

Sunday Sermon: June 3, 2018

Sermon Text: Mark 2: 23-28

Sermon Theme: The Son of Man is Lord, Even of the Sabbath

1. He Instituted it 2. He Rules over it 3. He Fulfilled it

²³ One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, 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."

God has placed into each of us a natural knowledge of right and wrong. In general, it gives us a standard of right and wrong and when we break that standard, it makes us feel guilty. The one problem is, our conscience is not always trustworthy because it is not always right. We can have a standard of right and wrong which is different from someone else's and which is different from God's. We need someone to tell us what is actually right and wrong, what we should do and not do. Thankfully God has given us this objective truth in the Commandments.

People have always struggled with the Ten Commandments and how they fit into their lives. Many believe that the commandments are made by an uncaring and unloving God. Some pick and choose commandments that they like and commandments that they don't like. Some just throw the commandments out because they are much too high of a standard to live by. Others wonder why the God of the Bible should have the final say in what is right and wrong.

As Christians, we need to ask ourselves how do we feel about God's commandments. Are the commandments really unloving and uncaring? Are they really a set of standards too high to live by?

The answer to both is no. Our God is eternally loving and caring and his commandments are eternally loving. In His wisdom, God wants to keep us away from temptation and danger, and even problems that we bring on ourselves because we sin. He tells us to stay away from thoughts, words and actions that breed murder, adultery, lying and coveting. He wants our families to be blessings to us so he tells us to honor our fathers and mothers. Finally, he wants us to know where to turn for help and salvation so he says he will not give his glory to any other. He also tells us where to look to find this message of salvation and forgiveness.

This commandment about worship remains one of the most important ones for us to hear, read and take to heart. Take time to honor God and grow in the Word by taking time out for the Lord. Far from being restrictive this is a blessing to us. Today we will see that Jesus is the Lord of Sabbath. He is the one who established it, the one who rules over it and the one who fulfills it.

The Sabbath Day was the Old Testament Day of worship and rest. God commanded it in the 3rd commandment, **Remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy**. To understand Jesus words from Mark, we have to look at the original intent of this commandment. We look at what our God established when he gave this commandment to us.

When we look in Deuteronomy chapter 5, we see that God did give a short explanation. **Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁴but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God.** When we look at the commandments we often miss what God allows and blesses us with. God allowed 6 out of 7 days to be filled with completely personal and business necessities. 6 days you are allowed to work in the fields, you are allowed to sow and reap, you are allowed to make your business run. Notice he didn't say you are required to work for 6 days, he simply said here are the 6 days you may work whatever schedule is necessary to get your work completed and for that work to be a blessing to you and your family.

What did God bless them with? On the seventh God blessed them with something that would make them far richer than anything that would come out of the ground or that they could raise with their hands. On the seventh day, God wanted them to become rich in faith. He blessed them to have complete freedom from the stress of the fields, complete freedom from business calls, or contracts, complete freedom from somebody

interrupting a much needed evening away. He gave them freedom to do something else. He gave them freedom to grow in their faith and knowledge as they used this time to join together around him to remember his promises and what he had done for them.

When we look at ourselves we see God loves us as well. He not only wants us to believe in him and go to heaven, he points us to his house so that our faith can be strong and we can have that blessing.

Every Sunday God says to us, "Come to my house. I will prepare everything. I will have everything ready. It doesn't matter what you look like. Come with all your sins and all your problems and I will make sure that when you are here, you are taken care of. I will give you rest for your body and your soul."

Our Savior established this Sabbath for us. He allows us to come near to him to receive from him something we can never get from the world. Rest for our body where we can set aside the cell phone and stress and rest for the soul where Jesus says I have something much better planned for you. As we worship, our eyes are pointed heavenward and our troubles may be forgotten for a moment because Jesus has it all taken care of. We receive unconditional love and forgiveness. We are reminded to look to Jesus in this world.

Jesus established this commandment for our good to give us rest for our souls which need to be pointed to heaven. Jesus also rules over this commandment for our good, showing us how to follow this commandment correctly.

In our sermon text, Jesus retells the Old Testament story of David who did something that the Pharisees would have stoned him and the priest for. David went into the temple and ate the bread that was set aside for worship.

The Pharisees had just accused Jesus. Did you read between the lines of what they accused him of? "Don't you know how to follow the Sabbath?" Did you follow why the Pharisees were accusing Jesus? As Jesus as his disciples were walking along, some of the disciples were hungry and wanted a snack. They reached over, picked some heads of wheat in order to shuck them and eat them.

To the Pharisees, this was harvesting, and that was work? Does that sound like work? Let me ask it this way, How many of you think it is work to go and get a snack of crackers out of the pantry or grab a cookie from the cookie jar? The disciples were really doing no more or less than many people did on the Sabbath. People ate, people cooked, people walked about. However, these Pharisees were trying to condemn Jesus and his disciples with their false teaching about the Sabbath.

When Jesus says, "**The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.**" ²⁸ **So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.**" He was telling the Pharisees it was them that misunderstood the Law and the Commandments, it was them that didn't understand God's intent in giving this Law. This commandment about the Sabbath was not made to punish people and send them to hell if they "worked" too much or "rested" too little. This Sabbath commandment was there to point them to the proper time for worship to the Lord. The Sabbath was about setting aside time to worship the Lord and to do what is right and proper.

Now we might understand why Jesus used the story of David. The bread in the temple was not there to tempt David in his hunger and damn him to hell when he ate it. Instead, the priest understood that it was God-pleasing to give this bread to David and his men who were serving the king and the Lord. This was using the bread to God's glory. David was ate this food in his time of need and was thankful that the Lord provided it to him in his time of need.

It is Jesus who rules over this commandment and shows us what is for and how to follow it. Jesus did not show the Pharisees what actions were acceptable and which were not because the Sabbath wasn't about work. The Sabbath was about worship, time set aside to thank the Lord, to pray to the Lord, and to grow in the Lord. It was time to see the blessings of the earth that the Lord provided and to thank him for that goodness, while also remembering the blessing of eternal rest that God would provide them someday in heaven.

This commandment needed to be made because, on our own, we would not follow it. We allow many things to be more important than God and we don't come to the Lord's house. When we do that we are sinning. We allow things like job & career to get in the way of worship. Sometimes we have to work, other times we need a break because we have been working too hard. We allow family to get in the way of worship. Sometimes it's a family vacation, at other times it's family pressure not to go, still other times we have family engagements that are more important that to be in the Lord's house to worship. Still other times, we have no excuse, the cup of coffee and newspaper are more important, we just don't want to get up and come to church because it's too late, or too early, or not at the time that I want it to be at.

But really these are excuses to try to cover over our sins of despising God's Word and not being at his altar.

We need the Savior to rule over this commandment. We need him to guide us in the proper understanding of it, just as he did the Pharisees, so that we can properly worship him and praise him because he has fulfilled this commandment.

We do not preach come to church and you will be saved, we preach, just as the apostles did, believe in Jesus and you will be saved. We will never be able to attend church enough to save ourselves. We will never be able to follow any of the commandments well enough to save ourselves. But Jesus did not come to make sure that we were following those commandments well enough. He did not give the Pharisees gold stars for their attention to the details. Instead, he came to keep the commandments for us so, to fulfill the commandment for us, so that he could forgive us and give us heaven.

Jesus came to keep the Sabbath perfectly, to be the Lord of the Sabbath, so that we could be forgiven when we sinfully choose to avoid his house, to despise his Word, or stay away from his altar. Jesus fulfilled this Law perfectly so that we could and would be forgiven.

Even though Jesus has fulfilled this commandment, it still remains very important for us to hear and study and take it to heart. Where else do we have during our week to sit and meditate on the Gospel during our week? Where do we hear about Jesus, the light of life, where do we partake of the sacrament that strengthens faith? The place that we are guaranteed to hear this saving message is in the Lord's house during worship.

May God grant to us time to be with him in his house to hear his Word. My we have Sabbath time set aside on Sunday and every other day to thank and praise our Savior for fulfilling all the commandments for us and giving us the forgiveness we need. Amen