

## Madness

*“and they were filled with madness, and communed with one another what they might do to Jesus.”*

**Luke 6:11**

**Madness**—This word is *anoias*. It is the negative of *nous* (the *a* in front of a word means “not”). *Nous* is the Greek word for “mind.” It also means “intelligence, reason, comprehension.” In this combination, we have the sense of “out of their minds” or “went crazy.” These religious men were so soaked in rage that they lost mental control. All they wanted was to see Jesus dead.

Isn't it interesting that this verse does not use the word for anger? While I am sure they were also angry, Luke concentrates on the rational collapse. There is a good reason for this. This verse comes at the end of the stories of Jesus' doing good works on the Sabbath. The Pharisees went crazy over this because they thought they had God under their control. They had a religion that had all the answers. They were rationally certain that God could only do what they believed. Then Jesus came along and upset everything in their system of beliefs. The carefully constructed world that they used to oppress the common people was torn apart. So, Luke has a little pun here they lost their minds at the same time that they lost all the false reasons for their beliefs.

I often think about how carefully we construct our beliefs today. Each church thinks it has the “real” answer. Each of us faces the constant temptation to think that we know more about God than someone else. The truth is that only one man ever knew God well enough to call him Abba Father. We have that privilege today only because he opened the door for us. Arrogance is a great sin. All the degrees on my office wall could make me very arrogant, if it weren't for the fact of my sins. They remind me just how much I am like everyone else. I want Jesus to disturb my beliefs in order to break apart all those places where I think I have God in a box.

“Jesus, keep me from madness. Be gentle with me, but let me see where I am keeping the lid on what God can do.”