

22S39 Mark 2:14-28 (Part 5)

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope everyone is doing well. Today we are continuing our study of the gospel according to Mark with Mark 2:14-28 (Part 5) Matthew becomes a disciple, Jesus teaches about sabbath, new and old things.

Before we start, we need to understand a little about this amazing book in the bible. Most historians believe Mark was the first written account of Jesus' life, ministry, death and resurrection. The identity of Mark is not known for sure, but most believe this is John Mark. John Mark is spoken of by Luke in Acts as the cousin of Barnabas, John Mark is mentioned in many other books on the New Testament. Many believe he spent time traveling with Peter, so it is thought that much of Mark's gospel is actually from the perspective of Peter. We also believe that John Mark knew Jesus. There are accounts that Jesus stayed at Mark's mother's home, there are also some unique story details in Mark that are not in either Matthew's or Luke's accounts. We will try to highlight some of these as we go through the stories in Mark.

I'm reading from the New American Standard version (NAS) today. But of course, you can use whatever translation you choose.

Let's read Mark 2:14-28 (NAS) *¹⁴As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax office, and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him. ¹⁵And it happened that He was reclining at the table in his house, and many tax collectors and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of them, and they were following Him. ¹⁶When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they said to His disciples, "Why is He eating with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹⁷And hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners." ¹⁸John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they came and said to Him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" ¹⁹And Jesus said to them, "While the groom is with them, the attendants of the groom cannot fast, can they? As long as they have the groom with them, they cannot fast. ²⁰But the days will come when the groom is taken away from them, and then they will fast, on that day. ²¹"No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear results. ²²And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins." ²³And it happened that He was passing through the grainfields on the Sabbath, and His disciples began to make their way along while picking the heads of grain. ²⁴The Pharisees were saying to Him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" ²⁵And He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and he and his companions became hungry; ²⁶how he entered the house of God in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the consecrated bread, which is not lawful for anyone to eat except the priests, and he also gave it to those who were with him?" ²⁷Jesus said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸So the Son of Man is Lord, even of the Sabbath."*

Let's pray. Dear heavenly father, guide our discussion today such that your message is clear to each of us. As we read your words from Mark, help us see what Mark wants his readers to understand and why. I pray that you help me stay out of the way so your hope and peace can be shared with us. I pray this in your name Lord Jesus. Amen.

Now, let's take a closer look at these verses, Mark 2:14 (NAS) ***14As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax office, and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he got up and followed Him.*** Each time Jesus calls a disciple to follow, I've always been amazed at how easily they leave everything to follow Jesus. But I think sometimes we too swiftly scan by these stories. Levi or Matthew, had a job that paid very well as a tax collector. Matthew was most likely hated by everyone that knew him because of his job. I wonder if Matthew had seen Jesus before, or maybe even been at some the places Jesus was teaching. It's hard to believe that there was anyone living in Capernaum that did not know of Jesus at this point. The earlier stories said everyone had heard what Jesus was doing. So, I think yes. Matthew probably knew of Jesus, so when Jesus invited him into this new life, Matthew was ready and said yes.

Then, Mark 2:15-16 (NAS) ***15And it happened that He was reclining at the table in his house, and many tax collectors and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of them, and they were following Him. 16When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they said to His disciples, "Why is He eating with tax collectors and sinners?"*** So Jesus goes to Matthew's house to eat and the scribes are offended that Jesus would associate with such people. Remember, the scribes don't like Jesus, they are watching and looking for ways to accuse Jesus of doing something wrong. So, they are more offended now. But remember how Jesus answered them. Let's read on, Mark 2:17 (NAS) ***17And hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."*** What Jesus says is quite profound. People who think they are okay don't go to the doctor. Only those who know they are sick seek to go to a doctor. The Pharisees and scribes thought they were righteous but the tax collector and other sinners knew they needed Jesus.

Now there is a break in the story and Mark begins a new story about Jesus in Mark 2:18 (NAS) ***18John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they came and said to Him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?"*** This is another accusation of Jesus. They were saying your disciples are not disciplined, they don't fast. That may not seem like much to us today. But in the first century, fasting was a sign of devotion to God. The Jews took this very seriously and any religious person would be fasting to show how religious they are. But Jesus' followers did not do this. They were saying that Jesus must be a bad teacher, or maybe even more, Jesus was being accused of being a false teacher. But Jesus again takes the accusation and turns it around in Mark 2:19-20(NAS) ***19And Jesus said to them, "While the groom is with them, the attendants of the groom cannot fast, can they? As long as they have the groom with them, they cannot fast. 20But the days will come when the groom is taken away from them, and then they will fast, on that day.*** Jesus is

predicting He will be going away soon. I doubt anyone understood what He meant which is probably why He followed it up with some symbolism to help them understand in Mark 2:21-22 (NAS) ²¹*"No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear results. ²²And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."*

I wonder if the scribes understood these. Jesus was saying that you don't mix the old ways with the new ways. It makes perfect sense to us today but I'm sure the disciples and scribes were asking themselves so what is new. Jesus is saying He has the authority to teach new things not in the law of Moses.

Now there is a break in the story and Mark begins a new story about Jesus in Mark 2:23-24 (NAS) ²³*And it happened that He was passing through the grainfields on the Sabbath, and His disciples began to make their way along while picking the heads of grain. ²⁴The Pharisees were saying to Him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?"*

Again for the third time in these few verses, Jesus is being attacked. Now it is getting more serious, His disciples are violating the Sabbath. Remember the Jews take the Sabbath very seriously. Then Jesus responds in a way they would have never expected in Mark 2:25-26 (NAS) ²⁵*And He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and he and his companions became hungry; ²⁶how he entered the house of God in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the consecrated bread, which is not lawful for anyone to eat except the priests, and he also gave it to those who were with him?"*

Talk about shutting people up. Jesus tells them a story about King David. They all know this story and what David did was far worse than what Jesus' disciples were doing. Och. The Pharisees are shut up hard. I'm sure they did not like this, then Jesus really makes them mad in Mark 2:27-28 (NAS) ²⁷*Jesus said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸So the Son of Man is Lord, even of the Sabbath."* These are two verses that many really don't like. The Jews whole culture revolved around the Sabbath. Now Jesus is saying they have it wrong. The Sabbath is a thing God created for man. Sabbath did not always exist. Jesus says the day of rest was created for men, not the other way around. Then Jesus makes a claim that probably made them want to kill Him. Jesus, the son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath. Lord over even the Sabbath. Jesus is saying He is in charge of everything, the Sabbath does not change that. It's just a day. Other places in the bible say, God has never stopped working. In fact that has to be true, if God stopped working then His creation would stop. So of course God does not need a Sabbath. It was created for men; People need to rest and focus on God so they can be better for the other six days. Let's review.

- 1) Sinners? People were offended because Jesus cared for everyone. He came to reach and teach those who know they need Him. Jesus cannot reach or teach those who think they are righteous without Him.

- 2) Fasting? The Jewish people saw fasting as a sign of devotion to God. Jesus said, I'm hear. Show devotion to God by focusing on God all the time, not just by outward religious acts. Now I like fasting. I think if you do this correctly, it can help you to focus on Jesus. But that is for another lesson.
- 3) Sabbath? Sabbath was a very big deal to Jews. Even some of our Christian groups take this very seriously. Jesus is saying that yes, a sabbath rest is good for people but it was made for people to help them. People were not made so they could keep the sabbath. This was a major thing to say. I know myself; I perform better if I take one day a week and rest. This is not sitting by the pool or vacationing. This is resting from normal work and leisure activities and intentionally spending time refocusing on God. This can include going to Church. Although I choose to observe a Sabbath on a day I don't go to church. This can include spending time with your family but it must include God at the center of all activities. If Jesus is not the priority, then the sabbath will not give you the intended benefits.

Let's Pray. Heavenly Father thank you for Bible. Help us to read and meditate on your words so we can hear the message you have for us. Help us to remember who you are Lord. You are our king, king of kings. You are our Lord, Lord over everyone. We can trust you, Lord. Help us to ask you for wisdom when we don't understand. I pray this in your Name Lord Jesus. Amen

Let me leave you with this, Jesus was accused over and over again. Jesus was showing He is God and He knows the best way to live. But the people didn't get it. The scribes and Pharisees are mad, I'm sure His disciples were a little confused. This is kind of like us. Jesus either offends us or confuses us. But, what Jesus is trying to teach us is He knows the best way for us to live, right here and right now. Trust God. God is working around us and through us. Don't miss it.

Thank you for joining me for our study of the gospel of Mark. Please email me comments or feedback. And if you liked the message, please share the link with your friends. Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.