

Mark 02 - Jewish Response to Healing the Leper; Call of Matthew; Disciples Eat With Sinners; Jesus Challenges Sabbath Law

II. Ministry of the servant (Mark 1:21—3:19)

- (6) Healing of the paralytic (2:1-12)
- (7) Calling of Levi (2:13-17)
- (8) Christ's service is beyond the pharisaical system (2:18-22)
- (9) Christ defends the disciples (2:23-28)

Mark 2

- (6) Healing of the paralytic (2:1-12) (Cf. Luke 5:17-26)

1 When Jesus came back to Capernaum **a few days later**, it was heard that He was **at home**.

1 When He had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home.

1 Several days later, Jesus returned to Capernaum and it was reported that he was at home.

1 And again he entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house.

— "...a few days later" - translates a Jewish phrase that means "after a considerable interval"

— When Jesus returned to Capernaum after a preaching tour, it did not take long for news of His arrival to circulate

— Soon, locals were mobbing Him, so much so that He could not find a restful retreat, even at home

— "...at home" - some suspect that it was Peter's house

— Churches would have no attendance problem if it was "noised that Christ is in their house"

2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer space, not even near the door; and He was **speaking the word** to them.

2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, not even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them.

2 Such a large crowd gathered that there wasn't room for them, even in front of the door. Jesus was speaking his message to them

2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.

- "...speaking the word" - note the emphasis upon the integrity and inerrancy of the Word of God. It will never return to Him void (Is 55:11)

3 And *some people* *came, bringing to Him a man who was **paralyzed**, carried by four men.

3 And they *came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men.

3 when some people came and brought him a paralyzed man being carried by four men.

3 And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

- "...paralyzed" - *paralutikosis*, a paralytic; fine illustration of Mark's vivid dramatic historical present

— The man was literally "without strength"; he thus symbolizes all men in their sins

— We are all spiritual cripples (Rom 5:6)

— Four men carried the man to Jesus' house because he was unable to walk

4 And when they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and after digging an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralyzed man was lying.

4 Being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying.

4 Since they couldn't bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof over the place where he was. They dug through it and let down the mat on which the paralyzed man was lying.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

- They must have been unconcerned about the damage they were doing to someone else's home, or the shower of dirt and debris they sent raining down on everyone below

— We all have a tremendous obligation to bring our needy loved ones into the presence of Jesus—even if it was inconvenient and unconventional!

5 And Jesus, **seeing their faith**, *said to the paralyzed man, "**Son, your sins are forgiven.**"

5 And Jesus seeing their faith *said to the paralytic, "**Son, your sins are forgiven.**"

5 When Jesus saw their faith, he told the paralyzed man, "**Son, your sins are forgiven.**"

5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

- "...seeing their faith" - their faith was evidenced by works. Actions speak louder than words.

— In the OT, physical healing and forgiveness of sins were intimately connected (Ps 103:3; 67:2; Is 58:8)

— Cf. Paul's prayer of Gaius (3 John 2)

— While God may have some hidden purpose, we may still pray for healing (James 5:16)

- Jesus dealt with their friend's need better than they had expected

— Sin is the root cause of all sickness, so by forgiving his sins, Jesus dealt with the ultimate cause

— We might think that Jesus was only announcing God's forgiveness in view of their faith (Cf. Nathan announcing God's forgiveness of David, 2 Sam 12:13), but the scribes took Jesus' statement as blasphemy (v7)

6 But some of the scribes were sitting there and thinking *it* over in their hearts,

6 But some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts,

6 Now some scribes were sitting there, arguing among themselves,

6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

- Since this was only the "stage of observation" (see note: **Convention in Capernaum** on Luke 5:17), they were not allowed to raise questions or objections

7 "Why does **this man** speak that way? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins except God alone?"

7 "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?"

7 "Why does this man talk this way? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

7 Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?

- They were dead right: this prerogative belonged to God alone (Cf. Ex 34:6-9; Ps 103:3; 130:4; Is 43:25; 44:22; 48:11; Dan 9:9; Micah 7:18)

— We, again, owe a debt of gratitude to the Pharisees: whenever we might miss a key point, they always come to our rescue. Whenever they are upset, examine the text closely to uncover the reason why! Cf. Luke 4:28-29 (Gentile election); Luke 19:39-40 (Daniel's 69th week)

— The Jews believed that even the Messiah could not forgive sins because the OT never attributed that power to Him

— ***It is disturbing to note that the professional theologians were the last to understand the times***

- They later condemned Him to death for what they considered blasphemy (14:61-64)
- "...this man" - *hootos*, a derogatory construction in the Greek

8 Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were **thinking that way within themselves**, *said to them, **"Why are you thinking about these things in your hearts?**

8 Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, *said to them, **"Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts?**

8 At once, Jesus knew in his spirit what they were saying to themselves. **"Why are you arguing about such things among yourselves?"** he asked them.

8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, **Why reason ye these things in your hearts?**

— "...thinking that way within themselves" - Jesus knew their thoughts (Ps 94:11; 139:2)

— This appears to be simple discernment (Cf. 5:30; 8:12) rather than supernatural prophetic insight

9 Which is easier, to say to the paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'?

9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk'?

9 "Which is easier: to say to the paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or 'Get up, pick up your mat, and walk'?

9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

— The easier thing to say was, "Your sins are forgiven" because that required no tangible, external and observable evidence

— To state that a palsied man was going to be healed was a harder thing to say because that did require external and observable evidence

— Both forgiving sins and healing a man of palsy are both equally impossible tasks for men

Jesus goes on to say (v10-12) that He was going to prove that He could say the easier "Your sins are forgiven" by performing the harder, healing the palsied man. He proceeded to heal the palsied man. There was instantaneous, observable evidence, because the man was able to stand up, walk around, and even carry his own bed. Doing the more difficult (healing the man) proved that Jesus could say (and do) the easier, that this man's sins were also forgiven. If Jesus could forgive sins, then it meant that He was who He claimed to be: the Messiah.

10 But so that you may know that the **Son of Man** has authority on earth to forgive sins"—
He *said to the paralyzed man,

10 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—
He *said to the paralytic,

10 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..."
Then he told the paralyzed man,

10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith
to the sick of the palsy,)

- "...Son of Man" - title used 14x in Mark's Gospel; 80x in the Gospels
- A Messianic title (Dan 7:13-14)
- Jesus used this title of Himself when He spoke of His sufferings and death (8:31; 9:9-13,31; 10:33,45; 14:21,41); He also used it when speaking of His future return in glory (8:38; 13:26,32; 14:62)
- Thus, He used this title to blend the concepts of Suffering Servant and the Messiah in His listeners' minds
- "...He said to the paralyzed man" - this remarkable parenthesis in the middle of the sentence occurs also in Matt 9:6 and Luke 5:24, suggesting that both Matthew and Luke followed Mark's narrative.

11 "I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet, and go home."

11 "I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home."

11 "I say to you, get up, pick up your mat, and go home!"

11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.

- Jesus chose to do what they considered harder to show that He could also do what they considered easier

- Jesus gave the paralytic three commands:

— "Arise" tested his faith

— "take up thy bed" required him to assume responsibility for himself that others had previous shouldered

— "go thy way into thine house" gave him the direction that he needed

12 And he got up and **immediately** picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all **amazed** and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen *anything* like this!"

12 And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone, so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

12 So the man got up, immediately picked up his mat, and went out in front of all of them. As a result, all of the people were amazed and began to glorify God as they kept on saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

- "...immediately" - Mark's favorite word; the man responded to all three commands "immediately" and obediently

- "...amazed" - *existasthai*, out of their minds; they had witnessed something that no one had ever seen before

- But that is not enough. There is no emotion more transient or less fruitful than gaping astonishment. That piddling acknowledgment of God's power led to nothing: Later Jesus would say of this very town:

Matt 11:23-24:

23 And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades! For if the miracles that occurred in you had occurred in Sodom, it would have remained to this day.

24 Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom on *the day of judgment*, than for you."

In response to the first messianic miracle of the healing of a leper, the intensive investigation of His messianic claims began. The leaders observed Jesus claiming the right to forgive sins. Therefore, He was either a blasphemer or the Messiah. The leadership of Israel would return to Jerusalem and decree the movement of Jesus as significant. After this event, Jesus began undergoing the second stage of the Sanhedrin investigation, the stage of interrogation. Between the performance of the first messianic miracle and the second messianic miracle, everywhere Jesus went a Pharisee was sure to follow. This time, they were no longer silent. Everywhere He went, a Pharisee was always there asking questions or raising objections. They were trying to find a basis for rejecting or accepting His messianic claims.

The Call of Matthew (Cf. Matt 9:9; Luke 5:27-28)

The call of Levi was the culmination of the previous two miracles: the cleansing of the leper and the man taken with palsy. Jesus had demonstrated His authority to make a person ceremonially clean and to forgive sins. Now those two authorities were brought to bear on one who was to become His disciple.

(7) Calling of Levi (2:13-17)

13 And He went out again by the seashore; and all the people were coming to Him, and He was teaching them.

13 And He went out again by the seashore; and all the people were coming to Him, and He was teaching them.

13 Jesus went out again beside the sea. The whole crowd kept coming to him, and he kept teaching them.

13 And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

- Jesus' pattern of teaching then retreating is a common theme in Mark's Gospel

— After demonstrating the saving power of God, Jesus withdraws from the populace to a lonely region, either the wilderness, the mountain or the sea

14 As He passed by, He saw **Levi** the **son of Alphaeus** sitting in the tax office, and He

*said to him, **“Follow Me!”** And he got up and followed Him.

14 As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax booth, and He *said to him, **“Follow Me!”** And he got up and followed Him.

14 As he was walking along, he saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting at the tax collector's desk. Jesus told him, **“Follow me!”** So Levi got up and followed him.

14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, **Follow me.** And he arose and followed him.

- Matthew was a customs official; as such, he had to be skilled in shorthand (that's why his gospel details Jesus' main discourses: he probably took them down verbatim!)

- The challenge of Jesus was sudden and sharp, but Levi (Matthew) was ready to respond at once. He had heard of Jesus and quickly decided. Great decisions are often made on a moment's notice.

— Matthew gave up a lucrative business when he chose to follow Jesus. A fisherman could return to fishing, but a tax collector could not return to his job since many people competed for his career—even though it involved social ostracism.

- "...Levi" - tribe of Levi; the tax collectors were on an incentive: they purchased the franchise and had incentives to be rigorous. He knew he had burned his bridges; he could never go back. "He left everything behind" (Luke 5:28, NASB).

- "...son of Alphaeus" - the fact that Matthew (Levi) and James the Less had father named "Alphaeus" does not necessarily mean they were brothers. Apparently they were not. Alphaeus was a common name at the time.

The Disciples Eat With Sinners (Cf. Matt 9:10-13; Luke 5:29-32)

15 And it *happened that He was reclining at *the table* in his house, and many **tax collectors and sinners** were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of

them, and they were following Him.

15 And it *happened that He was reclining *at the table* in his house, and many tax collectors and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of them, and they were following Him.

15 Later, he was having dinner at Levi's house. Many tax collectors and sinners were also eating with Jesus and his disciples, because there were many who were following him.

15 And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

- Matthew (his new name: "Gift of God") apparently celebrated his new calling and allegiance with a feast (my kind of guy!)
- The feast took place in Matthew's home (Luke 5:29); he obviously was wealthy and had a large home to host "many"
- Hospitality was a sacred duty in that culture
- When someone invited someone else to eat with them, they were extending a pledge of loyalty and protection to that person
- To accept an invitation to dinner implied willingness to become a close friend of the host. Thus, Jesus acceptance of table fellowship with "sinners" conveyed by action the forgiveness He gave verbally (v5)
- "...tax collectors and sinners" - used 3x in two verses. It was an offense for a Jew to eat with Gentiles as many of the early Jewish Christians felt (Acts 11:3), and publicans and sinners were regarded like Gentiles (1 Cor 5:11).

16 When the scribes of the **Pharisees** saw that He was eating with the **sinners** and **taxcollectors**, they said to His disciples, "Why is He eating with tax collectors and sinners?"

16 When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they said to His disciples, "Why is He eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners?"

16 When the scribes and the Pharisees saw him eating with sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples, "Why does he eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

- "...Pharisees" - a progressive group among, though not of, the people
- Their goal was that Israel should become the righteous nation of the covenant
- To this end, they taught compliance with the "tradition of the elders," an oral code of conduct effectively adapting the law of Moses to later times and changing demands.

- "...sinners" - refers to those Jews who did not follow the Pharisees' traditions, as well as worse sinners
- Jesus' critics believed that He should not associate with such people if He had a genuine regard for the OT, as they professed to have. To do so risked ceremonial defilement
- "...tax collectors" - a bad reputation for dishonesty

17 And hearing *this*, Jesus *said to them, "*It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.*"

17 And hearing *this*, Jesus *said to them, "*It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.*"

17 When Jesus heard that, he told them, "*Healthy people don't need a physician, but sick ones do. I did not come to call righteous people, but sinners.*"

17 When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, *They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

- A great summary statement of Jesus' mission during His earthly ministry (Cf. 10:45)
- Self-righteous people like the Pharisees saw no need for true righteousness because they viewed themselves as already righteous
- However, the people the Pharisees viewed as "sinners" represented real sinners, those lacking righteousness
- Jesus spent time with "sinners" because they felt a need for what He had to offer, spiritual healing
- There are, of course, "none righteous" (Rom 3:10). It is the confessed sinner who finds mercy.

Many Pharisees and priests ultimately did come to faith in Christ (Cf. Acts 6:7); but there is no record of a Sadducee—the liberals of the day—coming to faith.

From the very outset of Jesus' ministry, people failed to understand that the heart and soul of Christianity is forgiveness, not law-keeping. It was a problem for the Pharisees here, and it remained a problem in the early church, as so many of Paul's epistles testify. And it's a problem for us today, both within the church and without. Most non-Christians today continue to believe that Christianity is really just another word for "trying to be good." And many Christians only add to the confusion by acting as if that indeed were the case.

(8) Christ's service is beyond the pharisaical system (2:18-22) t (Cf. Matt 9:14-17; Luke 5:33-39)

The Disciples Do Not Fast

18 John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they *came and *said to Him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?"

18 John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they *came and *said to Him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?"

18 Now John's disciples and the Pharisees would fast regularly. Some people came and asked Jesus, "Why do John's disciples and the Pharisees' disciples fast, but your disciples don't fast?"

18 And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?
- We don't know why the disciples of John the Baptist fasted. Perhaps because he was in prison, or possibly as an expression of repentance designed to hasten the coming of the kingdom

- The Pharisees fasted twice a week (Mon/Thurs, Luke 18:12). The feast at Levi's house may have occurred on one of those two days.

— Jesus' disciples were to fast (Cf. Matt 6:16-18), but they apparently did not observe the extra fasts that the Pharisees did

19 And Jesus said to them, **"While the groom is with them, the attendants of the groom cannot fast, can they? As long as they have the groom with them, they cannot fast.**

19 And Jesus said to them, **"While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom cannot fast, can they? So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.**

19 Jesus replied, **"The wedding guests can't fast while the groom is with them, can they? As long as they have the groom with them, they can't fast.**

19 And Jesus said unto them, **Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.**

- Christianity is, indeed, a wedding. Jesus is echoing the words of John the Baptist (John 3:29).

— Jesus had come to unite with Israel, His bride, as her Messiah

— The wedding banquet seemed just a short time away, as the OT prophets said it would occur after Messiah's death and resurrection, and after the Tribulation

20 **But the days will come when the groom is taken away from them, and then they will fast, on that day.**

20 **But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.**

20 But the time will come when the groom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day."

20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

- The first hint of His death and resurrection in Mark's Gospel
- Fasting is not just for the OT (Jesus fasted (Matt 4:2; 6:16-18; Mark 9:29; Acts 10:30; 13:2-3; 14:23; 1 Cor 7:5; 2 Cor 6:5; 11:27)
- The bridegroom would have to leave His friends and His bride before the banquet. While they were still together, they could rejoice, not mourn, which is what fasting represents.
- Jewish custom exempted the friends of the bridegroom from certain religious obligations, including participating in the weekly fasts
- Israel had been "married" to YHWH and they belonged to Him (Is 54:5; Jer 31:32). Their unfaithfulness was the primary theme in Hosea.

21 "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old **garment**; otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear results.

21 "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; otherwise the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear results.

21 "No one patches an old garment with a piece of unshrunk cloth. If he does, the patch pulls away from it—the new from the old—and a worse tear is made.

21 No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.

- Jesus gave two more short "parables" to clarify why fasting was inappropriate for Jesus' disciples at that time
- Not only was the timing wrong, but the messianic age that Jesus would introduce would render the old traditional forms of Judaism obsolete
- Judaism became the "old" and Jesus was going to set up a "new" form of God's kingdom on earth that would be similar to a new garment (Cf. Heb 8:13), the messianic kingdom
- He came to introduce the new, not patch up the old
- "...garment" - symbolized the covering of man's sinful condition in the OT (Gen 3:21; Is 61:10)
- The Jews were to lay aside the "old garment" of the Mosaic dispensation and put on "the new" garment of the messianic age

22 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."

22 No one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."

22 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will make the skins burst, and both the wine and the skins will be ruined. Instead, new wine is poured into fresh wineskins."

22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

- Jesus would establish a new covenant with His blood (Luke 22:19-20)
- The Law would be written on human hearts, not stones (2 Cor 3:1-3; Heb 10:15-18)
- The indwelling Holy Spirit would enable God's people to fulfill the righteousness of the Law (Rom 8:1-4)
- Judaism had become rigid and inflexible, mainly because of the traditions that encrusted it like old goatskins that contained wine. Jesus kingdom could not operate within those constraints, but would be a new and flexible way to bring "new wine" (joy) to humanity.

Jesus may have addressed the first of these short "parables" (v19-20) to John's disciples, since they anticipated a coming change. The second (v21) and third (v22) were directed more to the Pharisees, since they wanted to maintain the legalistic practices of Judaism that were now threadbare and inflexible.

Salvation is not patching up the old; you become a new creation (2 Cor 5:17). Blessed are the flexible for they shall not be broken. Ossification is one of the reasons the Holy Spirit tends to use new channels of communication. How tragic it is to retain dead religious traditions when one gains living spiritual truth. Why cherish shadows when the reality has come (Heb 10:1ff)?

(9) Christ defends the disciples (2:23-28) (Cf. Matt 12:1-8; Luke 6:1-5)

Controversy Over Grain on the Sabbath

23 And it happened that He was passing through the grainfields on the Sabbath, and His disciples began to make their way *along* while picking the heads of grain.

23 And it happened that He was passing through the grainfields on the Sabbath, and His disciples began to make their way along while picking the heads of grain.

23 Jesus happened to be going through the grain fields on a Sabbath. As they made their way, his disciples began picking the heads of grain.

23 And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn.

24 The Pharisees were saying to Him, "Look, why are they doing what is **notlawful** on the Sabbath?"

24 The Pharisees were saying to Him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?"

24 The Pharisees asked him, "Look! Why are they doing what is not lawful on Sabbath days?"

24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?

- "...not lawful" - this practice was in accordance with the Mosaic Law (Deut 23:25). It was also ordained in the Law of Gleaning (Lev 19:9-10; Deut 14:19-21; Cf. Ruth 2).

— However, by doing it on the Sabbath, the disciples violated a traditional Pharisaic interpretation of the law

— The Pharisees held that to do what the disciples did on the Sabbath constituted reaping, threshing and winnowing, and that was forbidden work on the Sabbath (Ex 20:10)

- Even today, we let the trivial obscure the perception of the critical; formalism rather than substance; etc. These were proud, covetous, liars, lustful; but they put their "holiness" on display to the public.

We are to be marked by love rather than doctrine. We must not enthrone orthodoxy at the expense of the substance of Christ: love. It is our union with Him that must eclipse the exaltation of the trivial...

25 And He *said to them, "**Have you never read** what David did when he was in need and **he and his companions became hungry**;

25 And He *said to them, "**Have you never read** what David did when he was in need and **he and his companions became hungry**;

25 He asked them, "**Haven't you read** what David did when **he and his companions were hungry and in need**?

25 And he said unto them, **Have ye never read** what David did, when he had need, and **was an hungred, he, and they that were with him**?

- "...Have you never read" - "Have you done your homework?" (Lev 24:9)

— The incident Jesus referred to is found in 1 Sam 21:1-6

— Jesus' point was that David broke the Law, as the Pharisees wrongly interpreted it, by eating bread that only the priests were to eat. Nevertheless he could do so because David's men were in need.

— The offense was a matter of incorrect Pharisaic interpretation, not a true violation of the Law

26 how he entered the house of God **in the time of Abiathar the high priest**, and ate the consecrated bread, which is not lawful for *anyone* to eat except the priests, and he also gave it to those who were with him?"

26 how he entered the house of God in the time of Abiathar *the* high priest, and ate the consecrated bread, which is not lawful for *anyone* to eat except the priests, and he also gave it to those who were with him?"

26 How was it that he went into the House of God during the lifetime of Abiathar the high priest and ate the Bread of the Presence, which was not lawful for anyone but the priests to eat, and gave some of it to his companions?"

26 How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?

- "...in the time of" - means "during the lifetime of" not necessarily "during the high priesthood of"

- "...Abiathar *the* high priest" - Mark notes Abiathar was the high priest, but 1 Sam (?:?) states that Ahimelech was the high priest

They had the most elaborate rules for the preparation of the shewbread, the loaves of presentation, the loaves of the face or presence of God. It was renewed on the commencement of the sabbath and the old bread deposited on the golden table in the porch of the Sanctuary. This old bread was eaten by the priests as they came and went. This is what David ate.

27 Jesus said to them, "**The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.**

27 Jesus said to them, "**The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.**

27 Then he told them, "**The Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath.**

27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

- The Pharisees had completely misconstrued the purpose of the Sabbath. They had made the Sabbath a "straitjacket" that inhibited the Jews, when Jesus Himself created the Sabbath to benefit man.

— Most of Jesus' theological tangles or arguments during His ministry revolve around Him doing something on the Sabbath, and the Pharisees not liking it.

— Jesus healed people on the Sabbath, feeding His disciples on the Sabbath, etc., and the Pharisees come along and tell Him that He's breaking their laws, their traditions.

— Jesus tells them that they don't understand the purpose of the Sabbath...but He does, because He brought the Sabbath into existence. Jesus created the Sabbath for the benefit of man, but the Pharisees, with their manmade rules, turned it into a burden for man.

- It was OK for the Pharisees to pull an ox out of a ditch on the Sabbath, but not OK for Jesus to heal a man, created in God's image, on the Sabbath. The Pharisees completely lost sight of the purpose and blessing of the Sabbath.
- Pharisaic Judaism taught that the reason God made Israel was for the Sabbath. Jesus taught that the exact opposite was true.
- The purpose of the Sabbath was to give Israel a day of refreshment and rest, not to enslave them to Sabbath Laws. Yet these 1500 additional rules and regulations had the effect of enslaving Jews to the Sabbath.

28 **So the Son of Man is Lord, even of the Sabbath."**

28 **So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."**

28 **Therefore, the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."**

28 **Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.**

- Because He is Lord, He is the "lord of the sabbath" (Matt 12:8; Cf. notes on Acts 10:36)

The final arbiter in the use of all things is love, not law.

| SABBATH CONTROVERSIES | | | | |
|--|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Event | Matthew | Mark | Luke | John |
| The disciples plucked ears of grain in Galilee. | 12:1-8 | 2:23-28 | 6:1-5 | |
| Jesus healed a paralytic at the Pool of Siloam in Jerusalem. | | | | 5:1-18 |
| Jesus healed a man with a withered hand in Capernaum. | 12:9-14 | 3:1-6 | 6:6-11 | |
| Jesus referred to the Jews circumcising on the Sabbath. | | | | 7:22-23 |
| Jesus healed a man born blind in Jerusalem. | | | | 9:1-34 |
| Jesus healed a woman bent over in Judea. | | | 13:10-17 | |
| Jesus healed a man with dropsy in Perea. | | | 14:1-6 | |