

Religion & The Pleasure Of Fasting

Mark 2:18-22

May 14-15, 2022

- Last Week: Mark 2:13-17 The Befriending Of Sinners

3 Sermons On Religion- (Religion Vs. Christianity)

- Religion & The Pleasure Of Fasting (**Mark 2:18-22**)
- Religion & Rest (**Mark 2:23-27**)
- Religion & Religious Practices (**Mark 3:1-6**)

Comparing Religions

1. People Have Always Compared Religions (**Mark 2:18**)
2. Pharisee's Disciples- Standing In The Way Of Jesus (**Mark 2:18 & Luke 18:11-12**)
3. John's Disciples- Preparing For Jesus (**Mark 2:18 & Mark 1:6-8 & John 3:26-28**)
 - μαθητής (mathetes) - a learner, disciple, pupil (**Mark 2:18**)
4. All Religious Backgrounds Have A Mixture Of Both:
 - Obstacles To Jesus
 - Preparations For Jesus

How Jesus' Presence Changes Things

"And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast." (**Mark 2:19**)

1. Jesus Calls Himself The Bridegroom (**Mark 2:19**)
2. Jesus Calling Himself The Bridegroom Is On Par With Saying, "I Am God!" (**Isaiah 61:10 & Isaiah 62:5**)
3. It Is Sinful To Mourn & Fast When You Should Rejoice & Feast!

The Place For Pleasure & Self-Denial In Our Lives

1. Examples Of Pleasures That Point To Jesus' Greatness
 - Bridegroom - Pleasure & Self-Denial Are Relational (**Mark 2:19-20**)
 - New Clothing - Pleasure & Self-Denial Are External (**Mark 2:21**)
 - Wine - Pleasure & Self-Denial Are Internal (**Mark 2:22 & Ephesians 5:18-21**)

"The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day."(**Mark 2:20**)

2. What We Do & Don't Do Hinges On Jesus Himself

- Actually Fast ... (**Matthew 6:16-18**)
- Fast *In Order To* Feast
- Learn To Long For Jesus (**1 Corinthians 8:8 & Romans 14:2-3, 5-9**)

3. Real Pleasure Is Rooted In Jesus Christ

4. Unless We Feast On Him We Will Not Deny Ourselves

Community Group Discussion Questions:

1. How does Christianity compare and contrast with other religions?
2. Have you fasted (going without food and/or water for a period of time)? How was it beneficial? How was it challenging? Share your experience.
3. Read Mark 2:18-22. Consider the three analogies Jesus shares. Why does he use these analogies and what can we learn from them?
4. How is Jesus and his teaching like the unshrunk cloth and new wine?
5. How has the “wine” of Jesus burst your “old wineskins” — your religious rituals and ruts?

Suggested Reading: *A Hunger For God: Desiring God Through Fasting & Prayer*, by John Piper

Key Words For Kids To Count: Fasting, Fast