

THE LORD OF THE SABBATH

--MARK 2:23-28--

INTRODUCTION:

As we come into our passage for today and finish up the second chapter of Mark, we are introduced to another of our Lord's titles. Jesus Himself declares that He is the Lord of the Sabbath, again setting Himself in direct conflict with the scribes and the Pharisees. By declaring Himself Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus was striking a direct blow at the entire system of works-righteousness that found its focal point in the Sabbath. By claiming to be Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus was declaring His authority over the whole Jewish religion, because the Sabbath-day observance was its high-point. The implications of Jesus Christ's claim struck deep. Remember this day of rest was established at creation when God rested on the seventh day. Then years later it was God who wrote on the tablets of stone in Exodus 20:8, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." (Exodus 20:8, NASB95) God was the One who established the Sabbath, to claim to be the Lord of the Sabbath was to claim to be God, and this fact was not lost on the Pharisees and scribes.

I. A STROLL THROUGH THE GRAINFIELDS (Mark 2:23)

- a. Mark informs us that on a certain _____, Jesus and His disciples were walking in the grainfields. (Matthew 12:1; Luke 6:1)
- b. In Israel from the time of Jesus and earlier, it was normal for pathways to crisscross _____, it was the way of dividing one field from another. (Deuteronomy 23:25)
- c. This is exactly what Jesus' disciples were doing, just as the Old Testament law _____ them to do.

II. A SCORNFUL ACCUSATION (Mark 2:24)

- a. As we consider what is taking place here, it is hard to imagine how the Pharisees could have followed Jesus through the grainfields and stayed within the _____ feet they were allowed to go from their homes.

- b. They could not believe what they were seeing, and they were offended and outraged that a rabbi would allow His disciples to do something that was _____. (Luke 6:2)
- c. Notice that the Pharisees showed no _____ for well-being of the disciples or the fact that they were hungry.

III. A SCRIPTURAL PRECEDENT (Mark 2:25-26)

- a. They had asked Jesus a question, so Jesus _____.
- b. The _____ that Jesus is referring to is found in 1st Samuel 21:1-6.
- c. The point that Jesus was making using this Old Testament event as His illustration was that _____ in God's eyes, always trumped strict adherence to ritual and ceremony.
- d. In the parallel account in Matthew, Jesus also told the Pharisees in Matthew 12:5-6, "*Or have you not read in the Law, that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple break the Sabbath and are innocent? But I say to you that something _____ than the temple is here.*" (Matthew 12:5-6, NASB95)
- e. By stating that "something greater than the temple is here" Jesus was again declaring His _____.

IV. THE SOVEREIGN OF THE SABBATH (Mark 2:27-28)

- a. The Law with all its ceremony, ritual, and tradition, was never _____ by God to stand in the way of mercy, compassion, kindness, and goodness toward others.
- b. Again, looking at the parallel passage in Matthew, Jesus also told the Pharisees in Matthew 12:7, "*But if you had known what this means, 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT A SACRIFICE,' you would not have condemned the _____.*" (Matthew 12:7, NASB95)
- c. By this time the Pharisees were _____ when Jesus escalated the matter even more.

CONCLUSION:

As God in human flesh, Jesus Christ condemned the Pharisees self-

righteous attempts to please God. Jesus Christ, the Son of God was characterized by grace; the religious leaders prided themselves on their works. Jesus Christ demonstrated mercy and compassion to people; the scribes and the Pharisees cared only about protecting the rabbinic tradition of rules and regulations. The Lord of the Sabbath exemplified the true purpose of the Sabbath; the Pharisees with their myriad of rules had transformed the Sabbath from a day of divine blessing into a dismal day of drudgery.

The scribes and the Pharisees believed that the Sabbath belonged to them. For centuries they had been working out its rules. When Jesus Christ declared that He was the Lord of the Sabbath, that He was the sovereign over it, that He was God the Creator who had created the Sabbath and had given it to the people of Israel to be a divine blessing, the hostility and hatred of the religious leaders grew to a point that they would not be satisfied until they had Him murdered.