

**INTRO:** Recap Mark 2:12-17.

## **I. Why are they not Fasting? (v. 18-22)**

### **A. The Issue of Fasting. (v. 18-20)**

#### **1. "Pharisees"**

- a. Around 167 B.C., the Hellenistic Seleucid Greeks outlawed the study of the Torah, and the Maccabees struggled against their oppression.
- b. The Maccabees' strongest followers were the **Hasidim ("pious ones")**, the teachers and scholars. After the Maccabee victory and the cleansing of the temple, the Maccabees' successors soon became as Hellenized as the Greeks they had fought earlier,
  - 1) This caused a split of the **Hasidim ("pious ones")** into 2 groups...
    - a) **Zealots** – militant group opposing paganism and Rome. (cf. Matt 10:4; Mark 3:18)
    - b) **Pharisees ("separatists")** – religious group of about 6,000 that committed themselves totally to God and assumed the responsibility to lead Israel back to Him.
      1. They believed that one should devote oneself to complete obedience to every detail of law and to separate oneself from all influences or people that might interfere with that devotion.
      2. Very popular with the common people.
      3. Conservative theology.
        - a. Believed in resurrection, angels, etc...
        - b. Believed in a coming Messiah.
      4. Like the Puritans, started off with good intentions, but ended up an empty religion of legalists.

#### **2. For the Jews.**

- a. The only day fasting was compulsory was the Day of Atonement (cf. Lev. 16:29-31), but the stricter Jews would fast as a regular practice (cf. Luke 18:9-14).

- 1) They would fast twice a week: Mondays and Thursdays from 6am – 6pm.
- b. They would fast to seem holier to other men. (Cf. Matthew 6)

### **3. For Christians.**

#### **a. Fasting can be good, profitable, and beneficial.**

- 1) For important decisions. (Acts 13:2; 14:23)

#### **b. Fasting is often in conjunction with repentance.**

- 1) Lev. 16; Jonah 3; Isaiah 58:1-13.

#### **c. Fasting is often coupled with prayer. (Luke 2:37; 5:33)**

- 1) Brings an acute spiritual awareness. (Psalm 35:13; Acts 13:2)
- 2) Can bring spiritual victory. (2 Chron. 20:3)
- 3) Can build your faith and prepare you spiritually for demonic opposition. (Mark 9:19, 29)

#### **d. Fasting is not to be used to...**

- 1) Be blessed by God.
  - a) God is not obligated to work because we fast. God will work on our behalf because of His grace!
- 2) Punish the flesh, but to redirect attention to God.
- 3) For dieting.
  - a) The purpose of a biblical fast is not to lose weight, but rather to gain deeper fellowship with God.
  - b) **NOTE:** Anyone can fast, but some may not be able to fast from food (ex. = diabetics, etc...)

#### **e. NOTE:** Although fasting in Scripture is almost always a fasting from food, there are other ways to fast.

- 1) From personal comforts. (i.e. ESPN, TV, coffee, etc...)
- 2) From sex. (cf. 1 Cor. 7:1-5)
- 3) Daniel fast – i.e. Only fruits and vegetables.
- 4) Total fast – i.e. No food or water.

- f. **KEY: Fasting should be to take your eyes off the things of this world to focus completely on God.** It is a way to demonstrate to God, and to ourselves, that we are serious about our relationship with Him. It helps us gain a new perspective and a renewed reliance upon God.
- g. **KEY: Everyone can temporarily give up something in order to draw closer to God.**

#### 4. The disciples were not to fast because it is a time of rejoicing!

- a. After a Jewish wedding, the couple did not go away for a honeymoon. They stayed at home! For a week or so they had an open house and continual feasting and rejoicing!
  - 1) There was a rabbinic ruling that said: "*All in attendance on the bridegroom are relieved of all religious observances which would lessen their joy.*" Thus, the wedding guests were exempt from fasting!

### B. The Real Issue of New Wine. (v. 21-22)

#### 1. (v. 21) New Patch – New Garment.

- a. If you wash a new garment, it shrinks. So if you put a new patch on an old garment that already shrank, when you wash it, the patch will shrink and rip the old garment.
  - 1) **Illust** – You older folks remember patching the holes in your jeans!... My generation buys jeans with the holes already in them!
  - 2) **Illust** – When I was little, my mom used to make my shorts that were called "Jams". I hated those things. One time I went to my Kung-Fu lesson, and my shorts ripped up the back.

#### 2. (v. 22) New Wine – New Wineskins.

- a. This is something the Jews would understand. They loved wine, and they always had wine at their weddings and feasts.
  - 1) A wineskin was a goatskin that was removed without slitting it. The openings at the feet and tail were closed, leaving the neck as well as the mouth. If you put wine into these wineskins, there's a chemical reaction. So you need a new one so it stretches and bubbles until it's done fermenting. And if you put new wine into an old wineskin that's already hard, set, and established (like Judaism), it would burst.

- b. Jesus was saying, "My Spirit doesn't fit into that religion. If I were to try and fit, it would just burst."
- c. Jesus wasn't fixing the Old Covenant, but establishing a New Covenant.
  - 1) Jesus doesn't want to change your life, but give you a new one.
  - 2) Paul said, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (2 Cor. 5:17)
- d. **New wine is NOT...**
  - 1) Any experience that contradicts the Word of God.
  - 2) Some charismatic groups talk about...
    - a) "Drunk in the Spirit"
    - b) Barking like dogs.
    - c) Slain in the Spirit.
- e. **There have been times in history that God has gone outside of the established system to continue His work.**
  - 1) The Reformation – God used Martin Luther outside of the Roman Catholic Church.
  - 2) John Wesley had to leave the Church of England.
  - 3) Evan Roberts was used in the Welsh Revival that was beyond any one denominational system.
  - 4) Chuck Smith had to leave the Foursquare denomination and God used him in the Calvary Chapel movement.
  - 5) If Calvary Chapel ever becomes an Old wineskin, then God will have to go outside Calvary Chapel, etc...

## II. Why are they not keeping the Sabbath? (v. 23-28)

### A. Verse 23.

1. There is an interesting law in the O.T. that allowed people to pick grain from your field. When you harvested, you had to leave some in the corner of your fields for the poor and the stranger.
  - a. **Leviticus 19:9-10** says, "*And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of*

*thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God."*

- b. **Leviticus 23:22** *"And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the LORD your God."*
- c. **Deuteronomy 24:19** *"When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands."*

2. It was okay for the disciples to pick grain in this field because...

- a. They were allowed under the Law.
- b. They were hungry.

## B. Verse 24

- 1. *"And the Pharisees said unto Him, Behold, why do they on the Sabbath day that which is not lawful?"*
  - a. *"Said"* – imperfect tense, lit. *"kept on saying."*
    - 1) **Illust.** – Liesl loves it when I tell her that I love her all the time. There are times I'll joke around with Liesl and I'll say, "Did I tell you I loved you on our wedding day?" "Yes." "Well, if anything changes, I'll let you know!"
  - b. *"Why do they on the Sabbath day that which is not lawful?"*
    - 1) **Exodus 20:9-11.**
    - 2) **Q** = What does it mean to "work on the Sabbath?"
      - a) They didn't know what it meant to work on the Sabbath, so they had to interpret it, and they had a **24 chapter commentary** on that one law, which is called the **Mishnah**.
        - 1. They had one of the little rabbis walk until he started to sweat and said, "Now he's working."
      - b) Then they had to interpret the **Mishnah**, so they had a commentary on that called the **Talmud**.
  - c. According to the Jewish leaders, because the disciples did it on the Sabbath, they committed at least two sins.

- 1) The disciples were committing two sins by...
  - a) Plucking the ears of corn.
  - b) Rubbing them in their hand.
    1. Thus, they were sifting in a sieve, threshing, sifting out fruit, grinding, or fanning (which were all not allowed on the Sabbath day).
- d. Then you have Jesus' argument from scripture. (v. 25-28)

### C. Verses 25-26

#### 1. Jesus' argument is based on the scriptures.

- a. "Have you never read what David did, when he had need, and was hungry, he, and they that were with him?"
  - 1) In the Jewish mind, David was a great man that had a zeal for the Law of God, and so Jesus is referring to **1 Samuel 21:1-6** to show them their hypocrisy.
  - 2) Alfred Edersheim said, "Although, by the letter of the Levitical Law, (Lev. 24:5-9) it was only to be eaten by the priests, Jewish tradition vindicated his conduct on the plea that 'danger to life superseded the Sabbath-Law', and hence, all laws connected with it..."<sup>1</sup>
    - a) KEY: Even in their own laws they knew that human need superseded the Law.**
      - 1. "Pekuah Nephesh" – "to the saving of the soul"**
- b. God cares more about the internal condition of the heart than the outward observance of His own ceremonial regulations.
  - 1) Jesus used this action of David, which God did not condemn, to show that the Pharisees' narrow interpretation of the Law blurred God's intention.<sup>2</sup>
- c. The Pharisees were more concerned about their "Pharisaic" laws than the "Divine Law" of God.
- d. God cares more about the heart than outward actions. He cares more about the *spirit* of the law than the *legal requirements* of it. (cf. 2 Corinthians 3)

#### 2. Q = As Christians, are we to keep the Sabbath day?... **Not legally!**

- a. We are not under the Old Covenant, but the New Covenant.

<sup>1</sup> Edersheim, Alfred. "The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah", vol. 1, p. 509, Ch. 35

<sup>2</sup> Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 114

### 1) Jesus is our Sabbath.

- a) Paul said, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the substance is of Christ." (Col. 2:16-17)
  - 2) We do not have to keep all the Jewish observances and just lay around all day one day a week, even though that might be good for us.
  - 3) We are to just rest in Christ, and serve Him, no matter what day it is.
- b. However, because the Lord gave us a day to rest, we should take advantage of it. "The Sabbath was made for man!" It is a blessing, not a legal requirement.

### 3. "In the days of Abiathar."

- a. In 1 Samuel 21, it gives the name "**Ahimelech**", the father of **Abiathar**.
- b. **Q** = Did Jesus mess up? No. Here are some possibilities:
  - 1) They each had both names. (1 Chron. 18:16 w/ 24:6; 1 Sam 22:20 w/ 2 Sam 8:17)
  - 2) Both the father and the son were there when David came to Nob, and both gave the bread to David.
  - 3) Jesus was referring to the O.T. passage about Abiathar rather than the man.
    - a) This was the way the Jews identified sections of scripture since they didn't have the Chapter breaks and verse numbers.

## D. Verses 27-28

1. **NOTE:** In these two verses, Jesus answers the Pharisees question in verse 24.
2. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath."
  - a. Man was created on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of creation (Gen. 1:26-31).
  - b. The day started in the evening, so after Adam and Eve were created, they were to enter a day of rest.
3. "Therefore Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath."

- a. *"The Son of Man"* is a Messianic title.
  - 1) Daniel 7:13-14; Mark 2:10, 28; 8:31, 38; 9:9, 12, 31; 10:33, 45; 13:26, 32; 14:21, 41.
  
- b. *"Lord"* – Gr. *kurios*, "he to whom a person or thing belongs; owner"
  - 1) This word in the Septuagint (LXX) is the word for LORD (YHVH) in the Old Testament.
  - 2) The Messiah is Jehovah.
  
- c. The Messiah is the Lord of the Sabbath because He's God.