



WEEK OF 09/13/26

WHAT DOES LOVE REQUIRE?

MARK 2:18-3:6

Silence (1-2 minutes)

Sit silently for a minute as a way to center your heart and invite the Holy Spirit to help you listen to and receive God's Word.

Opening Prayer (2-3 minutes)

Read: Mark 2:18-3:6

Devotional

Adding on to last week's conflicts between Jesus and the Pharisees, this week we delve into three more conflicts. These answer the question of why the Scribes/Pharisees schemed with the Herodians to get rid of Jesus. As well, we hear about Jesus' answers to these conflicts and learn what love looks like.

1. Describe a time when you either witnessed or experienced conflict with another person (or group) while using technology (e.g., social media, the comments section, text message, etc.). Compare your reaction with that of the Pharisees and/or Jesus to any of the conflicts in today's passage.

Mark 2:18–20 | In these verses, the Pharisees wonder, why do Jesus' disciples not fast like the rest of us? The simple summary of Jesus' answer (His wedding analogy) is "because they're with me, the Messiah, and my love for them is so great that I want to celebrate our love. Now. While I'm here." Jesus expresses that love is right here, right now.

2. What are you clinging to (e.g., an act, an idea, an emotion) that may be holding you back from experiencing God's right here, right now love?
3. What draws you closer to God's love?

Mark 2:23–26 | In these verses, the Pharisees are adamant the disciples are breaking the Sabbath. Jesus' response, in paraphrase, is "Remember David? He took the bread of Presence so that his men would survive." David had the choice to feed them or not, that is, to do good or do nothing.

4. David fulfilled the true spirit of the Lord's Word: to do good. How are you doing this in your life? Think of ways big and small.
5. Describe a time when you recognized the wrong of your ways? What changed your perspective (e.g., a friend, a passage of Scripture, a sermon)?

Mark 3:1–6 | This time, rather than asking a question, the Pharisees sit in silence in the synagogue to watch Jesus preach. Their goal is not to learn but “to see whether [Jesus] would heal [the man with the withered hand] on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him” (Mark 3:2). Jesus tests their silence with a question of His own, along the lines of “Come on, guys. Which is obvious? Do harm or do good? Save a life or kill a man?” The answer is obvious: do good. Jesus does good. He restores a man's hand, without violating any Sabbath laws—an act of mercy that ignites the partnership between the Pharisees and Herodians to kill Jesus. As for “save a life or kill a man?” Jesus silently points to the plans of their hardened hearts: to kill Him.

6. Open up and describe a time you sat in silence rather than choosing to do good.
7. Describe a time when someone did good for you. In other words, they didn't settle for what was convenient, but they intentionally demonstrated the love you needed.

These conflicts reveal this week's Big Idea: **Jesus Christ is Lord of the Sabbath. He doesn't ask what the day permits; He asks what love requires. He still does.** He died for the Pharisees, and He died so we can live. That's how much He loves us, enough to die for us.

Closing Prayer

Dear God, thank you for loving us. Soften our hearts to your Word and its answers, and give us the courage to answer and act on the question “What does love require?”

Share Prayer Requests (10-15 minutes)