

Mark 2:18-3:6 | Jesus: Something New

Tyler Velin | October 2nd, 2014

Tomorrow I officially reach a new plateau as a person. Because tomorrow I will am going to sign some papers, write a check, and walk away the proud owner of a mini-van.

I'm now dad legit. While on one hand this car is just a new car, on the other hand, it is enabling and symbolic of a new life.

I can now carry all of my gear, Sarah's gear, Owen's gear, and unnamed baby #2's gear in one vehicle, plus anything else I could ever want to carry. For the first time in my life I will be able to adequately fit in a car that I own. I can move many people. I can stow-and-go the crap out of whatever I want. I am all that is man driving my funhouse on wheels.

It's also symbolic of my new life. I am not drive a compact, manual, race-car, single Tyler anymore. My life revolves around a family. I care less about speed than I do about power sliding doors and built in sunshades.

Where I'm going with this, is that mini-vans are like Jesus. In the least heretical way. And in the same way my vehicle both enables and signifies a new station in life for me, what we are going to see tonight is that Jesus both enables and signifies something altogether different in himself.

Again, Mark is going to teach us a lot about Jesus by showing us three stories of Jesus. Tonight we are going to see three points: 1. The Newness of Jesus, 2. Jesus the New David, and 3. Jesus the New Sabbath. But I want to actually set the tone of our discussion with the very last verse we are going to look at: **Mark 3:6**.

If we include last week's text, and this week's text, we are seeing 5 stories, 5 points of conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees, or religious officials at the time. And in today's stories we see a distinct result of these interactions, we see people responding to Christ in anger and hatred.

As we look at the newness of Christ tonight, I want you to keep in mind what we just read. These are not isolated, neat, didactic stories of Jesus' life. These are acts of God which will ultimately lead his son to be murdered on a cross. **Pray**

The first point we are going to look at tonight is the **1. The Newness of Jesus**. And when I say new, I meant that he is new, but I also mean that he is unique. This battle for uniqueness is really what we see in marketing isn't it.

Look at all the dialogue that has happened between Apple and Samsung over the new batch of iPhones. Apple is toting these new phones, but Samsung is trying to say that they have done this new before. They are trying to say that Apple isn't unique.

But in our text today we are seeing that Jesus is both new, and unique. In all of the history of this world there has never been, nor will there ever be any person, event or thing more unique than the man Jesus Christ.

This is something Mark wants to illustrate in these verses. Let's start by looking at **Mark 2:18**.

Now this is the one story, kind of jammed in the middle of all the rest, where we don't see the Pharisees lobbing charges at Jesus. All we know here is that a group of people come up to Jesus and they ask why his disciples are not fasting.

For them, this was an honest question because as we have seen Jesus is becoming a larger than life religious figure. And the people look around and they see the other two religious groups, John the Baptist and his disciples, and the Pharisees, and they see them fasting, so why don't Jesus' disciples fast.

So Jesus answers them: **Mark 2:19-22.**

While there is a lot going on here, Jesus' base answer is this. Why don't my disciples fast? Because something new has come. Jesus uses the example of a wedding feast and he says, "Why doesn't the bridal party fast at a wedding?" Because it's a celebration. The groom is here, so we eat.

Now the weight of this analogy is huge. When we look in the New Testament, we see passages like Ephesians 5 where it is clear that Christ is the husband, the groom of the church. And that he has come to take his bride, the church with him. So for modern Christians this analogy is pretty simple.

But it was earth shattering for the audience of the time. Jesus here is calling himself a bridegroom. Now there are prophecies that the Jews would have known at the time which point towards a king who will come, prophecies which point towards a healer who would come, a deliverer who would come. But never in the Old Testament do we see a prophecy that a husband was coming. Why?

In Hosea we see an illustration of God's love for his people. And look at what God says to his people in **Hosea 2:19-20.**

Why is there never a prophecy about someone coming as the ultimate husband? Because God is the husband. God relates to his people like a husband relates to his wife. So when Jesus is calling himself the bridegroom he is not simply making an illustration he is making a proclamation that the groom has finally come. God has come. God is here, and so God's disciples rejoice in the presence of Jesus.

Jesus is not like everyone else. He is someone totally new to the religious landscape, and like you cannot sow an unshrunk cloth as a patch, and as new wine bursts old wineskins, Jesus is a totally new paradigm.

You see in today's world Jesus gets crammed into just about every system of belief. Jesus gets molded to fit into our desired perceptions of him. But what Jesus just made clear is that Jesus himself is the substance of our faith. Jesus is his own definition. We don't define Jesus, Jesus defines us.

With this newness in mind, Mark continues in the story **Mark 2:23-26.**

So the Pharisees are back in the landscape now and they, because the Pharisees are always watching, why do your disciples break the Sabbath? Why are they harvesting grain when the law forbids it?

I want to come back to the Sabbath theme in a minute, but first I want to look at our second point: **2. Jesus the New David.**

So the Pharisees level a charge against Jesus of breaking a Jewish law and Jesus answers this charge by referencing scripture. And he references a story in 1 Samuel 21. In this story David and his men are on the run from King Saul who is trying to kill David because he knows that God has chosen David to be king.

While David's men are on the run, they are wandering around in the wilderness with no food to eat. But they stumble upon a tabernacle. What would the equivalent of a church today. And inside the tabernacle is

what is called the bread of presence. It was a bread which was supposed to be only food for the priests. It was the bread of presence because the priests were called to be separate from the world, and only those who were set apart as holy could stand in the presence of God.

But David, who is not a priest, asks the priest for the bread, and he gives it to David. Why? Because David was God's anointed to be King. David would grow up to be a man after God's own heart. Outside of Christ there was probably not another man who lives who lives such an upright life before God.

And the Pharisees knew that. They loved David, they grew up with David action figures and posters. They were the Jew equivalent of Michael Jordan fans. Anytime another king or prophet was talked about they were just hardened and said, David was still better.

And Jesus just said to them, I am able to alter the law in the same way David was. Jesus was saying a new David was here. Not just new, but unique.

David received an exception because he was blessed by God. Jesus is the exception because he is God himself.

This is the final point: **3. Jesus the New Sabbath.**

The issue at hand here is Jesus and the laws of the Sabbath. You see in the Old Testament we see something prescribed in a couple places called the Sabbath. And the Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, and the Old Testament said that on the Sabbath you are to keep it holy and refrain from work.

Now, because people like to complicate things. People started asking: well what is work? And the result of this was that on top of the Biblical commandments for the Sabbath, there were books and books of manmade commandments which were put on top of the Sabbath. You couldn't walk a certain distance, you could only be so benevolent, you could only spend so much time cooking...the list went on and on and on. It was a burden to follow the Sabbath law.

And here we see Jesus' disciples plucking some grain from a field and eating it, the Pharisees see that as a transgression of one of the Sabbath laws which say you cannot harvest, and they ask Jesus why his disciples break the law. Truly no good teacher of the law, no true religious authority would allow his followers to so blatantly break moral code.

But was the Sabbath really there to regulate out diets? What was the reason for the Sabbath?

We see the Sabbath first mentioned in **Genesis 2:1-3**.

So here we see, in a perfect world, prior to sin. The Sabbath was a day where God rested yet in his rest, we had perfect fellowship with God. God spent six days creating the earth and filling it, but on the seventh day God rested because God saw rest as the end result of his creation. Perfect rest and relationship with God almighty.

But a page later we sinned. We rebelled and were kicked out of relationship with God.

Things changed. In the 10 commandments we see the Sabbath as one of them but look at what it says: **Deut 5:13-16**.

The Sabbath day is a day of rest, but not simply because we need the rest, but because we need to remember the God who brought us out of Israel. The Sabbath commemorates the rest that God granted Israel through their salvation. But the problem was that Israel continued to sin. The promise land was

supposed to be like a permanent Sabbath, a place where God's people dwelled in safety and relationship with God. But they sinned and they were conquered by other nations.

So the prophets pick up their dialogue on the Sabbath. In the very last chapter of the book of Isaiah, God is speaking of the new heavens and the new earth which is yet to come and this is what he says: **Isaiah 66:23**.

The Sabbath was part of God's creation of this world, but an ultimate Sabbath is coming where all shall worship before God, and have rest in a new way.

Up until this point Jesus' audience knew the original Sabbath, God's perfect rest, was lost in the fall, they knew the second Sabbath, a day to keep holy was lost in our sin, they knew the third Sabbath, a new land for Israel was lost in the hardness of heart.

But now with that in mind look at how Jesus responded to the Pharisees. **Mark 2:27-28**.

Jesus says the Sabbath was never meant to be a burden on man, the Sabbath was meant to be the restoration of a perfect relationship. Sabbath is for a man's good, not for a man's detriment. And I Jesus am Lord of the Sabbath.

Jesus is the new Sabbath. Jesus is the ultimate rest. Jesus is the restoration of relationship. Jesus is the ultimate good for man.

We see that in the final story from Mark today: **Mark 3:1-5**.

Again, we see Jesus following this conflict up by immediately going to a synagogue and those dang Pharisees are following him. And they are watching him so that they might accuse him.

Jesus sees a man with a withered hand, and he says, "Come here." The man, probably ashamed of his imperfection, ashamed of his handicap, nervously arises from the sitting crowd and walks over to Jesus.

Jesus turns to the Pharisees, his last words still fresh in their mind, and says: "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good, or to do harm, to save a life or to kill." And they were silent, and this grieved Jesus.

Mark said Jesus was angry and grieved at their stubborn hearts. Why was he grieved? Because these men were so numb to the gospel. They saw salvation locked up in the rules and regulations of man, they saw performance and perception as the key to perfection. So much so that they would wish this man to be crippled his whole life rather than to be healed on the Sabbath.

But Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath fears no man made rules. Because he is Lord of the Sabbath he is set to do good to his people. So Jesus confronts the man with his worst fear: Stretch out your hand. And he does, and it was restored.

Now, immediately after this the Pharisees when out and held counsel on how to destroy Jesus. Why? Because he is the enemy of man-made religion. He is the enemy of a works based salvation.

I love the subtly of what Jesus said in **Mark 2:4**. You see Jesus was talking about the man's hand when he talked about good or harm. But ironically he was talking about himself too. As Jesus fulfilled his role as Lord of the Sabbath in healing and restoring what had been broken, he condemned himself to the cross.

I want to close with this passage from Hebrews, a book written by masters of Sabbath law. **Hebrews 4:6-11**.

When Jesus condemned himself to the cross, he became our true Sabbath. It is only through Jesus we have rest. It is only through Jesus we have hope. Jesus is unlike anything we have ever seen, and the greatest rest we will ever know is yet to come. Do not harden your hearts to it.