

Lord even of What?!
Mark 2:23-28

I. Thank yous

A. Thank you, first, to Christ our Savior

1. Safe journey
2. Privilege of providing care for my mom
3. Peace of heart and mind He gave throughout this journey

B. Thank you to *sunergoi*

1. Sunergoi - those who labor alongside someone else
 - a. Elders
 - (1) John Hay
 - (2) Dave Avery
 - b. Worship Team
 - (1) Laurie & John
 - (2) Valita
 - (3) Billy D
 - (4) Mattsons
2. Special sunergoi
 - a. Mark Beck
 - b. Bill Doucette
 - c. Tom Fleming
 - d. Wayne Kallestad

II. Principle of Inverse Returns

A. Definition

1. In some systems, the more you add of one component, the less you get of desired return
2. Example
 - a. Southern Sweet Tea
 - (1) 1 Gallon brewed tea / 1 cup sugar
 - (2) 1 Gallon of brewed tea and add 5 cups of sugar
 - b. The more sugar you add the less desirable the return.
 - (1) The components are all equally valuable
 - (2) But when one component gets out of balance it reduces the quality of the final product.

B. Application in the Christian Life

1. The more we are distracted from pondering with wonder and with awe and with humility and with love the Person and work of Jesus Christ, the less we will appreciate the magnitude and glory of God and His mercy to us, of which Jesus is Himself the physical and eternal manifestation.
2. What God did and what God continues to do in and through Jesus Christ
 - a. Outshines the brightest sun in the summer sky
 - b. Exceeds the greatest wonder in the created world
 - c. Surpasses the most astounding marvel of the modern age
3. Jesus is

- a. Traits
 - (1) Incomparable in His Person
 - (2) Indisputable in His office
 - (3) Incorruptible in His perfection
 - (4) Unconquerable in His victory
 - (5) Unconditional in His love
 - (6) Unrelenting in His mercy
- b. He is
 - (1) a feast for the soul
 - (2) a challenge for the mind
 - (3) a direction for the will
 - (4) a delight for the heart
 - (5) a purpose for the body
- c. **Jesus deserves our deepest, continuous, consistent, devoted attention and our lives are best served when He gets from us the attention and devotion of faith and practice that He deserves.**
 - (1) Focusing on and following Jesus in faith and obedience is the key to successfully maneuvering life in a broken, sinful world.
 - (2) The more we are distracted from Christ, the less victorious, the less holy, the less reflective of God Himself our lives become.
 - (a) This is the principle of inverse returns applied to the life of faith.
 - (b) This is the condition Mark addresses in His gospel!

III. Mark's Gospel (Review)

A. Mark's Main Point:

1. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
2. Jesus is worthy of enduring faith and continued obedience

B. Mark's Strategy Thus far

1. The gospel in five words
2. Nine proofs that Jesus is the Christ
3. Five controversies where Jesus Himself speaks His nature and God appointed role as Christ
 - a. 2:1-12 The paralytic
 - (1) (Permission)
 - (2) "Why does this man speak like this? . . . Who can forgive sins but God alone?"
 - b. 2:13-17 Tax collectors and sinners
 - (1) (People)
 - (2) "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?"
 - c. 2:18-22 Fasting
 - (1) (Procedures and Protocols)
 - (2) "Why . . . do your disciples not fast?"

- d. 2:23-28 Sabbath
 - (1) (Purpose)
 - (2) “Why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?”
- e. 3:1-6 Withered hand
 - (1) (Petulance)
 - (2) “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?”

4. **Each section, and every word of Mark’s gospel focus us on the Person and work of Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, in order that we might prosper in the eternal life and glory that is ours through faith in Jesus.**

- a. As I sat by my mother’s side, as she struggled for each breath, as I watched her die and leave this world behind, I was reminded once again, our ONLY hope in this world is Jesus.
- b. He alone can
 - (1) Heal what is wounded
 - (2) Mend what is broken
 - (3) Forgive what is sinful
 - (4) Reconcile what is divided.
- c. ONLY Jesus can
 - (1) Make sense of the senseless
 - (2) Give meaning to the meaningless,
 - (3) Provide hope for the hopeless
 - (a) Paul to Timothy
 - (b) **2 Timothy 3:1-5 (ESV) ¹ But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.**
 - (c) Only through faith in Jesus,
 - i) saving faith that makes us a new creation from God
 - ii) and sanctifying faith that continually transforms us into the likeness of Jesus,
 - iii) can anyone hope to be other than Paul describes.
- d. **Know this, the more we are distracted by the world and the situations of life in the world, the more we focus our attention and efforts elsewhere, the less we will experience the power and glory of Christ in our lives!**

IV. The Fourth Controversy: Jesus is Lord even of What?!

A. Controversy introduced

1. Jesus and His disciples, and apparently some Pharisees were there, walking along with Him through some grainfields on the Sabbath.
2. As they are walking along, Jesus' disciples reach out and pluck some of the heads of wheat from the stalks, presumably to husk them and eat them.
3. The Pharisees raise the controversy
 - a. **Mark 2:24 (ESV)** *And the Pharisees were saying to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?"*
 - b. Controversy: Why are the disciples of Jesus practicing lawlessness?

B. Controversy examined

1. Questions
 - a. Why are the Pharisees raising this question?
 - b. What could possibly be wrong with plucking a few grain of wheat to eat when you're hungry walking along on the Sabbath?
2. Dual nature of the controversy
 - a. What is the Sabbath law?
 - b. What gives Jesus the right to disregard the Sabbath law?
3. Short history of Sabbath law
 - a. **Genesis 2:1-3** *Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.*
 - (1) God Himself engages in Sabbath rest, setting the standard for how the day should be observed
 - (2) God defined the Sabbath day for the rest of us: blessed and holy
 - b. **Exodus 35:2-3 (ESV)** ²*Six days work shall be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death.* ³*You shall kindle no fire in all your dwelling places on the Sabbath day.*
 - (1) God codifies the observance of Sabbath in covenant law
 - (2) God describes the means for obeying the law of Sabbath
 - (a) Work six days
 - (b) Solemn rest on the seventh day
 - (c) A day set aside to the LORD
 - (d) So holy that disobedience is punished by death!
 - c. That holiness demands that "work" be defined
 - (1) Mishnah (The Rule Book) defines "work
 - (2) **7:2** A The generative categories of acts of labor [prohibited on the Sabbath] are forty less one:
 - (3) B (1) he who sews, (2) ploughs, (3) reaps, (4) binds

sheaves, (5) threshes, (6) winnows, (7) selects [fit from unfit produce or crops], (8) grinds, (9) sifts, (10) kneads, (11) bakes;

(4) C (12) he who shears wool, (13) washes it, (14) beats it, (15) dyes it;

(5) D (16) spins, (17) weaves,

(6) E (18) makes two loops, (19) weaves two threads, (20) separates two threads;

(7) F (21) ties, (22) unties,

(8) G (23) sews two stitches, (24) tears in order to sew two stitches;

(9) H (25) he who traps a deer, (26) slaughters it, (27) flays it, (28) salts it, (29) cures its hide, (30) scrapes it, and (31) cuts it up;

(10) I (32) he who writes two letters, (33) erases two letters in order to write two letters;

(11) J (34) he who builds, (35) tears down;

(12) K (36) he who puts out a fire, (37) kindles a fire;

(13) L (38) he who hits with a hammer; (39) he who transports an object from one domain to another—

(14) M lo, these are the forty generative acts of labor less one.

- d. Doing any of these activities between sunset on Friday and sunset on Saturday is worthy of the death penalty.
- e. **And the real question here is not why are they doing work, the real question is, “Who is Jesus to let them get away with work on the Sabbath?”**

V. The Real Question: Who is Jesus?

A. Jesus uses David as an example

1. Moses is the greatest prophet, David is the greatest king
2. Jesus cites David as an example
 - a. that there are occasions when revered authorities act in the best interest of their people even when it appears to “break the law.”
 - b. The point is, if they accept the validity of David’s actions, one greater than David is standing right in front of them.
3. Jesus cites Himself as God as the definitive answer to the controversy
 - a. **Mark 2:27-28 (ESV)** ²⁷ *And 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.”*
 - b. Jesus says, referring to Himself, that the Son of Man is lord, even of the Sabbath
 - (1) Who first engaged in Sabbath? God did.
 - (2) Who first defined Sabbath? God did.
 - (3) Who codified and set the parameters for Sabbath? God did.
 - c. So, when Jesus says that he is lord, master, authority of even the

Sabbath, what is He saying?

- d. **Jesus declares that He is God, having authority over all creation, even the Sabbath, the one thing in all creation that God Himself actively engages in personally.**

B. The Impact of Christ's Assertion for the Believer

1. Christian, listen, we have said that the principle of inverse returns declares that the more you add of one component in a system, the less you gain in the return.
 - a. If we focus our attention, our efforts, our emotions, our expectations on the world, we will be less satisfied, less content, less enamored with Jesus and have less devotion and love for him.
 - b. **HOWEVER, if we focus our attention, our efforts, our emotions, our thinking, our desires, our values, our will, our entire life and being on Jesus, we will find that the world in which we live, with all its deceit and sin and brokenness will offer less and less satisfaction, less attraction, less value, and ultimately less control and less destruction in our lives.**
2. So, here's a question for you.
 - a. If Jesus Christ, is lord, even of the Sabbath, "What in your life is Jesus not yet lord of?"
 - b. What attitudes, values, behaviors & habits, what choices and decisions, what relationships, what dreams and efforts and emotions, what expressions and efforts, what in your mind, heart, spirit, will, or body is Jesus, even though He is lord, even of the Sabbath, is not lord of in you?
 - c. What part of who you are and what you do does Jesus not control or have authority over as surely as He is lord, even of the Sabbath?
 - (1) Can we say, without reservation or guilt, that Jesus is lord, even over our finances?
 - (2) Can we say, without reservation or guilt, that Jesus is lord, even over our habits, those things we do without real thought both in public and private?
 - (3) Can we say, without reservation or guilt, that Jesus is lord, even over our responses to other people? Not just the angry responses but the arrogant responses, the dismissive responses, the inconsiderate and insensitive responses?
 - (4) Can we say, without reservation or guilt, that Jesus is lord, even over our possessions, the things that we claim to have gained for ourselves but really, in this world, belong to him?
 - d. Who sets the rules for the minutiae of your life, you or Jesus?
 - e. Who orders the course of your life, you or Jesus?
 - f. Who gains the benefit of your decisions, you or Jesus?
 - g. Is Jesus lord, even of you, all that you are, all that you have, all that you do?

- h. Or do you retain a measure of authority for yourself, relegating Jesus to the role of silent minority partner status in some areas of your heart, your thinking, your life?
- 3. When Jesus declares that He is lord, even of the Sabbath, we are faced with this challenge:
 - a. to submit and yield to ourselves to Christ in faith knowing that doing so will mean less of the world in us,
 - b. or submit and yield ourselves to the world as deceived and deluded slaves, knowing that the more we love the world, the less we will love Christ and the less His love will be in us.
- 4. Jesus is lord, even of the Sabbath. Is He lord, even of you, today?