

## Daily Bible Study

*“Kurios Sabbaton”*

*Mark 2:23-28*

*October 18-24, 2009*

**THE LORD’S DAY** – This week we turn in our study of the Gospel of Mark to **Mark 2:23-28**. In our text for the week we see that Jesus asserts His authority as Kurios (*Lord*) even of the Sabbaton (*Sabbath*). Previously in **Mark 2** we have seen Jesus both in His teaching and actions demonstrate the faith, freedom, joy, and gladness that come from knowing Him and His salvation. He has already had some conflict with the Pharisees and in our text this week He comes into conflict again with them by saying that the same gladness and joy that marked His gospel (the *New Wine*) should also mark the Sabbath. The Pharisees had turned the God ordained observance of the Sabbath into a burden by all their accretions (additions) to it. According to the Pharisees, Christ’s disciples were breaking the law of God by their actions of picking and eating grain on the Sabbath. Jesus explains to them that God in establishing a day of rest never intended it to be a burden to man but rather a rest for him. Jesus declares in this text that He is *the Lord of the Sabbath* for He is God, The Lord of Creation. Read **Mark 2:23-28**.

*The Word Applied: What is one specific thing that stands out to you in reading this text?*

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, teach me this week as I study and feed upon Your Word.*

**MONDAY** – As I mentioned yesterday, Jesus has already had some conflict with the Pharisees in this chapter such as Jesus eating with the “*tax collectors and sinners*” (**Mark 2:15-18**) followed by the question concerning “*fasting*” (**Mark 2:18-22**) and now Mark provides two more incidents of conflict which center around the Sabbath day (**Mark 2:23 - 3:5**). There is some question regarding the chronology and sequence of these events but what is obvious is that Mark provides us with the logical connection. We know that in **John 5:1-18** Jesus healed the paralytic at the pool Bethesda and this healing also took place on the Sabbath. All these controversies over the Sabbath and working on it seem to have occurred on successive Sabbath days. The bottom line is that the Pharisees with their work centered, self-righteous religion are being confronted by the true God, Jesus Christ and He will not allow them to go on twisting and adding their man made attempts of attaining righteousness to His gospel message of repentance and faith in Him and His work. These confrontations of man made false piety versus the truth of God delivered by Jesus are all coming to a head which will result in the Pharisees desiring and planning to “*destroy*” Jesus (**Mark 3:6** and **John 5:16**). This is their objective; this is their goal; to get rid of Christ because He exposes their phony hypocritical lives and calls them to acknowledge their sin and turn to Him in repentance. The truth always confronts our sin, exposing the fact that a Holy God hates sin and evil and that sin will not go unpunished. Read these verses that speak of the fact that there are enemies of God and there is a punishment for them: **Romans 5:10, Philippians 3:17-19, Colossians 1:21-22, Hebrews 10:26-31**.

*The Word Applied: In these verses look at the behavior & mindset that characterizes enemies of God. Also, see the grace of God in providing a remedy for sin & repentant sinners. Meditate on the horror of being an enemy of God. What behaviors and thoughts characterize your life?*

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thanks for making me aware of my sin & enmity against You. Give me a repentant spirit of obedience, forgive me of my sin, & give me greater love for You.*

**TUESDAY** – Since the passage before us deals with the Sabbath day let’s take today to look at the Sabbath and get a bit of an understanding of it. We must start with the fact that the Sabbath was given by God and the Sabbath principle was established at Creation (**Genesis 2:2-3**). In **Exodus 20:8-11** we find that God wrote with His own finger the commandment to “*Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy*”. He reiterated the commandment in **Exodus 31:12-17** as well as recording it again in the listing of the Ten Commandments

from **Deuteronomy 5**. Make no mistake that it was God who ordained the Sabbath and it is God who orders, defines, and interprets it. It is precisely this point which drove the Pharisees crazy in our text; for Jesus in calling Himself *Lord of the Sabbath* was taking for Himself the authority belonging only to God. The word Sabbath in its root form means to “cease, desist, rest”. The root word from which we get “Sabbath” contains only one beta or letter “b”. When the word Sabbath is used it contains two letter “b’s” which only intensifies the meaning of ceasing or rest to mean a total and complete rest. This is what God did after His work of creation, He completely rested or ceased from His work of creation. It is in honor of God’s work of creation that man is to take the day to rest and remember God and His work. God made the day for man; to rest, recuperate, remember, and worship Him. Sadly, sinful man here in particular the Pharisees had piled on their own accretions to God’s law making many regulations that only burdened man. Jewish historians inform us of the many regulations which were added to God’s law which made the entire observance of the Sabbath quite unbearable. One of these added requirements is the point at which the Pharisees found fault with Jesus’ disciples in our text when they by legalistic reasoning attempted to equate the picking of grain by the disciples to “reaping” a crop which was forbidden on the Sabbath in God’s law (**Exodus 34:21**).

*The Word Applied: God has commanded us to rest & worship Him. Do you thank Him for His goodness, care, and concern toward you? Do you love and enjoy the gifts He gives or do you love and enjoy Him, the giver?*

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me remember Your work of creation and also honor You by taking rest and reflecting on Your grace toward me. Help me be careful to not add to Your law but to see that You are to always be my supreme focus and desire.*

**WEDNESDAY** – In **verse 23** we find that Jesus and His disciples are going *through the grainfields on the Sabbath*. We also find that as they went the disciples began to pluck the heads of grain along the way. Matthew records for us that they were hungry and were eating the grain that they picked (**Matthew 12:1**). God had permitted men to pick and eat from a neighbors crop fields as they walked by them in order to satisfy their hunger as long as they were not taking home in containers the crops and were not using a sickle to reap and harvest the neighbors crop (**Deuteronomy 23:24-25**). In **verse 24** we find that the Pharisees question Jesus by charging Him and His disciples of violating the Sabbath by their actions. Their traditions had interpreted the mere rubbing of the grain in the hands to be the equivalent of reaping a crop and therefore they were accusing Jesus and the disciples of “working” on the Sabbath day. The mere fact they questioned Jesus was telling that they held their traditions above the very Word of God. Jesus addressed their problem of pride in attempting to play God with these types of accretions in **Mark 7:13**. We’ll see Jesus’ response tomorrow but for now listen as Matthew Henry comments: “He justifies them in *plucking the ears of corn on the sabbath day*, which, I will warrant you, a disciples of the Pharisees would not dare to have done; for it was contrary to an express tradition of their elders. In this instance, as in that before, they reflect upon the discipline of Christ’s school, as if it were not so strict as that of theirs: so common it is for those who deny the *power of godliness*, to be jealous for the *form*, and censorious of those who affect not *their form*.”

*The Word Applied: Do you hold your own traditions or ways to do various things above the very Word of God? Do you look down on others when they do not do things as you do? Scripture does tell us to “be fully convinced in our own minds” (Romans 14:5) concerning our personal behavior but we must beware we do not impose our own convictions upon others.*

*Suggestion for Prayer: Lord, help me to be humble and desire to obey You in sincerity. Help me not take Your rightful place as judge concerning matters of my own personal convictions.*

**THURSDAY** – In **verse 25** we see that Jesus asks the Pharisees a question of His own. He references a story in Holy Scripture from **1 Samuel 21:1-6**. In this response, He questions their very understanding of Scripture which in itself was a blow of sarcasm to their proud and stubborn hearts. These men saw themselves as student’s *par excellence* concerning God’s law and Holy Writ and Jesus exposes their faulty interpretation and ignorance with His question. The story He recounts is when David and his men were fleeing from Saul and in their hunger came to Nob. David approached Ahimelech the priest and asked if there was any bread for them to

eat. Ahimelech the priest answered that there was “*no common (ordinary) bread on hand; but there is holy (consecrated) bread...*” The Scripture goes on to say that the priest *gave him holy bread* and we read from Jesus words that they ate it. It is interesting to note that **1 Samuel 22:10** informs us that the priest “*inquired of the Lord for him*”. The bread which David and his men ate was bread that was placed on the table of the sanctuary and was to only be eaten by the priests (**Leviticus 24:5-9**). There were 12 loaves of bread representing the 12 tribes of Israel and they were replaced every Sabbath day and the old bread was eaten by the priests in the holy place. We will discuss this passage in more detail this upcoming Lord’s Day. Suffice to say, Jesus relates to the Pharisees an incident which they should be familiar with and one that speaks volumes against their prejudicial and sinful questioning of Jesus. Jesus was not changing the Scripture “on the fly” if you will; rather, He is showing these Pharisees His understanding of the depth of Scripture and its proper interpretation and application.

*The Word Applied: We need to be warned against taking a piece of Scripture and twisting it by lifting it out of its context and trying to make it justify our particular thoughts.*

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, give me wisdom in studying Scripture and by The Holy Spirit teach me to discern and interpret Your Word as You meant it.*

**FRIDAY** – In the question of Jesus to the Pharisees it is important to notice that Jesus said David *was in need* when he went into *the house of God* and *ate the showbread*. Nowhere do we find this act condemned by God in Scripture as the preservation of the life of David and his men by eating superseded the ceremonial regulation of who could eat it. Furthermore, this act was done out of mercy and necessity with inquiry of the Lord Himself (**1 Samuel 22:10**). Here in Mark the point is that Jesus, the greater David had the authority to accurately interpret God’s law. Both the instance in **1 Samuel 21** and **Mark 2** demonstrate for us how legalism often amounts to a misapplication of God’s Holy Law. **Matthew 12:5** says Jesus even reminded these men that the priests *desecrate* the Sabbath by working on it yet remain *blameless*. In this accusation of the Pharisees we see The Son of David, who is far superior to King David, had Divine authority over a totally unwarranted, ceremonial, man made Sabbath regulation when necessity demanded it. This is precisely what Jesus demonstrated and that angered them (**3:6**).

*The Word Applied: Meditate on the personhood of Jesus Christ as very God in bodily form.*

*Suggestion for Prayer: Jesus, help me to always see You as more than mere man.*

**SATURDAY** – Only Mark records for us Jesus’ statement in **verse 27** where we are again reminded of the Sabbath being made for the benefit of man so that he would find his delight in God (**Isaiah 58:13-14**). Jesus sums up this conversation by declaring Himself *Lord of the Sabbath*. **Matthew 12:1-8** informs us that Jesus made clear His Divinity. He was “*guiltless*” and He was “*greater than the Temple*” which was to say that God dwelt in Him; He was the place of God’s dwelling for He was God in the flesh and as Lord He is Sovereign over the day.

*The Word Applied: Is it your delight to rest and worship God? Do you bow before His rule?*

*Suggestion for Prayer: Jesus, thank You that as Sovereign Lord You govern all things & days.*