

Spiritual Growth Questions for February 20, 2022

Opener: What has God been teaching you this week? Describe an event where you saw God's hand in your life?

1. **Read Mark 2:23-27.** David broke the Law of Moses concerning the holy bread. Jesus' disciples broke the Pharisees' interpretation of the Law concerning the Sabbath (the Pharisees said picking even a few grains counted as work, which was forbidden on the Sabbath). In your own words, tell why both David and Jesus' disciples were justified in breaking the Law. Why is Jesus' appeal to Scripture (2:24) so important in this narrative?
2. **Read Mark 2:28.** Why do you suppose Jesus says that He is "Lord even of the Sabbath" (2:28)? What is the significance of Jesus putting himself on par with David in his response? Can you think of a time when the requirements of your Christian faith appeared to be in conflict with human need? 2:23-28. How did you respond? Did you think you responded correctly?
3. **Read Mark 3:1-6.** On another sabbath, Jesus heals a man with a withered hand. Why does he perform this healing when he knows people are watching for something to accuse him of 3:1-6? How do you see His mercy being revealed in this passage?
4. The rabbinic tradition had turned the Sabbath from a great gift to a laborious burden. Where do you see this type of legalism within the Christian community? Are there ways you see in yourself that are similar? How do you discern it? How do you deal with it?
5. **Read Matthew 11:18-30.** Discuss only in Jesus is real Sabbath rest found. In most of the Western world, society as a whole no longer observes the sabbath as it did in past generations. How can we learn to live in a rhythm of work and rest without becoming legalists in the process? Why is the Sabbath truly a gift for us?
6. **As we look back on Mark 2:1-3:6,** we see five distinct stories about how the kingdom of God is breaking through in lives. We see Jesus modeling ministry for the disciples. We also see opposition opposing and growing against Jesus. The clash of authority is not over the rules but who rules." How could each of these stories have helped the church at Rome and also for us today living in a post-Christian society?
7. How has God's mercy delivered you from the "rat race" on this earth?

How can we pray for you this week?

New Life Through Jesus: A study of the Gospel of Mark His Mercy is More Mark 2:23-3:6 February 20, 2022, Pastor John Lloyd

We will continue a new study this week called "New Life through Jesus: a study of the Gospel of Mark." This Gospel is the oldest gospel, and it is an assortative biography of Jesus. It is a book that narrates the life of Jesus. The writer, John Mark who wrote these accounts from the apostle Peter, wants his readers to not only to know the testimony of Jesus but also is inviting them to become part of the story itself. I believe God is offering each one of us new life through Jesus. He is also wanting the mission of Jesus to become our purpose for 2022. It is truly a revelation (unveiling) when we discern who Jesus is and what He desires to do through His yielded followers. In our passage for today, we will see how a religious outlook without the Holy Spirit withers mercy. Serving the various idols and gods of this world dry up our souls. We truly need the gift of time that the Sabbath can bring. We are blessed to be able to have the opportunity to serve and worship our merciful Lord. Jesus is our true merciful Sabbath rest. His mercy is more!

Key Questions: Why are they (the disciples and Jesus) doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath? Have you not read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry? Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?

Mark 2:23 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." **3:1** 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.

Big Idea: True rest is found in our merciful Lord. His mercy brings real healing and rest. His Mercy Is More!

I. His mercy is more than a _____ .

Mark 2:23 One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain.

Certain areas of a field were reserved for travelers and foreigners (Deut. 23:25) so taking the grain was not a problem.
Mark 2:24 Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?"

Jewish tradition stated that there were thirty-nine acts that were strictly forbidden on the Sabbath. Moses had prohibited work on the Sabbath, but he did not give many specifics (Ex. 20:10). It was wrong to kindle a fire for cooking (Ex. 35:3), gather fuel (Num. 15:32ff), carry burdens (Jer. 17:21ff), or transact business (Neh. 10:31; 13:15, 19), Warren Wiersbe.

Mark 2:25 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?"

Have you never read- (I Samuel 21:1-6)

**Reject our tendency to spoil God given blessings!
The truth of God's merciful Word sets us free! His Mercy is More!**

II. His mercy is more _____ than _____ .

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

The true purpose of the Sabbath laws is worship and rest. The true purpose of the Sabbath was to meet the needs of the people. It was never intended to create a situation in which basic human needs went unmet. Sabbath was not meant to be a burden but a blessing. Grant Osbourne

Matthew 12:6 I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. 7 And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. 8 For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.

Sabbath observance was regarded as a way to honor the holiness of Yahweh. The Sabbath "was a sanctuary in time." (Exodus 20:8-11, Deut. 5:12-15). Our daily struggles may produce economic triumphs but can make our lives a spiritual wasteland. David Garland

New Testament Sabbath struggles: (See Galatians 4:10, Colossians 2:16).

Matthew 11:28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 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. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Some Sabbath suggestions:

A day of rest is gift! It is also a time for doing good! His Mercy is More!

III. His mercy is more _____ than _____ !

Mark 3:1 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.

They might accuse him-

Mark 3:3 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.

Mark 3:5 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.

Expect opposition but be concerned for the hard hearted.

The Pharisees didn't care a bit about the welfare of this man. Jesus wanted to do good on the Sabbath while the Pharisees conspired to do evil. The evil Pharisees conspired to do evil' to condemn Jesus for doing good. Swindoll.

Isaiah 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—everyone—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

He welcomes the weakest, the vilest, the poor. What riches of kindness He lavished on us. His blood was the payment His life was the cost. We stood 'neath a debt we could never afford. Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

May we stretch out our withered hands to Jesus and ask for His merciful healing of our lives! **His Mercy is More!**