



Turning the Tables

WARM UP: *When was the last time someone picked a fight with you? What was it about? When was the last time you picked a fight? Was it worth it?*

You remember the Kenny Rogers's song, the Gambler? Remember how the chorus went? *"You've got to know when to hold them; know when to fold them. Know when to walk away and know when to run. You never count your money while sitting at the table. There will be time enough for counting when the dealings done."*

Which leads me to wonder... Are there times when we not only need to take a stand and intentionally pick a fight when it would be easier to just walk away? I am pretty sure that Jesus would say there are times when turning the other cheek accomplishes nothing and picking a fight is the only way to get the job done.

READ ABOUT IT: Matt. 12:1-14

1. *As a child, what were Sundays like for you? What were you allowed to do and what were you not allowed to do? What was the reason behind the rules?*
2. *Regarding the Sabbath, why did Jesus use David as an illustration? What about the priests who were performing duties while serving in the temple?*
3. *In quoting Hosea 6:6, what was the point that Jesus was trying to make concerning the letter of the law vs. the purpose and meaning of the law?*
4. *What does Jesus imply by his claim in verses 6-8? How does this go over with the Pharisees?*
5. *What motivates Jesus to go to **their** synagogue? Do you think he knew what was waiting for him when he and his disciples got there?*
6. *The man with the shriveled hand was a set up. In the Pharisees' minds, that had Jesus in a "no win" situation. How so?*
7. *How does Jesus respond to their set-up? In God's sight, which is more important, a man or a sheep?*
8. *How important are your needs to God? Have you ever fallen into the trap of "offering sacrifices" while "neglecting mercy"? How can you work to reverse that this week?*

We love because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19 (NIV)

God is a God of people, not of rules.

The best time to reach out to someone is when he or she needs help.