

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE GOSPEL

--MARK 2:18-22--

INTRODUCTION:

From the opening verse of this chapter the Lord Jesus has had clash after clash with the religious leaders. It began with Jesus declaring His authority to forgive sin, He then demonstrated His willingness to extend forgiveness to sinners by calling a tax collector to follow Him as a disciple. By His actions, Jesus was showing the Pharisees that His message was completely and absolutely opposed to everything the Pharisees represented. They taught a way of salvation through self-righteous effort and legalistic works, the gospel message of Jesus focused on God's grace being granted to those believing in Jesus Christ and crying out to Him for mercy as they repented of their sins.

Mark records this next clash between Jesus and those who questioned Him immediately after the meal at Levi's home. The chronological sequence is not accidental, and it is here right after the meal with the tax collectors and sinners that Jesus explains just how incompatible His message is with the Judaism practiced by the Pharisees, and by extension with any system of man-made religion.

I. A CHALLENGE ABOUT FASTING (Mark 2:18)

- a. Each of the _____ that Jesus had with the religious leaders of the day revolved around questions related to His teaching or behavior.
- b. Why were disciples of _____ with the Pharisees?
- c. The _____ to that question is not given but it most likely included a number of factors.
- d. Remember also that the baptism of John was a baptism of _____ that was to signify a renewed spiritual commitment.
- e. Whatever the reason these disciples of John were among the religious leaders on this occasion it was to _____ Jesus a question.

- f. For the Pharisees and scribes _____, prayer, and charitable giving were all ways in which they showed their self-righteousness.
- g. That the scribes and Pharisees had added their own man-made traditions and regulations to God's Law is seen by their _____ to Jesus.

II. A CORRECTIVE RESPONSE (Mark 2:19-20)

- a. The Pharisees asked this question and Jesus _____ but not how they were expecting.
- b. The Lord used an illustration of a _____ celebration to make His point.
- c. Jesus used the excitement and anticipation that accompanies a wedding to illustrate the _____ and elation surrounding His own presence.
- d. Jesus' response ended in an ominous _____.
- e. The disciples did not understand Christ's predictions of His suffering and _____ when He spoke of them, and this is the first such reference we have in Mark's Gospel.
- f. Jesus' point to the Pharisees and scribes was simply this: Judaism at its most devout level, which was the Judaism that the Pharisees and scribes personified was completely and utterly _____ and alienated from God's plan of salvation.

III. SOME CLARIFYING PARABLES (Mark 2:21-22)

- a. Jesus did not end with His wedding feast illustration but went on to give two more _____ to illustrate His point of the uniqueness of the Gospel.
- b. The message of _____ is completely incompatible with any false religion or system that promotes a works-righteousness, and this included the apostate Judaism of Jesus' day.
- c. Jesus' first parable had to do with patching a tear in an old garment.

- d. As we look at this first parable it is important to note that the old _____ Jesus refers to is not the Old Testament, nor is it the Law of Moses.
- e. Jesus' second _____ had to do with wine making and carried with it the same message.
- f. Like the first parable, which Jesus used to demonstrate that the true _____ cannot be attached to a false system of works-righteousness, this parable demonstrates that the legalism of Judaism cannot contain the message of salvation by grace.

CONCLUSION:

These two parables illustrate the uniqueness and exclusivity of the Gospel, and the tragedy that results from trying to mix it or make it a part of a false religious system. They are incompatible and only one is the truth, and Scripture is clear that it is the gospel of salvation through grace alone by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Anything else is a false gospel that leads not to heaven, but to hell. We live in a world where relativism reigns. But as Christians we know that there is an absolute truth that tells us that everyone will have to stand before God and give an account for his life unless we have repented and believed the message of salvation by grace through faith alone. There is no other gospel and as believers we need to guard the treasure that has been entrusted to us as Paul instructed Timothy in our Scripture reading this morning. We need to make sure that it is unstained and undefiled when we pass it on to the next generation. May we never have to hear the words of Paul that he wrote to the Galatians, *“I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!”* (Galatians 1:6–8, NASB95) May we never hear those words but faithfully guard the treasure of the undefiled gospel that has been entrusted to us.