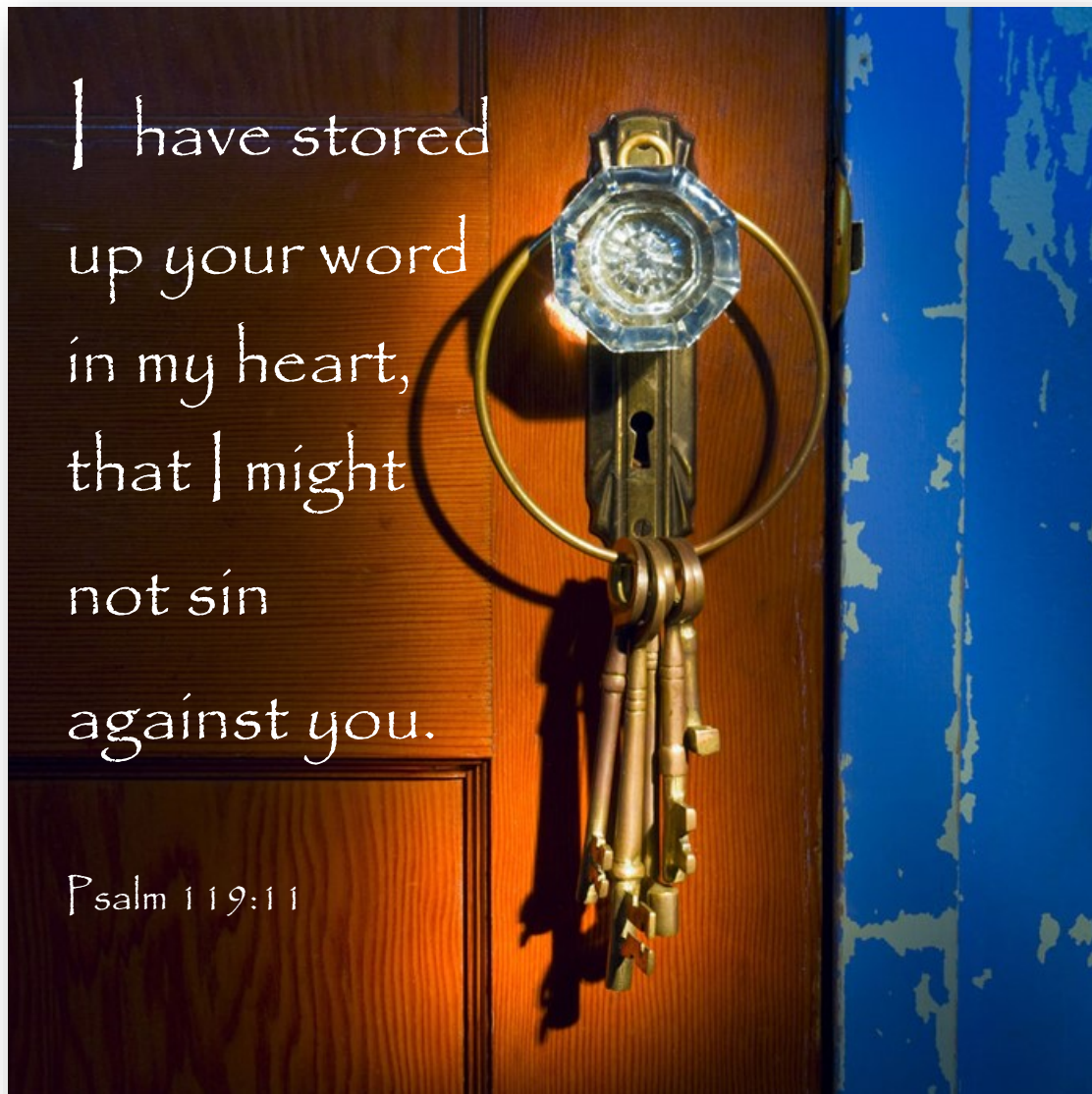


UNLOCKING THE WORD



THE GOSPEL OF MARK STUDY GUIDE

CHAPTER 2



CHAPTER 2

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THE BOOK OF MARK BACKGROUND

The Gospel of Mark—Jesus Christ Servant and King

Mark, or John Mark, is a Jew and the companion of the Apostle Peter. He presents Jesus to a Gentile Roman audience as the *suffering servant*, yet convincing them that this Jesus is the true King, The King of Kings. A hard sell and up hill task to the Roman mind, for who would want a servant as a king?

Rome was about “Empire”, strong, secure leadership. Slaves were servants not kings. Mark knows his audience’s Hellenistic worldview, that man is the captain of his own destiny; which the Roman’s exulted in society. Mark targets the four cultural pillars that Rome was built on: *Education, Heath Care, Entertainment, and Competition*, and writes to his audience with these in mind. You will find many references and descriptions of these four pillars woven into Mark’s gospel.

This Gospel could be called the *action gospel* as it unfolds rapidly. This would likely appeal to his hearers who are all about decisive action. This is not unlike our own western culture: the fast pace, get to the point, make your argument, give me the facts, hurry up and give me the answer. Whereas, Eastern thought learning happens via discovery and experience, taking the “long way” to enjoy the process of learning, like a treasure hunt.

Mark identifies more of the acts of Jesus and less about what Jesus taught. By doing so, Mark demonstrates what true Kingly behavior is: to serve and sacrifice for the empire, for the kingdom of God, something Romans would understand, a man of action.

Cont.

Gospel Outline

Mark's Gospel can be outlined in three large overarching scenes.

- The first is chapters 1-8 all of which take place in Galilee and ask the questions, “Who is Jesus?”
- Chapter's 11-16 asks the question “How Jesus becomes king?”, taking place in Jerusalem and that being the last week of Jesus' life. And in this case who finally “gets it” is a Roman soldier.
- Between those two scenes is chapters 8-10 creating a bridge with Jesus and the disciples traveling through the countryside on the way to Jerusalem and asks the question, “Who do you say I am?”, and Jesus will tell them the answer to the second question before they get to Jerusalem

Justin Martyr spoke of this Gospel as *“the memoirs of Peter”*. *Mark was a helper, he wasn't a preacher, an apostle, but a regular guy that God called to ministry.* He would have had the privilege to know both Peter and Paul —being taught by, working with and seeing them first hand begin this new work, “the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” The timeframe for this book ranges from AD 50-70, before the destruction of Jerusalem by Rome.

Important Cultural Players

Herodians—Tried to blend the Greek worldview with the Religious worldview by taking the best both. A little bit of the theater, luxury, leisure, healthcare, and have my synagogue worship.

Sadducees—They were priests but had pretty much the same view of the Herodians. They were secular in nature and had been for centuries which made them very corrupt.

Essenes—Priests who did not agree with the Sadducees and broke off separating themselves moving away from Jerusalem in to the wilderness. They devoted themselves to the learning, copying and living out scripture. We can thank them for much of the ancient manuscripts we have today.

Zealots—Devoted to doing the right things as part of upholding to Jewish culture and killing the Romans if they get in their way.

Pharisees—They took the same zeal and devotion as the Zealots but without the sword. More of a political means to change and stay in power.

The first reference to the author and circumstance of the Second Gospel comes from Papias, bishop of Hierapolis in Asia Minor, in a work entitled *Exegesis of the Lord's Oracles*, composed sometime prior to Papias's death in A.D. 130. Although the *Exegesis* has since been lost, Papias's testimony has been preserved by Eusebius in the following version:

Mark became Peter's interpreter and wrote accurately all that he remembered, not, indeed, in order, of the things said or done by the Lord. For Mark had not heard the Lord, nor had he followed him, but later on, as I said, followed Peter, who used to give teaching as necessity demanded but not making, as it were, an arrangement of the Lord's oracles, so that Mark did nothing wrong in thus writing down single points as he remembered them. For to one thing he gave attention, to leave out nothing of what he had heard and to make no false statements in them.

Characteristics of this gospel

1. Mark's Gospel unique among the Gospels. First, it emphasizes Jesus' actions more than His teaching. Mark recorded 18 of Jesus' miracles but only four of His parables (4:2–20, 26–29, 30–32; 12:1–9) and one major discourse (13:3–37). Repeatedly Mark wrote that Jesus taught without recording His teaching (1:21, 39; 2:2, 13; 6:2, 6, 34; 10:1; 12:35). Most of the teaching he did include came out of Jesus' controversies with the Jewish religious leaders (2:8–11, 19–22, 25–28; 3:23–30; 7:6–23; 10:2–12; 12:10–11, 13–40).

2. Mark's writing style is vivid, forceful, and descriptive, reflecting an eyewitness source such as Peter (cf., e.g., 2:4; 4:37–38; 5:2–5; 6:39; 7:33; 8:23–24; 14:54). His use of Greek is nonliterary, close to the everyday speech of that time with a recognizable Semitic flavoring. His use of Greek tenses, especially the "historical present" tense (used over 150 times), simple sentences linked by "and," frequent use of "immediately" (*euthys*; cf. comments on 1:10), and the use of forceful words (e.g., lit., "impelled," 1:12) lend vividness to his narrative.

3. Mark portrayed his subjects with unusual candor. He emphasized the responses of Jesus' hearers with various expressions of amazement (cf. comments on 1:22, 27; 2:12; 5:20; 9:15). He related the concern of Jesus' family over His mental health (cf. 3:21, 31–35). He candidly and repeatedly drew attention to the disciples' lack of understanding and failures (cf. 4:13; 6:52; 8:17, 21; 9:10, 32; 10:26). He also highlighted Jesus' emotions such as His compassion (1:41; 6:34; 8:2; 10:16), His anger and displeasure (1:43; 3:5; 8:33; 10:14), and His sighs of distress and sorrow (7:34; 8:12; 14:33–34).

4. Mark's Gospel is dominated by Jesus' movement toward the Cross and the Resurrection. From Mark 8:31 onward Jesus and His disciples were "on the way" (cf. 9:33; 10:32) from Caesarea Philippi in the north through Galilee to Jerusalem in the south. The rest of the narrative (36%) was devoted to events of the Passion Week—the eight days from Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (11:1–11) to His resurrection (16:1–8).

Occasion and Purpose

Mark's Gospel contains no direct statement about this, so that information must be derived from a study of its contents and presumed historical setting. Because such assessments differ, various views have been given.

Some suggested purpose statements: (a) to present a biographical portrait of Jesus as the Servant of the Lord, (b) to win converts to Jesus Christ, (c) to give instruction to new Christians and strengthen their faith in the face of persecution, (d) to provide material for evangelists and teachers to use, and (e) to correct false ideas about Jesus and His messianic mission. These suggestions, though helpful, seem either to exclude portions of the Gospel from consideration or fail to account for Mark's emphases.

Mark's purpose was basically *pastoral*. The Christians in Rome had already heard and believed the good news of God's saving power (Rom. 1:8) but they needed to hear it again with a new emphasis to catch afresh its implications for their lives in a dissolute and often hostile environment. They needed to understand the nature of discipleship—what it meant to follow Jesus—in light of who Jesus is and what He had done and would keep doing for them.

Grassmick, J. D. (1985). [Mark](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 99–100). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books. Grassmick, J. D. (1985). [Mark](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 99–100). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

THE BOOK OF MARK

STUDY TWO

BACKSTORY

Chapter two begins with Jesus returning to Capernaum which means “Village of Nahum”. We don’t know who Nahum was and Matthew is the only writer who gives us the location, “Capernaum by the Sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali” (Matt 4:13). This was the headquarters of much of Jesus’ ministry on the northwest side of the Sea of Galilee. Probably it was Peter’s home.

This was an outpost town where a small garrison of Roman soldiers, 100 men, would have been stationed from Matthew 8:5, Luke 7:2. Jesus calling Levi to come and follow him leaving his taxation post over this area is also noted in Matt 9:9, Luke 5:27.

Jesus did a great deal of ministry here but it was also here that he cursed the city because of its unrepentance; “And you Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to Hades, For it the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.” Matthew 11:23, Luke 10:15

The architecture of Jesus’ day usually had adjacent rooms around an inner courtyard with a stairway on the outside of the house that led to the upper rooms or roof. Stone or timbers projected out from the walls to support the stairs. Walls and ceilings were plastered, but some used sticks, thorn bushes, or thatch using mortar and earth to make the roofing plaster. One authority states that the roof could easily be broken up and materials set aside then repaired. This was often done for the purpose of letting down grain, straw or other articles. This particular authority writing in the 1800’s said, “I have often seen it done, and done it myself to houses in Lebanon, but there is always more dust made than is agreeable.”

Finally, as you observe this chapter, look who always seems to be following Jesus around as He is teaching: the Scribes and Pharisees. Also, remember who Mark is writing to and the four pillars of Roman culture that he will continue to reference.

“Great was the work of creation, but greater the work of redemption. It cost more to redeem us than to make us. In the one, there was but the speaking of a word. In the other, there was shedding blood. The creation was but the work of God’s fingers. Redemption is the work of His arm.” ~ Thomas Watson

the GOSPEL of MARK

BIG IDEA: Jesus Christ cares for all the details of our lives, but He is very aware of our deepest need

WEEK 1 | November 8, 2020

Authority over Sin

MARK 2:1-12

Chapter two begins back in Capernaum, Peter's home town located on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. This had become the launching point for Jesus' ministry in northern Israel. Once again the whole city came to the house. The crowds were so large it became very hard, if almost impossible for Jesus to enter any town. We may think of large crowds as "success" but to Jesus it hindered Him from moving freely from town to town to heal. Not only Him but also those that couldn't physically get to Him, which is where Mark begins this chapter. You can find the parallel text in Matthew 9:1-8 and Luke 5:18-26.

Consider the physical mechanics of what is happening and the effort it took for these friends to do what they did. The paralytic was being carried on a bed or a small couch. The houses were low, usually with an outside stairway to reach the roof. The roofs were tiled and covered with thatch. The four men had to drag the cot up the stairs, tear up the tiles, and dig through the thatch. The hole would have to be large enough to get the cot through. Add to this the annoyance of the people below. Debris would be falling on them as they tried to listen to the words of Jesus. An additional complicating matter is the damage to someone else's property. We have no idea how the owner of the house, whether it was Simon Peter or someone else, reacted to the destruction of his property, but we can imagine that it came as quite a shock!

Jesus makes an interesting statement, the text says, "he saw their faith." Whose faith did Jesus see? The text says "their faith." He certainly saw the faith of the four men who would not let any barrier stand in the way of their friend's need. But I believe that Jesus also saw the man's faith. It took courage to lie calmly while people were hauling you up a flight of stairs and then lowering you through a hole in the roof.

Don't we all like people to think we have it together, that we do not need anyone? I think this is what the man on the pallet did. By letting his friends take him to Jesus, he was admitting his need. Sometimes this takes a lot of faith.

Son, your sins are forgiven. In the Greek, the word here is literally "child." Jesus claimed first a special relationship with the man—a relationship of love and care. The second thing Jesus claimed was the ability to forgive his sins.

Mark's Gospel is filled with miracles of healings. This is the only place where a person's sin is forgiven. Some may take it that Mark views forgiveness as a lesser priority than healing. However, when this is looked at in context—that Jesus was claiming authority to **forgive as well as heal**—Mark is attesting to Jesus' identity as God. Without this authority to forgive, the miracles of healing and exorcisms are not as significant. **Prophets were often said to heal, but only God could forgive.**

PRAYER

This week give thanks to God for knowing all the details of your life to grow you into maturity in Christ. Give Him thanks that He is for you even in those simple, small, seemingly insignificant details of your life. Thank Him that He knows your deepest need for forgiveness and has made that possible through Jesus Christ. Now ask Him to show you who you can, by faith, bring to the feet of Christ.

READING PLAN

This week use the following steps to dig into the truth of God's word:

Reading:

Begin with reading through the passage a few times and really seek to understand the individual words, phrases, and thoughts that make up the passage. Take time to journal any specific that stands out to you. Don't try to add your own meaning, but read the text as it comes off of the page. The goal is not to see the words with your eyes, but to feel them in your heart, mind, and soul.

Meditation:

This step has everything to do with thinking of specific chunks of the passage in front of you. Think about phrases and specific words that stood out to you. Focus intently on why the Holy Spirit might have chosen these words to speak to you today. Reflect on how it might apply to your life. Is it relevant to something that you are going through? Does it bring to mind a struggle you have been dealing with? Journal some thoughts that followed your meditation time.

Prayer:

Our next step is to take all of the words, thoughts, feelings, actions, fears, and convictions that we've just experienced and offer them to the Lord in prayer. Ask him to illuminate what he would have you do with them. Simply talk to God and tell him how you are feeling. Confess any anxieties, praise him for who he is, ask him for what you need. Take time to record your prayers in a prayer journal.

Contemplation:

Be silent in the presence of the Lord. Relax, embrace, and just be with the Lord. Don't rush this. Quiet your mind and soul sitting patiently with Him. Take time after contemplation to write down your experience with God in silence.

SCRIPTURE

Monday: - Exodus 34:1-9; 2 Chronicles 7:11-14

Tuesday: - Psalm 32; Isaiah 43:25; Daniel 9:9

Wednesday: - Psalm 103:1-12; Nehemiah 9:17

Thursday: - Matthew 6:12-15; 2 Corinthians 2:7-10

Friday: - Hebrews 9:1-22; 1 John 1:1-10

Saturday: - Catch up, Reflect and Pray.

NOTES

GROWTH GUIDE—Mark 2:1-12

WEEK 1 | November 8, 2020

BIG IDEA: Jesus Christ cares for all the details of our lives, but He is very aware of our deepest need

BELONG

What example can you give of Jesus taking care of a seemingly “little and insignificant” thing in your life that turned out to be not so insignificant in hindsight?

GROW

1. Jesus popularity has grown so much that when He returns home to Capernum, many people gathered to see and hear Him. By way of review, what were some of the things Jesus did in chapter 1 that led to this explosive popularity?
2. Four men bring a paralyzed man to see Jesus. What were the obstacles in their way and what were they willing to do to get to Jesus? Why?
3. What is the significance of Jesus telling the paralyzed man that his sins are forgiven? Why not just heal him?
4. What evidence does Jesus give that He is the Son of God in verses 1-12?
5. Mark now identifies more deeply the battle line in that the religious leaders are now opposing Jesus. How is it these men could be on the side of evil? What type of personal character might be present in their lives? Are any of those present in your own life?
6. How is it that you can do something so good and yet have those who will resent, criticize and oppose that is being done?
7. What do you think it will take to love like Jesus in this way, to seek out nothing in return?

REACH

The notion that if the church “got her act together” culture would somehow embrace her may well be wishful thinking. What makes people fear indiscriminate love for others and how must we be ready for persecution if it should come?

Who in your life needs to hear the message that they can be healed not from their physical wounds but their mental, emotional or spiritual wounds? Are you the person that Jesus wants to deliver that message to them?

BIG IDEA: God's grace is given to those who would hear His call, who can offer nothing to Him in return or benefit Him in any way. A true faux pas.

The GOSPEL of MARK

WEEK 2 | November 15, 2020

The Faux pas of Grace

MARK 2:13-17

A “faux pas” is a slip or blunder in etiquette, manners, or conduct; an embarrassing social blunder or indiscretion. Grace is God’s active involvement and assistance on behalf of humanity in their dire state of need. Now putting these two together we get a picture of the length to which God will go to love, redeem, and bless those who are thought of as “undesirable” or “too far gone”, who hear His call, whereby defecting to His kingdom. It’s as if God is simply doling out His grace without thought or cause to people who don’t deserve it. Which is the point: you don’t, no one does.

Jesus is back in Capernaum proclaiming His Good News by the seaside when He invites Matthew, a tax collector to become a disciple. Taxes and tax collectors conjure up all sorts of mental and emotional images in our minds and it was no different then, probably more so. The tax collectors were Jews working for the Roman Empire: the occupier nation, the enemy of all good Jewish citizens. But if you were a Jew in bed with Rome, well you get the idea as to how you would be looked at, thought of, and treated. Better for you to have not been born than to conspire with a foreign, Gentile nation.

The thought that God would exercise His will to help someone like Matthew the tax collector, as well as other “sinners” is the “Faux pas of Grace”. You see Jesus do this over and over again as He begins His ministry, inviting the un-invitable. It is in this faux pas of grace that we get a small glimpse of our understanding of the depth of love God has for those He is saving. We also see the stark, contrast of those who truly believe they have no need of this grace, which is a faux pas in its saddest human form.

PRAYER

This week pray this prayer each day and submit yourself to Him by trusting in Him.

Lord prepare me with a heart for the lost and help me be prepared to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with someone this week. Strengthen me to overcome any fear I may have. Open the door for a gospel conversation by letting them ask me about the faith I have in you. Amen.

READING PLAN

This week, dig into the scriptures below using the Two Truths and a Lie method:

Truth 1:

What is the biggest Truth that you pulled from your reading today? Why did it stand out to you? What made it an important truth for you to cling to? How can you apply it to your life? Write down the scripture and the truth that you gleaned.

Truth 2:

Use Bible study tools or Google to find another Bible truth that supports the statement from the first truth that you found. Write down the scripture. What does this verse or passage say to support that truth? What do you need to do to walk in the power of that truth?

Lie:

What lie are you believing or are tempted to believe that stands in the way of these truths? Take time to refute that lie with the truths that you've learned. God has given Christians a spirit of power, love and self-control, 2 Timothy 1:7, therefore there is victory over fear. Write down a sentence that says something like this, "The lie I've believed is _____, but God's word says that _____."

SCRIPTURE

Monday: 1 Kings 17, Luke 4:16-30

Tuesday: Hosea 14, Jeremiah 3:22-4:2

Wednesday: Hosea 11, Romans 5

Thursday: Psalm 92, Isaiah 57:14-21

Friday: Ezekiel 37:1-14, Joel 2

Saturday: Catch up, Reflect and Pray.

NOTES

GROWTH GUIDE—Mark 2:13-17

WEEK 2 | NOVEMBER 15, 2020

BIG IDEA: God’s grace is given to those who would hear His call, who can offer nothing to Him in return or benefit Him in any way. A true faux pas.

BELONG

- Do you prefer diversity or uniformity? Explain.
- If you were to hand pick a group of people for a very important task or business startup, in general what type of people would you pick?

GROW

1. What do you believe is the most noblest, essential work of the church?
2. Jesus calls Matthew to follow and he does. What do you think the connection is between that and vs 15? What do you think is going on?
3. Do you have a hard time seeing Jesus at what could have been Matthew’s going away party with His friends? Why or Why not?
4. Jesus is hand picking His disciples to become fishers of men or in Matthew’s case to invest for a return. He even picked a Zealot who wanted revolution against Rome. Why do you think Jesus picked such a wide variety of backgrounds to follow him? What could this say about the diversity it takes to spread the gospel?
5. If you were to upgrade the phrase, “tax collectors and sinners” who might that be in our cultural context? Do you see yourself in that same context?
6. Read Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23. What is “the word of the kingdom”?
7. What are the 3 out of 4 responses?
 - A. Vs 19, what is not understood? This is a heart compared to what? What are the characteristics of a path?
 - B. Vs 21, what is missing? What does the root provide for that you know will come?
 - C. Vs 22, what does not come to fruition?
8. What do all four have in common? And what three things must be present or happen, so you know you’re on good soil?
9. Is there anything you can do in this case to improve where the seed, (Word) lands? What does this say about the character of God that the seed just goes everywhere?
10. In the gardening world there are sowers and harvesters, which do you think you are? Are you a selective sower/harvester or an indiscriminate sower/harvester?

REACH

John Knox the Scottish minister said, “Give me Scotland or I die.” How does that passionate attitude for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ compare to our own passion for doing the same? Jesus came to save, gathering a diverse group to do the same. ***What does it mean to you to be a fisher of men, or a gardener of fruit? What would be helpful for you to be better at sharing the gospel?***

the GOSPEL of MARK

BIG IDEA: The Gospel of Christ cannot be contained in, connected to external traditions or rituals of the law, but solely on grace.

WEEK 3 | November 22, 2020

The Gospel—Old and New Man

MARK 2:18-22

This section is a continuation of the dialog and dinner between Jesus and His disciples at Matthew's home.

What is interesting throughout Jesus' interactions with people is that there are other groups watching... following him around. In this case it's the Pharisees, and some of John the Baptists disciples. We know there is a large group of disciples following Jesus and we also know a quite a number of Matthew's friends and associates are at the house as well; they are all eating together. Mark also tells us that the Pharisees and John's disciples are there and they are close enough for Jesus to hear a comment they make to Jesus' disciples. Are they in the same room, just watching? If so, who invited them? Seems rather odd that some random people would show up to your house and then criticize you and who you invited, doesn't it?

There are some cultural customs we miss, but nonetheless we see John's disciples, (John is now sitting in Herod's jail), who have yet to recognize who Jesus is. These men may not have been there to hear John say "this is the Christ follow Him." Then we have the Pharisees, steeped in the law of Moses, "traditions of men" as Jesus calls it; all while trying to stay in political power doing a dance with the Romans who are occupying their land. ***Two groups both who are shocked and disturbed that Jesus dare to associate with tax collectors and sinners.***

The reference to fasting implies that they are following good Jewish practices (Luke 18:9-14), group think, or righteousness by majority, not unlike our own day, when the reality was the Old Testament prescribed only one fast, and that was on the day of Atonement, (Leviticus 16:29-31). There is or was nothing wrong with fasting more but with the right motivation of repentance, seeking God, or in time of grief.

Jesus makes a clear distinction which the two groups miss the point of the reason for the celebration in the first place, which is the bridegroom (Jesus) is here and it would be inappropriate not to celebrate. But there would be a time for fasting when He is taken away a reference to His death. Once again Mark is driving the point, "who is Jesus", in that you can't mix the old covenant with the new, the good news, the gospel.

PRAYER

Lord let me praise you for making me new and celebrate the work you are doing within me, growing me into your likeness. Continue to root out the old nature by the power of your Spirit renewing a right spirit within me. Take away those old desires that linger and fill me with new ones that long to serve and worship you. Amen.

READING PLAN

This week, use the PLANT method to look into the truth of scripture:

Prepare:

Put away distractions and ask God to prepare your heart for your reading and journaling time.

Learn:

What does this passage have to teach me today? Write down lessons that the characters learned or a principle (s) that are present that you can glean from this passage.

Ask:

Ask questions of the passage. What don't you understand about the passage and take time to write down these questions. What could be illuminated through further study? What principles should you discuss with those around you?

Name Truths:

What are some of the nuggets of truth from this passage that you can learn from? What truths do you need to take away and put into practice?

Take Action:

What will you do with what you've read? How can you put the lessons and truths into action this week? Write out your steps and follow them.

SCRIPTURE

Monday: Genesis 3:14-19, 12:1-3, 22:7-8, Exodus 6:1-12

Tuesday: Genesis 17:1-16, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 18:15, Jeremiah 31:33, Matthew 5:17-20

Wednesday: Psalm 105

Thursday: Isaiah 55

Friday: Galatians 4:21-31, Romans 9

Saturday: Catch up, Reflect and Pray.

NOTES

GROWTH GUIDE—Mark 2:18-22

WEEK 3 | NOVEMBER 22, 2020

BIG IDEA: The Gospel of Christ cannot be contained in, connected to external traditions or rituals of the law, but solely on grace.

BELONG

- Review and share previous studies and how they have been applied or impacted your life.
- How hard is it to break with an old tradition? What does it depend on?

GROW

The previous section of Mark, he describes Levi (or Matthew as we know him), coming to Christ and becoming a disciple. A tax collector of Rome, disliked by the people. We also see this grand party and feasting with joyfulness with Matthew's friends, potentially a good-bye party for him as he will leave everything to follow Christ. Then in our section we contrast this with a question of fasting. There is more to this question than just fasting. What we need to know for reference is found in Leviticus 16:29,31. ***The Old Testament prescribed fasting for all Jews only on the annual Day of Atonement as an act of repentance. However, by the time of Jesus the Pharisees promoted fasts twice a week, Luke 18:12.***

1. With the appropriate understanding of fasting (above), when a tradition supersedes God's law, how would you feel being looked down on or even being called a sinner based on that tradition instead of God's law?
2. Are there any areas in our Christian life that we do something similar and go beyond God's word to say, "protect" ourself or someone else from sinning? Example Romans 14:21
3. Jesus was fasting back in v 12, so it must be possible to fast at other times. Why fast? For what purpose? There are situations in which fasting is appropriate. Read the following to discover reasons for doing so.
- 2 Sam 1:11-12, -Dan 6:18, Ester 4:3, -Jonah 3:5-9, -Ezra 8:21, -Deut 9:9, Acts 13:1-3
4. The fact was you could fast more than the law required. What is the underlining characteristic for fasting? Ps 69:10, Joel 2:12-15
5. Mark gives us a clue to the relationship we are to have with Jesus in vs 20. Who is the character Jesus is referred to and what is our relationship to that? Knowing we are subordinate to Him, how does this fact impact your daily life?
Mark records the use of two of Jesus' parables, both of which have a broader view than just fasting in vs. 21-22.
6. What does Jesus' presence signify?
7. What does the new cloth on an old garment represent? Or old and new wine?
8. See John 1:17, Galatians 3:10. Do we, and if so, how do we sometimes try to marry the old law with the new? (James 4:11 for example) How is the Old covenant and New covenant incompatible? Does this make the old covenant any less important? Why or why not?
9. What is the sole purpose of the law? (Romans 7:1-12)

REACH

Challenge: *As a group, using the parameters discussed, set up a time of fasting and prayer.* Each may need to modify based on dietary needs or health issues but be specific and clear on the purpose. Next week, talk about your experiences of fasting.

BIG IDEA: Humanities need is more important than religious rituals.

the GOSPEL of MARK

WEEK 4 | November 29, 2020

Jesus, Lord of the Sabbath

MARK 2:23-28

No Jewish institution was regarded more highly than the Sabbath. Divinely inspired by God from the beginning when He rested from Creation in Genesis 2:3. This was incorporated into the Ten Commandments to be a special day set aside for rest and remembrance for the people of Israel. Beginning at sun down Friday and ending at sun down Saturday. Any food preparation was to be done ahead of time: everything was washed, oil lights trimmed, and all tools put aside. This was in keeping with what Moses said, “you shall do no work.”

However, hundreds of years of rabbinical teaching had added numerous unbearable and arbitrary restrictions to God’s original requirement, which one could be stoned for if broken. Travel was limited to 3,000 ft. of one’s home (Num. 35:5; Josh. 3:4). Wearing false teeth was carrying a burden. Plucking out a gray hair. Only certain kinds of knots could be tied or loosened. Starting, kindling or putting out a fire, even in an emergency or sickness to stay warm. These are just a few examples among thousands.

Rabbinical tradition had interpreted the rubbing of grain in the hands (cf. Luke 6:1) as a form of threshing and declared it unlawful. Reaping for profit on the Sabbath was forbidden by Mosaic law (Ex. 34:21), but that was obviously not the situation here. Actually the Pharisees’ charge was itself sinful since they were holding their tradition equal with God’s Word. Travelers who did not take enough food for their journey were permitted by Mosaic law to pick enough grain to satisfy their hunger (Deut. 23:24, 25; *see note on Matt. 12:2*).

Jesus referred to King David’s actions in 1 Samuel 21:1–6. The Pharisees and scribes would have been familiar with this passage; but they did not understand its significance. Matthew 12:7 adds a comment by Jesus: “If you had known what these words mean, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the innocent” (see Luke 11:42). Jesus cut through the posturing and pretense of the Pharisees and exposed their hearts.

What is interesting is today, in one sense nothing has changed when it comes to the attitude of those that govern regarding those that are governed. Those in earthly authority seem to follow the same pattern making laws or regulations that either, by law doesn’t apply to themselves or they believe they are above the law they’ve created.

PRAYER

Father in heaven, help me see my deepest need of you. Like the paralytic, let me trust that you will heal me. Take the areas of my life and lead me in your path of righteousness. Let the words of my mouth be in your control. Grant me understanding through the reading of your Word. Keep my eyes on what is good and pure. Let my ears listen to your praises. Let my strength be used in service to you, the Servant of all. Amen.

READING PLAN

This week, use the WORD reading plan to dig into what God says about anger:

Word:

Pick a verse that stands out to you from today's passage. Write that verse out in your prayer journal. Read over this verse several times and pray for God to illuminate its meaning.

Observe:

Try to answer the Who, What, When, Where, and Why questions about this passage. Who wrote it? What is it about? When was it written? Where did it take place? Why did they include what they wrote in this passage?

Relevance:

How is this passage relevant to your life today? In what ways is it applicable and how can you immediately put to use what you're learning through reading?

Declare:

Write out any promises that you've gleaned from these portions of scripture, whether explicitly stated, or inferred. Declare these promises over your life in prayer. Ask God for His will and His timing in these promises.

SCRIPTURE

Monday: - Genesis 2:3, Exodus 20:9-11, Leviticus 24:5-9

Tuesday: - Deuteronomy 5:12-15, 1 Samuel 21:1-6, Romans 2:17-24

Wednesday: - Nehemiah 9:1-15, Ezekial 20:9-12

Thursday: - Matthew 12:1-8, 1 Corinthians 8:1-6

Friday: - Luke 6:1-5, Ephesians 1:15-23, Revelation 7:16-17

Saturday: - Catch up, Reflect and Pray.

NOTES

GROWTH GUIDE—Mark 2:23-28

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BIG IDEA: Humanities need is more important than religious rituals.

BELONG

Take time to review and talk about the last few weeks themes. What have you learned? What has been the life application? What are some questions you have?

GROW

1. What parallels can be made between what Jesus and His disciples were doing and what David and his followers did in 1 Samuel 21:1-6.
2. Why were need and hunger matters to be considered when following the Law and the Sabbath? How does that relate to loving God and your fellow man?
3. Jesus being creator and Lord of all, what was He trying to teach the Pharisees and the disciples regarding His Lordship and the law? What do we learn as ones no longer living under the law but under grace?
4. Why does Jesus do so many miracles on the Sabbath?
5. Jesus' stinging remark in vs 25, "have you never read", points out the ignorance of those leaders who took pride in their knowledge of the law, but miss its true meaning. Do we do the same thing as Christians today? If so how?
6. Read Isaiah 58. Especially look at vs. 13-14. What is the theme running through this chapter as it related to fasting and observing the Sabbath?
7. What is God accusing them of doing on the Sabbath?
8. Since we are living on the other side of the cross, in grace, what are the good works we are to be doing? Have they changed from then till now? If so how?

REACH

Read Galatians 6:1-9. If you could sum up the law of Christ, what would it be? For us as a body of Christ our motivation should be to fulfill that law. What observations do you see in this passage and how as a group can we keep them in the forefront to continue to fulfill this law?



BELONG. GROW. REACH.