

Matthew 12:1-14
An Unexpected Enemy
May 26, 2019 – Rev. Rick Lyon

Intro - *How many of you have heard of the Broadway play, "Hamilton"?*

Historian Evan Andrews: On July 11, 1804, founding father Alexander Hamilton and U.S. Vice President Aaron Burr engaged in a famous pistol duel near Weehawken, New Jersey. (*Think of that...*) The “affair of honor” left Hamilton with a mortal wound in his stomach, but it was only the last in a long line of personal slights and political disputes that extended back more than 25 years. Hamilton and Burr’s relationship first soured during the Revolutionary War, when they frequently locked horns while serving as members of George Washington’s staff. The enmity later deepened, when Burr claimed the senate seat previously held by Hamilton’s beloved father-in-law. In 1800, Burr obtained and helped publish a pamphlet Hamilton had secretly written criticizing President John Adams, a supposed ally. Hamilton responded by fiercely opposing Burr in the 1800 presidential race, but the incident that sparked their duel came in 1804, when Hamilton vociferously campaigned against Burr’s bid for the governorship of New York. Burr demanded an explanation, and when Hamilton refused, he challenged him to the duel. Hamilton accepted, setting the stage for the fateful showdown that led to his death.

Warren Blank: Of the three major *religious* societies of Judaism at the time of the New Testament, the Pharisees were the most vocal and influential. Their movement began in the time of the Maccabean Revolt. The name *Pharisee* means *separated ones*. They were also known as *Hasidim*, which means *loyal to God*.

1. The Pharisees valued their traditions too much.

Matthew 15:1-3 - Then the scribes and Pharisees came to Jesus saying, "Why do your disciples transgress the *tradition* of the elders?" Jesus answered, "Why do you transgress the *commandments of God* because of your traditions?"

Matthew 12:1-14
An Unexpected Enemy
May 26, 2019 – Rev. Rick Lyon

You see what the Pharisees valued?

Traditions come in all different shapes and sizes.

- **Some are good... Some are bad... Some are a little crazy**

On the small Greek island of Chios, every Easter Sunday, two rival parishes shoot fireworks at the other church.

All of this goes on while a service is in session... (*Can you imagine trying to preach while this is going on?*) Over 25,000 rockets are used. In the past the rockets have caused fires, damages to homes, and even deaths, but the tradition carries on still.

Here's another one:

Muslims in the western Indian town of Solapur line up to drop their babies off a 50 foot tower in a shrine, catching them in a white sheet. The ritual, which has taken place for more than 500 years, is believed to make the children grow up healthy and strong. (*That's provided they get caught*)

***What is Pamplona, Spain known for?* The Running of the Bulls in Pamplona, Spain, has taken place every year since 1910. The running involves penning up the bulls, and then letting them run through the street while people crowd in as well and run in front of the bulls. Since its start, 15 people have been killed, the most recent being at the run in 2009. It is said that 200-300 people are hurt each year during the run.**

Danger to every tradition--even the good ones.

I read a story about a Chinese man who lived in a remote part of China. He was very poor, but he loved God and sought to worship Him faithfully. As poor as he was, he understood that worship involves some sacrifice on our part. Food was his scarcest commodity, so every day before his time of Bible reading and prayer, he put a pat of butter on a dish and put it up on the windowsill as an offering to God. One day during this time his cat came in and ate the butter. To remedy this, he began to tie the cat to the bedpost each day before his quiet time. This solved the problem.

This man was so revered by others that they wanted to imitate him. And so, they worshipped as he did. Generations later, long after the man was dead, people would place a dish a butter on the windowsill during their time of Bible reading. Not only

Matthew 12:1-14
An Unexpected Enemy
May 26, 2019 – Rev. Rick Lyon

that, but each one bought a cat and tied it to the bedpost! Why did they do it? They had no idea!

Read v 12:1-2

Deuteronomy 23:25 - When you enter your neighbor's field of grain, you *may* pluck the heads of grain with your hand, but you must not harvest it with a sickle.

Mark 7:9 - "You *reject* the commandment of God, that you may *keep* your tradition."

Acts 2:42 - They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Ephesians 5:19-20 - Speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Singing and making music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything.

1 Cor. 14:26 - When you meet together, one will sing, another will teach, another will tell some special revelation God has given... Let all things be done for building up.

Matthew 12:1-14
An Unexpected Enemy
May 26, 2019 – Rev. Rick Lyon

Exodus 20:8-10 - Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the LORD your God.

2. The Pharisees forgot what matters most.

Matthew 23:23 - "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees... you're careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb garden, but you've neglected *the more important matters.*"

v.3 - Jesus said to them, "Haven't you read what David did when he was hungry?"

#1 - God's Word is important!

Psalms 119:105 - God's Word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path.

Read v.6

#2 - Christ is important!

Col. 1:16-18 - For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible... all things were created by Him and for Him. *He is before all things*, and in Him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning and firstborn from the dead, so that *in all things He may have preeminence.*

Read v.7

#3 - How you treat others is important!

Jesus: "Treat others the way you want them to treat you." (**Matthew 7:12**)

Read v.8

Read v.9

Matthew 12:1-14
An Unexpected Enemy
May 26, 2019 – Rev. Rick Lyon

#4 - "Church" is important!

Hebrews 10:25 - Let us not neglect meeting together, as some have made a habit, but let us encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Read v.10

How did the Pharisees view this man with a withered hand?

- **He was someone they could use to further their agenda.**

Read v.11-12

#5 - People are important!

Read v.13

#6 - God-given opportunities are important!

The Arabs have a saying: *"There are four things that don't come back: the spoken word, the released arrow, times past and the neglected opportunity."*