

Growth Group Curriculum

WINTER SEMESTER 2021

Mark Week 7 ch. 2 vv. 23 - ch. 3 vv. 6

For information on Growth Groups email info@cbclife.org

REVIEW

1. Was there anything from this past Sunday's message that challenged or confused you?
2. Can you think of one thing from Sunday's sermon that you are likely to remember two weeks from now?

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. On Sunday we got our first up close look at the Pharisees, a religious sect known for their strict adherence to the Law. We learn that they have become overzealous and missed the whole point of God's command. Have you ever been around someone whose zeal has gone bad (they are consistently judgmental or legalistic)? What was it like being around them and how did they impact their family and friends?

DIGGING DEEPER

In 2:15-17, we see that the religious and moral type persons are not attracted to Jesus as are the non-religious and the moral outsiders. Jesus says: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." He uses both terms ironically. He is saying that the word "righteous" here means self-righteous, and the word "sinners" here means people who know they are sinful and in need of a Savior. Jesus is turning normal religion on its head. He does not congratulate those who have attained a high degree of theological precision and moral discipline. Instead he warns them that they might be the farthest from him. In the next few incidents, Jesus challenges all sorts of expectations and practices of the religious and moral Establishment.

1. Read 2:18-19.

a. Why do people fast? (What does it accomplish?)

b. Why do you think John's disciples fasted so much? (read 1:4-5)

c. Why do you think the Pharisees' disciples fasted so much?

2. Look at 2:18b. What does the complaint against Jesus and his followers tell us about their attitude and conduct?

3. Read 2:19-20.

a. Does Jesus forbid fasting here or anywhere?

b. Who is the “bridegroom” of Israel? (cf. Isaiah 54:4-6; 62:5; Jeremiah 2:2-3, 32; Ezekiel 16:1-8). What is Jesus claiming here?

c. How does the image of “wedding guests”

4. indicate how his coming changes the way we use spiritual disciplines?

5. Look at 2:20-21. Jesus continues to speak here about how his coming changes traditional religious practices. What is he saying?

Read the following background note about the meaning of Sabbath Rest in the Bible.

a) In the Old Testament, when the Creator finished creating, he “rested” from his work. But that did not mean God was tired — it meant he stopped creating the world and started ruling the world. Thus Sabbath in the Bible means peace and “rest” and blessing all creation experiences under God’s rule. Isaiah 66:1, “Heaven is my throne, earth my footstool — why build me a house for my place of rest?” So rest equals the rule of God.

b) When we rebelled from God’s rule, we lost the Sabbath rest. If we are not under his Lordship, we become ‘restless’ and miserable in our sin (Isaiah 57:20-21).

c) God gives Israel some foretastes of “rest” when they obey him — but it is only the foretaste of something much greater to come. (Joshua 14:15; I Kings 8:56; Hebrews 4:1-10). He commands the Sabbath day to be observed once a week, to represent the rest and peace and restoration of what God’s salvation brings. (The English word “restore” retains something of the original meaning of rest as

"healing that which is broken.")¹

Read 2:23-3:6.

1. What is Jesus saying about himself when he says I am “Lord of the Sabbath?”
2. How does Jesus show that they are missing the “point” of the Sabbath — and what is that “point”?

Prayer Requests:

[illegible]

¹ Adapted from Redeemer Presbyterian Church, 2005