**WHERE ARE YOU?**

**(Matthew 12:1-14)**

 When you are in a photo of a group of people, like a class photo or a family photo, the first thing you do is to look for yourself. You want to see whether your eyes are open; you want to see the expression on your face; you want to see how you look.

 When we read a Bible story, we need to cultivate the habit of looking for ourselves in the story. Today, we are going to examine a story from the life of Jesus. Very likely, you are somewhere in this story. I want to help you find yourself by asking you four simple questions. Let’s first read our text—Matthew 12:1-14.

1. **ARE YOU TRAVELING WITH THE FAULT-FINDERS?**

 Matthew is careful to point out that what takes place in this passage all happened on the Sabbath day. Look at 12:1-2. The Pharisees saw the disciples of Jesus eating grain in the fields. They pointed their fingers and told Jesus that His disciples were violating the Sabbath. They were guilty of reaping and threshing.

 My problem with the Pharisees goes beyond their legalism. It is their fault-finding that concerns me most. What about you? Are you a fault-finder? Do you speak up and point your fingers when you observe people doing things of which you don’t approve?

 Don’t be a fault-finder. Be a bridge-builder.

1. **ARE YOU LISTENING TO THE TRUTH-TEACHER?**

 Notice vv. 3-8. There is a difference between hearing someone and truly listening to what they are saying. Jesus was teaching truth, but the Pharisees were not listening to Him. Their minds were already made up.

 Are you listening to Jesus? Are you paying attention to Him?

1. **ARE YOU SITTING BEFORE THE LIFE-CHANGER?**

The scene changes beginning in v. 9. Look at vv. 9-14. Jesus asks a pointed question: “Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath?” Next thing you know, Jesus does good for this man. He heals the man of his paralysis. I submit to you that most of us are this man. We are in need of Christ’s healing touch—some of us physically, all of us spiritually.

 What area of your life do you need to Jesus to heal?

1. **ARE YOU REACHING OUT AS A RISK-TAKER?**

 Jesus didn’t just ask the man to do a hard thing; Jesus asked him to do an impossible thing. Jesus told him to reach out his paralyzed hand or arm.

 My prayer is that Jesus would tell us to do things we can’t do. When He says such things, His power comes flooding in to our lives enabling us to do the very things we couldn’t do on our own.