

The Gospel According to Mark

Kingdom Identity > Religious Identity

Opposition doesn't mean Jesus is off mission; it means He's advancing it.

Mark 3:6 (NIV)

The Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

Big Idea: Kingdom Identity Always Challenges Religious Comfort.

1. Kingdom Identity Is Incompatible With Religious Identity.

Mark 2:18 (NIV)

"Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, 'How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?'"

- Comparison is often the first form of religious resistance.
- The Kingdom of God is about joy, not penance.

Mark 2:19-20 (NIV)

19 Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. 20 But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast."

Mark 2:21-22 (NIV)

21 "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new piece will pull away from the old, **making the tear worse**.

22 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins **will be ruined**. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins."

- Jesus Came to Make Things New, Not to Improve the Old

Romans 12:2 (NIV)

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

- New identity never thrives with old thinking.

2. Kingdom Authority Always Collides With Religious Control

Mark 2:23–28 (NIV)

23 One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. 24 The Pharisees said to him, “Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?”

25 He answered, “Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? 26 In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions.”

27 Then 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.”

Mark 2:27 (NIV)

“The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”

Mark 2:28 (NIV)

“So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

- Kingdom authority supersedes legalistic authority.
- You cannot accept Jesus as Lord without surrendering control.
- Authority always collides with control.

3. Religious Legalism Always Reveals What Is Truly Valued.

Mark 3:1–3 (NIV)

Another time Jesus went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. 2 Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. 3 Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, “Stand up in front of everyone.”

Mark 3:4 (NIV)

Then Jesus asked them, “Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” But they remained silent.

4. Compassion Exposes Hardened Hearts.

Mark 3:5 (NIV)

He looked around at them in anger and was deeply distressed...

Mark 2:27 (NIV)

“The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”

- A heart can become so committed to being right that it forgets to be loving.

Mark 2:5 (NIV)

He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored

- Obedience to the Father matters more than approval from people.

5. Following Jesus Often Leads To Conflict.

Mark 3:6 (NLT)

At once the Pharisees went away and met with the supporters of Herod to plot how to kill Jesus.

- Conflict doesn't always mean you're wrong; sometimes it affirms your faithfulness.

Some questions to ponder:

- Where has comfort replaced obedience in my life?
- Do I protect systems more than people?
- Would following Jesus more closely create tension?
- Am I more concerned with approval or faithfulness?
- **Identity that never costs anything never confronts anything.**