

Mark 2:13 Then He went out again by the sea; and all the multitude came to Him, and He taught them.

Jesus continued to teach, remember in Mark 1:28 Jesus had to go to the unwalled cities to teach people - for this purpose I have come forth

14 As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him.

Levi (also known as Matthew in Matthew 9:9) was a tax collector. In that day, tax collectors were despised as traitors and extortioners. Bid, collect, keep the extra, have the support of Roman soldiers. Most visible collaborators with Rome. Treated much like the leper but chose to be that way. Love of Jesus to invite Levi.

15 Now it happened, as He was dining in Levi's house, that many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him. 16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, "How is it that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?" 17 When Jesus heard it, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

Eating at the same table with people was a sign of friendship and relationship. Jesus was the friend of sinners.

Pharisees were a conservative religious group that often found themselves in disagreement, contention with Jesus.

Pharisee = separated ones - the holy one - everyone else is not

Jesus is the physician of the soul healing the sickness of sin. - Jesus likens those who are well to those who are righteous, and those who are sick to sinners

18 The disciples of John and of the Pharisees were fasting. Then they came and said to Him, "Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" 19 And Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast. 20 But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days."

Comparing yourself to others doesn't usually work out so well.

Weddings were to be a time of joy - so much so that religious rituals were waved by the Rabbis for weddings.

"Taken away" is an indirect prediction of Jesus' death. Jesus knew he wouldn't always be with them physically (taken away), but while he was it was to be joyous.

They will then return to the practice of **fasting to seek the presence of God**

21 No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; or else the new piece pulls away from the old, and the tear is made worse. 22 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins.”

If we try to make the Gospel fit into the old system of Judaism - you end up with a big mess. It will lose strength, tear, explode. Jesus came to introduce something new, not to patch up something old. This is what salvation is all about. In doing this, Jesus doesn't destroy the old (the law), but He fulfills it

23 Now it happened that He went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and as they went His disciples began to pluck the heads of grain. 24 And the Pharisees said to Him, “Look, why do they do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?”

There were 39 types of work, types of activity, you could not do on the Sabbath.

Deut 23:25 When you come into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not use a sickle on your neighbor's standing grain.

The Pharisees were not upset that they took the grain, but that they did this on a Sabbath Day. Work = Reaping, threshing, winnowing, and preparing food.

Jesus never broke the sabbath as He designed it, but often broke the religious rules that men designed regarding the Sabbath.

25 But He said to them, “Have you never read what David did when he was in need and hungry, he and those with him: 26 how he went into the house of God *in the days* of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the showbread, which is not lawful to eat except for the priests, and also gave some to those who were with him?”

By bringing up a David story - this will get their attention because he is a national hero.

Love is the supreme law - meeting human need overrides religious regulations - Jesus took it up a notch and used an example of His own law being broken to meet human need.

27 And He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. 28 Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.”

“Any application of the Sabbath Law which operates to the detriment of man is out of harmony with God's purpose.” (Morgan)

Sabbath was designed to be refreshing, revitalizing, rejuvenating, through relationship, through fellowship with God in His presence. Sabbath is a gift given to Man, in a strong sense it is God giving of Himself to Man.

Who rested on the 7th day - God What did humans experience their first full day of existence - the Sabbath.

Sabbath is pleasure, joy, it is enjoying the work of your hands/creation. Not a burden, weight, stressor.

We are to be lords over Sabbath, not have Sabbath lord over us. Then Jesus says He is the Son of Man - is Lord of the Sabbath - has authority over it.

The sabbath is going to become a major bone of contention for the Pharisees.

Mark 3:1 And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand. 2 So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him.

They were on Sabbath alert - and they expected that Jesus might heal this man's hand.

3 And He said to the man who had the withered hand, "Step forward." 4 Then He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they kept silent.

Yes it is lawful to do good and save life - the Sabbath is good and life giving. Love is the highest law. Two part two choice, multiple choice question -they are silent - because in their eyes you can't do either. In Jesus eyes they are being evil and destructive.

5 And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched *it* out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

Jesus did a classroom demonstration that it is lawful to do good and save life.

Why was Jesus so angry? Because the sabbath day is a day of restoration, healing and the man made religious regulations had actually become an obstacle, roadblock to the very purpose of the day.

Their hearts were as shriveled as the man's hand. They were insecure and anxious about the regulations, making them judgmental and self-righteous.

6 Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

The pharisees on the other hand are doing evil, and plotting to destroy Jesus.

Last week Jesus claimed to be able to forgive sins, which the religious leaders were able to call blasphemy. Jesus one upped Himself this week and they don't even have a word to describe it. Their response is we need to destroy this man.

One of the results of Jesus coming to earth - fully God - fully man - living a sinless life - dying in our place and rising again on the third day - is that He is not here to reform the religion he created (patch and wineskins)- judaism - He is here to fulfill it and replace it with Himself. So Christianity is not a religion - it is a relationship with Jesus.

From the two Sabbath incidents - eating the grain, and healing the withered hand We can learn about the fruitlessness of religion and the finality of Jesus Christ.

Don't break the Sabbath was one of Jesus big 10. Rest on the 7th day, don't commit adultery, don't lie, don't covet...

There are two different ways to approach the big ten. One is to see it as a burden the other is to see it as a blessing. One sees the law as a task master they are enslaved to, and it is always beating them up, making them feel guilty. The other sees the big ten as a blessing, it is a gift to guide us into a fruitful and thriving life.

What makes the difference - the first is religion - the second is relationship - the difference is which side of the gospel you are on. Take on the law as a way to redeem yourself - prove yourself acceptable to God by good works, that is a burden.

Be totally redeemed by the finished work of Jesus Christ - be justified with the goodness and righteousness of Jesus - then the law is a guide to a better relationship with Jesus.

The law of God is a way of showing you how to love God and how to love others instead of being absorbed on yourself.

Love thing, not a legal thing. The legal part has been done away with because Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the law.

Religion - I obey therefore I am accepted - **The Gospel** - I am fully accepted in Christ, therefore I obey.

Every other religion, including Christianity as a religion and secular humanism - you redeem yourself by good works. The Gospel is a relationship with God through Jesus redemption - says the work of redemption is finished.

You are of such value and worth to God, you are worth dying for. There is no amount of work you could do, no good enough life you could live to attain that much value.

In religion you only get a sense of being saved, an assurance that you of some worth, that you are good, a feeling of redemption by being better than everybody else. Because religion is performance based and the only way to feel good is to get an A on the test.

Kids who only care about getting A's (performance) vs kids who never get A's (growth).

The kids who only care about getting an A - because that A makes them important, gives them a sense of value, worth, being somebody - they want details, they are ready to memorize all the rules, to do things exactly by the book - it's not about learning and growth - it is about being right and getting the grade - being better than everybody else, better at all the details.

The Gospel says you have an assurance of salvation, and it is received by humility and admitting that you are no better than anybody else. I could never live up to the law - I'll never get an A - but since I am accepted, adopted, and adored by God, then I will engage in a life long relationship and desire to grow in the Law. Living in the Gospel, it is not about the details. In the gospel you look at the broad motivations and trajectory of the law.

One of the coolest things about the Gospel is that it is offensive to everyone. Grace is scandalous. In this story we see the religious leaders conspire with the Herodians, to destroy Jesus. The religious conspire with the irreligious to go after Jesus. Why because the religious and irreligious are ultimately the same people, performance based redemption.

The gospel does not say the good are in and the bad are out, nor that the open-minded are in and the judgmental are out. The gospel says the humble are in and the proud are out. Think of Nicodemus and the woman at the well in Samaria. Both needed Jesus.

The finality of Jesus - the work is finished - so we have rest.

27 And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. 28 Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."

The Sabbath is made for humanity, it is important, it is part of your thriving, fruitfulness, and growth, but I must shed all the performance luggage you've made it into.

Jesus claimed to be the Son of Man and which makes Him the Divine authority over the Sabbath.

The word Sabbath means the deep rest, deep peace. It's almost a synonym for shalom.

Jesus says, "I am the Lord of rest. I am the source of the deep rest you need. I am the Sabbath.

Matthew 11, he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

When the Bible calls you to rest, there are two levels. The first level is you need to take time off. You have to have physical and mental time off from your work.

There's a deeper level of rest. At the end of Genesis 1, when God created the world, it says he rested from his work. What does that mean? Does God get tired?

The answer is to rest is to be so utterly satisfied with your work that you can leave it alone. When God got done creating the world, what did he say? "It is good." He rested. To rest means to be so satisfied with something you can stop and enjoy it. This is the level of rest that God has for you.

The work underneath your work, the real weariness, comes from this need to prove yourself because you're not satisfied with who you are, you're never satisfied, it's never good enough, the work never ends.

Jesus says to us, "I have completed that work. I have lived the life you should've lived. I have died the death you should've died. If you rest in my finished work, God is satisfied with you, and you can be satisfied with life."

Life is a radically different experience when you work, serve, and grow from the place of deep rest. How you use the gifts and talents God has given you. The motivation of your pursuits. Your availability for others. How you handle success and failure.

There is no rest in redeeming yourself - there is no rest in proving your worth - there is no rest in trying to prove you are somebody.

When Jesus declared it is finished on the cross - the work of forgiveness, redemption, salvation - provided your forgiveness, paid your redemption, accomplished your salvation. Declared you are priceless and loved by God. You are a new creation in Christ Jesus - therefore everyday is the 7th day - enjoy the deep rest you can in your soul.