

Mark 2:23-3:6 – Jesus Is Lord Of The Sabbath.

Leader's Guide

January 6, 2019

1. Read Ephesians 4:7-16 to familiarize yourself with the passage.

²³ One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. ²⁴ And the Pharisees were saying to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" ²⁵ 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: ²⁶ 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?" ²⁷ And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸ So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath." ¹ Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. ² And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. ³ And he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come here." ⁴ 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. ⁵ 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. ⁶ The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him. Mark 2:23–3:6 (ESV)

2. In the message, we learned about the ways the Jews observed the Sabbath in the time of Jesus. How did they twist the Sabbath away from God's intent?

Instead of the Sabbath being a time of blessing and refreshment, they turned it into a burden. The Old Testament simply instructs people to cease from their regular work. The Jews made long lists to define work to make the day a regulative burden.

- *You couldn't travel more than 3,000 feet or 1,999 steps on the Sabbath.*
- *You couldn't lift anything more than the weight of a dried fig.*
- *If you threw something in the air, you had to catch it with the same hand. If you caught it with the other hand, that constituted work.*
- *You couldn't light a fire on the Sabbath, no matter how cold the day.*
- *You couldn't blow out a candle. That was considered work.*

- You couldn't drag a chair on a dirt floor because the furrow left by the chair in the dirt was akin to plowing, which was considered work.
- Women were not allowed to look in a mirror because they would be tempted to pluck a grey hair, which would be work.
- Women were not allowed to wear jewelry because it would be heavier than a dried fig, and would be considered work.
- You could only write two letters of the alphabet on the Sabbath. Anything more would be considered work.
- You couldn't tie or untie your shoes. Making or loosing knots was considered work.

God intended the Sabbath to be a blessing. It was to be a time of physical and spiritual refreshment. They turned it into a regulative burden. When Jesus said,

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew 11:29-30 (ESV)

The yoke and burden he was referring to dealt with his lack of rules and regulations compared to the Pharisees in Jesus' day.

3. What do each of these passages teach us about the way God wanted the Sabbath observed?

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. Genesis 2:1-2 (ESV)

The Sabbath was meant to be a day of rest from work.

"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. Exodus 20:8-11 (ESV)

The Sabbath was to be a day of rest from regular work. It was to be holy, that means different from the rest of the week. Just as God did all his work in six days then rested, we should do all of our work in six days and have a day of refreshment.

" '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. Deuteronomy 5:12-15 (ESV)

The Sabbath was to be a day to remember freedom from slavery. The rest of the world works 7 days a week. God brought his people to freedom. He only requires they work 6 days a week. One day a week is for rest and refreshment.

It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.' " Exodus 31:17 (ESV)

The Sabbath is to not just be a day of rest but it is to be a day of refreshment. It should be a day that gives us life, not takes life from us.

"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 23:3 (ESV)

The Sabbath is a day to gather for worship and refreshment in our relationship with God.

4. We live in a 24-7 work world. The nations around ancient Israel also observed a 7-day work week. How does knowing God insisted his people would be different because they took time for rest and worship change the way you think about following Christ in our non-stop world?

And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. Mark 2:27 (ESV)

- A. It encourages me to take time to get away from the phone, get away from the office and make time to be with my church friends and biological family.

B. It helps me realize that following Christ was not intended to be a slavish list of rules but resting in his completed work and being refreshed through our time with him.

5. Many people think of the Christian life as a list of rules and restrictions, like the Pharisees with their thousands of Sabbath taboos. Jesus challenged that false belief by insisting man-made religious regulations should never come before showing compassion for others in need. What do these verses teach us about how we can live our faith by showing compassion towards others around us?

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, Colossians 3:12 (ESV)

- Be compassionate toward others when you see them in need. Treat them with the care and concern you would like someone to give you.
- Be kind to people, like you want them to be kind to you.
- Be humble and don't promote yourself above others.
- Be meek, which means being gentle toward others when you are in a position of power over others. It is strength under control.
- Be patient with people that are difficult.

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Ephesians 4:32 (ESV)

- Be kind and tender toward other people.
- Be extremely forgiving to others, consistently forgiving them like Christ consistently forgives you.

So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23-24 (ESV)

Restoring broken relationships is more important than giving God worship. Taking the initiative to restore a broken relationship and making sure we have done everything we can to be in a right relationship with others around us is more important than time in worship.

But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Luke 10:33-35 (ESV)

When we see someone in crisis, don't drive by them (especially if we are late for church). Stop and help them in their time of need. Be willing to use our own money with no hope of repayment as we care for them.

"I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. Mark 8:2 (ESV)

Jesus had compassion for the physical needs of others, such as hunger. Meeting people's physical needs is an important way to live our faith. Good works, creates good will, which opens the door to the good news.

6. Today Jesus is our Sabbath and we celebrate our day of worship and rest on Sunday, the first day of the week. The Sabbath was created as Saturday, the last day of the week. What does Mark 2:28 teach us about Jesus' ability to change the Sabbath? What do these verses teach us about how Jesus changed our day of worship to Sunday?

So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath." Mark 2:28 (ESV)

When Jesus claimed to be Lord of the Sabbath, he claimed to be the one who created the Sabbath and the one who had the right to define it. This was an earth-shattering claim to be God. In John 1 and Hebrews 1, we see Jesus is the one who created everything. It was Jesus who rested on the seventh day. It was Jesus who created the day of rest so he has the ability to define it and change it.

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. John 20:1 (ESV)

Jesus rose on the first day of the week, not the last day of the week. This was the beginning of his transformation of the Sabbath day to what is now known as the Lord's Day.

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet Revelation 1:10 (ESV)

John identifies the first day of the week as "the Lord's Day". This was the Christian day of worship in the early church

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." John 20:19 (ESV)

Jesus didn't just rise on the first day of the week, but his appearances to his disciples took place on the first day of the week. After Christ's resurrection, the first day of the week becomes the day when Jesus comes to be with his church.

Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." John 20:26 (ESV)

The Jews counted inclusively, not exclusively. That means their eight days is the equivalent of our seven days. Jesus appears a second time a week later on the first day of the week.

On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight. Acts 20:7 (ESV)

The Christian day of worship was the first day of the week in memory of the Lord's resurrection. That is why they redefined the day to no longer be called the Sabbath but to be called the Lord's Day.

On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come. 1 Corinthians 16:2 (ESV)

The Corinthian church also met on the first day of the week.

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:1-4 (ESV)

The Day of Pentecost is 50 days after the Passover. Their 50 days is the equivalent of our 49 days since they count inclusively. This means the Holy Spirit was given to the church on the first day of the week. Once Jesus rises from the dead on the first day of the week, every date reference for the church from that point forward in the Bible happens on the first day of the week and not the last day of the week. Jesus, the author of the Sabbath, changes the Sabbath to make it a new day and a day all about him.