

Sermon Text from 6/20/2010

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide*

Sabbath 23 One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grain fields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain.

24 The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"

25 He answered, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? 26 In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." 27 Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. 28 So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

Mark 3:1 Another time he went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. 2 Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. 3 Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone."

4 Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent. 5 He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. 6 Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

Mark 2:23-3:6 (NLT)

Observation (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- Would you steal food to feed your starving family? Why or Why not?
- If you lost your hand, how would that affect your life? (Mark 3:1-5)
- : What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

Mark 2:23-28

- : What is the basic complaint about Jesus in both of these accounts (2:23-28 & 3:1-5)? Who makes these complaints?
- : Compare the incident in v. 25-26 to 1 Samuel 21:1-6. How does David's story apply to Jesus' situation?
- l: Why were both David and Jesus' disciples justified in "breaking" the Jewish law?
- l: How do Jesus' comments in v. 27-28 rebuke both too rigid and too lax a view of the Sabbath?
- l: Why do you think the word "even" is included in v. 28? (remember, look at the context of the passage)

Mark 3:1-6

- : What caused the tension in the synagogue (v. 1-6)? What concerns did the religious leaders share?
Why were their hearts so stubborn? What seems to be the most ironic phrases in this passage?
- l: What emotion does Jesus express in v. 5 (and what was it about the Pharisees' attitude that so distressed Jesus)?
When is it right to be angry at arbitrary rules? How do we ensure we put people above principle?
- l: Why does Jesus perform this healing when He knows people are watching for something to accuse Him of?
In what ways is the church today so blinded by a commitment to unnecessary rules that it fails to be part of God's healing and restoration?
- l: Survey the five conflicts recorded in 2:1-3:6 and then explain the conclusion these religious leaders come to in v. 6.
- l: How can Jesus' responses to opposition be a model for our own responses (note: focus on Jesus' response both here in Mark as well as in the broader scripture)?
- A: Is the Sabbath a day of freedom or restriction (or irrelevance) for you? Why?
- A: What is the best way for you to use the Sabbath? How much "Pharisee" lives in you?
- A: How can we learn to live in a rhythm of work and rest?

Recommended Follow-up:

- **Pray:** Pray that we would be a community driven by compassion and the Kingdom, not by rigid rules and regulations, and that we would find the rhythm to work and rest, community and solitude, righteous anger at injustice, etc.
- **Respond:** Make a commitment to practice Sabbath this week. Write down what you experience, pray about how to better incorporate this "commandment" into your life (or how to re-orient your life...).
- **Read:** Next week's sermon (6/27/2010) will focus on Mark 3:7-19. Take time prior to next Sunday to read & study the passage (& context), pray through the passage, meditate on the passage, etc.

* As discussed in Riverside's HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid "go through this guide word-for-word." There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time. These guides rely heavily on a few different study guides; including "LifeChange Series" (ISBN 0891099107), N.T. Wright's guide (ISBN 9780830821822), James Hoover's guide (ISBN 9780830830046), and the Serendipity NT for Groups by the Young Life ministry (ISBN is N/A)