Do Good on the Sabbath

"For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." ... "It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." Matthew 12:8-12, NKJV.

Jesus had lessons which He desired to give to His disciples, that when He was no longer with them, they might not be misled by the wily misrepresentations of the priests and rulers in regard to the correct observance of the Sabbath. He would remove from the Sabbath the traditions and exactions with which the priests and rulers had burdened it.

In passing through a field of grain on the Sabbath day, He and His disciples, being hungry, began to pluck the heads of grain and to eat. "But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day." To answer their accusation, He referred them to the action of David and others, saying: "Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple."

If excessive hunger excused David from violating even the holiness of the sanctuary, and made his act guiltless, how much more excusable was the simple act of the disciples in plucking grain and eating it upon the Sabbath day! Jesus would teach His disciples and His enemies that the service of God was first of all; and if fatigue and hunger attended the work, it was right to satisfy the wants of humanity even upon the Sabbath day....

Works of mercy and of necessity are no transgression of the law. God does not condemn these things. The act of mercy and necessity in passing through a grainfield, of plucking the heads of wheat, of rubbing them in their hands, and of eating to satisfy their hunger, He declared to be in accordance with the law which He Himself had proclaimed from Sinai. Thus He declared Himself guiltless before scribes, rulers, and priests, before the heavenly universe, before fallen angels and fallen men.--The Review and Herald, August 3, 1897.