

# Mark Bible Study

## Study 4 (week of Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

### **Mark 2:23-3:19 Jesus Christ – Lord over all**

#### Leader's Preparation

To prepare to lead this study read the passages over at least three times, noting what you feel might be some of the main points. Using your UCM Leader's Guide (pp. 22-23 or pp. 27-33), ask observation and interpretation questions of the passages.

You will also find it very helpful to read the parallel passages in the other 3 gospels.

- For Mk. 2:23-28 read Mt. 12:1-8; Lk. 6:1-5
- for Mk. 3:1-6 read Mt. 12:9-14; Lk. 6:6-11
- for Mk. 3:7-12 read Mt. 12:15,16; Lk. 6:17-19
- for Mk. 3:16-10, 23-27 read Mt. 10:2-4, 12:25-29; Lk. 6:14-16, 11:17-22

For more information refer to a good commentary by: William Lane, N.T. Wright.

#### Observation:

Ask the who, why, what, where questions.

Who are the main characters in these verses?

What is going on in these verses?

Key words or phrases: Are there any words you don't understand that may be important to the overall understanding of the passages?

Why would the Pharisees want to kill Jesus just because he had "broken" their understanding of keeping Sabbath? The Pharisee do not plot to kill Jesus only because of this one instance, but rather because of the accumulation of confrontations they have had with Jesus.

Who are the Herodians? Influential Jews who favoured the Herodian dynasty and therefore supported Rome. Normally the Pharisees and Herodians would have been on opposite ends of the political spectrum of Jesus' day. They join together here to remove the one who they feared might topple their hold on power.

To understand why Jesus did not want the spirits to tell who he was look at the previous week's notes concerning the messianic secret in Mark.

#### INTRODUCTION

Tonight we're going to look at Jesus' teaching concerning the Sabbath.

Introductory question.

**Read the Ten Commandments in Deut. 5:6-21. Take special note of the command to keep the Sabbath in Deuteronomy 5:12-15. Do you think the Ten Commandments including the Sabbath are still relevant for us today? Why or why not.**

Depending on how comfortable the members of your Core feel, ask each person to read a portion of the passage ( Mark 2:23-3:19) until you have read the whole passage. If some members don't feel comfortable reading in front of others, you offer to read more of the passage.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**1. Why does Jesus tell the story of King David and the high priest Abiathar? What point is he trying to make?** This story would have been well known to the Pharisees of Jesus' day. Jesus wants to point them to what he says next in verse 27.

**2. So what is Jesus saying in 2:27 when he says that the Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath?** The Sabbath was made for humankind's enjoyment, to be a day of rest and refreshment. For spiritual, mental and physical restoration (see Exodus 20:8-11). It was not meant to be governed by a set of strict rules to 'protect' it. The Pharisees had created so many restrictions for keeping the Sabbath that the burden had become intolerable for the average person. The Pharisees had lost sight of the fact that God cares more for people than He does about rules. David and his men had a real need for food. Similarly we today have a real need to stop our business and rest, and also reflect on God's importance in our lives.

**3. What is Jesus saying when he declares that he is the Lord even of the Sabbath (2:27)?** Just as God gave the Sabbath to humankind Jesus, as God incarnate, has the right to define how the Sabbath is to be observed. Jesus is declaring his authority as God to interpret God's (His own) Law.

**4. How should Christians "keep" the Sabbath today? How do you keep the Sabbath?** Paul Stevens in 'Disciplines of the Hungry Heart' writes, 'In the deepest sense, we do not keep Sabbath; the Sabbath keeps us. Sabbath was not intended to be only leisure, but intentional experience of reflection on the source and goals of our life on earth. Therefore, it keeps us turned toward God and heaven-bound.

### APPLICATION QUESTION

**5. Has your view of Sabbath keeping changed as a result of this study? What are you/ will you do(ing) as a busy student to ensure that rest and staying 'turned to God' is part of your busy week?**

Summarize the Study . You may want to set aside time in the following Core to answer any remaining questions people may have.