

Title: The Lord of the Sabbath

Passage: Mark 2:23 - 3:6

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One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. And the Pharisees were saying to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?" And he said to them, "*The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.*"

Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. And he said to the man with the withered hand, "*Come here.*" And he said to them, "*Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?*" But they were silent. And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "*Stretch out your hand.*" He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

Gospels

- written as a source of encouragement to believers as well as persuasive explanation of how Jesus was the Messiah (the Anointed One long promised/prophesized)
- Mark: focus Jesus as the Promised King. Jesus showing His authority.
 - Casting demons: authority over demons
 - Healing: authority over sickness
 - Forgiveness: authority over sin
 - Ch 2: Lord of the Sabbath

Overview: Questions

I. What is the Sabbath?

II. What was Jesus response?

III. How should we apply the passage today?

I. WHAT IS THE SABBATH?

Sabbath

- word derived from word meaning "to cease, stop, rest"

Genesis 2:1-3

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

Leviticus 23:3

"Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work. It is a Sabbath to the Lord in all your dwelling places.

Leviticus 25:3

For six years you shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its fruits,

- observation was key to Jewish law
 - Given special attention due to its frequency.

Purpose

1. Reminder we are dependent on a Creator. God created us.
 - Focus worship of the Creator, not creation.

Exodus 20:8-11

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

2. Affirmation of Israel’s identity
 - reminder of God’s rescue of Israel

Deuteronomy 5:12-15

“Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant, or your ox or your donkey or any of your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

3. Given as a gift from restless condition of slavery
 - Israelites were previously slaves in Egypt (working constantly)
 - God provided one day of rest as a gift to them.

Explicit Prohibitions

- no fire kindling, not leave their place (Ex 35)
 - Take and cook manna
 - Gathering sticks on Sabbath (man was stoned to death)
 - Man had left store open (Nehemiah)
4. Worship God
 - Ten Commandments - worship of God preceded the one concerning the Sabbath

Exodus 20:3-5

“You shall have no other gods before me.

“You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me,

Sabbath

- Sabbath was meant as a day of spiritual reflection and physical refreshment
 - was intended as a special gift of rest and devoted time to worship God.
- But by Jesus' time, religious leaders used it as a burden upon people.

II. WHAT WAS JESUS' RESPONSE?

Mark 2:25-28

And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?" And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."

Matthew 12:7-8

And if you had known what this means, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."

Jesus pointed to Old Testament story

- allowing breaking of ceremonial law to meet an urgent human need
- God never allowed ritual to prevent compassion and kindness to others.

1 Samuel 21:1-6

Then David came to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. And Ahimelech came to meet David trembling and said to him, "Why are you alone, and no one with you?" And David said to Ahimelech the priest, "The king has charged me with a matter and said to me, 'Let no one know anything of the matter about which I send you, and with which I have charged you.' I have made an appointment with the young men for such and such a place. Now then, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever is here." And the priest answered David, "I have no common bread on hand, but there is holy bread—if the young men have kept themselves from women." And David answered the priest, "Truly women have been kept from us as always when I go on an expedition. The vessels of the young men are holy even when it is an ordinary journey. How much more today will their vessels be holy?" So the priest gave him the holy bread, for there was no bread there but the bread of the Presence, which is removed from before the Lord, to be replaced by hot bread on the day it is taken away.

Jesus healing of man on Sabbath

Matthew 12:11-12

He said to them, "Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."

Mark 3:4-5

And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

- Jesus became angry (righteous)
 - Righteous anger: God did not get His way
 - Non-righteous anger: I did not get my way

Mark 3:6

The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

- the hearts of the religious leaders were as "shriveled" as the man's hand
- Why? Because of religion
 - They used "religion" to "get right with God" rather than having a right relationship with God

III. HOW SHOULD WE APPLY THE PASSAGE TODAY?

Feelings in passage continue to echo today in two spiritual mindsets

1. *View obedience as a burden*

- See message of the Gospel as advice
- View self as able to be right with God by your own effort.
- You relate to God by being good and be better
- How you can make your life the best for you.

2. *View obedience as a delight*

- Begins and ends in Jesus
- View self as broken with sin and needing a Savior. Only by God's mercy can you be saved
- You relate to God thankful for His salvation and serve out of worship to Him.

Luke 18:9-14

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Value the Sabbath but not as a religious burden but as an opportunity to worship God

Romans 14:5-6

One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God.

Colossians 2:16-17

Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

Romans 12:1

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

- worship God everyday