# **The Gospel According to St. Mark**

**Mark 2:18 - 3:6**

**Concordia Commentary – Dr. James Voelz, 2013**

## **Mark 2:18-28 – Old Ways and New Ways**

* Problem: “Why do you guys not fast?”
  + Pharisees fasted the second and fifth days of the week
    - Far beyond the requirements of the annual fast on the Day of Atonement
    - Leviticus 23:26-32
  + Fasting is a time for sorrow or penitence.
* Jesus responds
  + A parable-like response
    - Jesus as the bridegroom
      * NT image of the bridegroom parallels OT imagery of Yahweh as the husband married to His people as His wife.
        + Isaiah 54:5-6, Isaiah 62:5, 61:10
      * Here we are waiting for a future consummation.
        + Not a husband yet!
        + The wedding and consummation are yet to come.
      * Jesus claims the image of Yahweh!
        + But if the bridegroom that is standing before them is awaiting His marriage, then there is another arrival to take place.
    - Wedding guests/Sons of the bride chamber”
      * The disciples are to be the attendants of the bridegroom
        + Denotes either attendants of the groom or wedding guests
        + Jewish law permitted wedding guests to rejoice even when others could not.

Example: The Feast of Booths

Guests were not under obligation to live in booths for the seven days of a wedding celebration.

* + - * The bridegroom is with His people!
        + Time to party!!
    - The bridegroom will be taken away
      * Points to the crucifixion
        + Ascension is also possible
      * As we recognized in Revelation, after Jesus ascends ushers in a new age.
      * As the Israelites prior to the incarnation “fasted” waiting for the Messiah, the disciples (and we too) are in a “fast” waiting for our Savior’s return.
        + It is a time of repentance

Lamenting and mourning and repenting of sins (1:15)

Things you would do during a fast.

* + - The problem with a new patch and new wine
      * A new patch has not shrunk yet
        + Metaphor for the characteristics of life within and under the reign and rule of God/Jesus
      * The old cloth has already shrunk
        + Metaphor for life under the old covenant.
        + The two do not mix!
      * Same goes with new wine in old wine skins
        + The fermentation is going to burst the skins that have already stretched and dried out.
      * The new will burst the old
        + Jesus is referring to the covenant

The old covenant relies on obedience to the letter of the Law

Jesus will introduce actions and activities that overtly transgress the specifics of individual laws

Touching lepers

Working on the Sabbath

* + - * + The old covenant still matters

Galatians 3:23-29

Romans 10:4

Hebrews 10:1-3

2 Corinthians 5:17

The old must point to Christ to fulfill

* A New Problem
  + Picking and eating grain (that is not theirs) on the Sabbath
    - Pharisees confront Jesus
      * Is it sinful to confront someone on the Sabbath?
    - Jesus responds
      * Addresses improper eating
        + Confronts the Pharisees approach to the Law and legalistic traditions

Remember, the Pharisees would put a “fence” around the Law

Reaping was one of the 39 types of work forbidden by the Pharisees on the Sabbath

* + - * + What the disciples were doing was not sinful

Deuteronomy 23:25

* + - * + David and his men acted outside the Law

1 Samuel 21:1-6

The Scriptures did not condemn their act

The example of David tells the Pharisees that God’s laws are not intended to make life unbearable for His people when they are in need.

* + - * Addresses the Sabbath
        + Pharisees were focusing on Sabbath law and regulations

Man is subject to the Sabbath

* + - * + Jesus looks at the Sabbath relationship between man and created order.

It is about Sabbath day and its relation to man.

Sabbath for man

* + - * Addresses His authority
        + “Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath”

Somebody greater than David is here!

If Jesus says it is okay… it is okay.

If they were violating the Law, He would have stopped them.

## **Mark 3:1-6 – We’re Going to Get You For Healing Him!**

* Conflict in a synagogue
  + A new patch in an old garment is not working
* A man with a withered hand
  + “drying hand”
    - 1 Kings 13:4
  + Possible nerve damage beyond just his hand.
  + Possibly from a breech birth where the midwife would pull the arm to deliver a child.
* It’s a trap!
  + “If on the Sabbath He would heal him” – Word order!
  + Bring charges
    - Exodus 31:14
    - Numbers 15:32-36
  + But…
    - Healing on the Sabbath was not prohibited by any command in the Torah of Moses or the rest of the OT.
    - Neither is it included in any of the 39 types of work the Jewish rabbis determined could not be done on the Sabbath.
  + So…
    - A “fence” had been put around the Law
  + Note: After Jesus heals him, there is only plotting. No legal accusation.
* “Come here!”
  + Confrontational move by Jesus
* A few questions
  + Do good or harm? Save or kill?
    - With the second question, Jesus raises the stakes.
      * Ironic that Jesus’ opponents are looking to do harm and even kill Jesus.
      * What was it that these opponents were doing in their heart?
      * Jesus knows!
* Silent treatment.
* Jesus looked at them with anger.
  + Defiance of God’s will can do that to a person… even the Son of God.
  + Yet Jesus also grieves at this!
    - He recognizes the power sin has over these people.
* “Stretch out your hand.”
  + Only words!
    - No physical work was done!!
    - How can they accuse Jesus of just speaking?
      * If they were to continue, they would have to admit He had powers to do so, which would lead them to have to have the discussion, “Is He the real Messiah?”
  + “restore” not “healed”
    - What is the difference?
    - Acts 3:21
* Herodians
  + No firm evidence of who they were historically
  + Viewed as a political party that supported the Herod family who was loyal to Rome.
    - Herod the Great ruled all Palestine with Roman backing
      * 40 BC was given the title “king of the Jews”
  + Shows how much the Pharisees hated Jesus.
    - “My enemy’s enemy is my friend”
* Destroy not kill
  + A new stage of negative reaction to Jesus’ work has begun.
  + Jesus’ opponents are more intent on shaming Jesus and His reputation