you think you could still play all the games that you play now? Could you still do other things the same way, like eat at the table, or colour pictures? Probably not. Are you getting sore? Okay, sit down and get ready to hear today's story. Are you comfy now? Are you quiet inside? Have you connected with that quiet space inside where we know God is near? Good.

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Story:

The woman that Luke, the doctor who wrote this part of the Bible, tells us about (*show them the passage in your Bible*), had been living her life without standing up straight for a long time. How do you think Jesus felt when he saw the woman? If you saw her, would you want to help her feel better? That's just how Jesus felt, so Jesus healed her so that she could walk straight again. Some of the people who were watching when Jesus healed the woman were happy, but others were mad. They were mad because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, and that was against the Sabbath rules. Is Sabbath a new word? Sabbath is what they called their special day for worshipping God. People were not supposed to do work on that day so that it would be easier to rest and worship God. Healing someone is a kind of work. Walking far is a kind of work. So is cooking food. So they had rules about these things. They had lots of Sabbath rules. Hundreds of rules. They got carried away with rules and some people forgot why they had the rules. The rules became more important than the good reason that started the rule making.

We have rules, too. Has anyone ever told you that you could not do something at a certain time? My mom never let me eat after I brushed my teeth before bedtime. I always had to go to sleep with clean teeth. Those kinds of rules are important; because they help our bodies stay strong and healthy. But, there were special times when my mom would let me eat something after I brushed my teeth, or go to sleep before I brushed my teeth.

Our bodies need rest, and we need time to focus on God and God's love for all of us. Sabbath rules were good. But Jesus broke the rules when he saw the bent-over woman because he wanted to help her feel better again. Jesus wants people to be free to worship him and not hurting like the bent-over woman was.

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for loving us, and caring for us. Thank you for giving us rules that help us take time for you. Please help us remember that rules are there to help us live well. Show us how we can help others to love you, too. Amen.