

CONN³CT

Small Group Bible Study

Mark 2:18 - 3:6 The Murder Plot Begins Pt 2

February 12, 2012

What are some spiritual disciplines you regularly follow?
What is your motivation for doing them?

Begin by reading Mark 2:18.

Why may John's disciples have been fasting? What was the purpose of fasting according to Leviticus 23:27-28, and when was it commanded to be done? See Luke 18:12; what had become the tradition for the Pharisees?

Read Mark 2:19-20. What does Jesus imply about fasting, and about Himself?

Read Genesis 17:1-7 & Jeremiah 31:31-33. With these passages in mind, how do you interpret Jesus' teaching in Mark 2:21-22. What do the old garment and the old wineskins represent? What about the wine and the unshrunk cloth? What does any of this have to do with the discipline of fasting? Discuss.

Continue with Mark 23:1-24. What was the Pharisee's accusation?
Look back to Exodus 16:29 and Leviticus 23:3. Were the Pharisee's right?

Read Mark 2:25-27 as Jesus replies to their accusation.

What was the true heart of the Sabbath? What were the Pharisees misunderstanding?

What were the Pharisee's apparent motivations for keeping the law?

Thinking back to some of your own spiritual disciplines, do you ever fall into the same error of motivation?

By challenging the Pharisee's understanding of the law and their motivation for following it, Jesus had kindled their hatred for Him.

Read Mark 3:1-4. In His challenge to the Pharisees, Jesus gives them two distinct choices; to do good/save life or to do harm/kill. Why did this leave them unable to give an answer?

Continue with Mark 3:5-6. Why does their lack of response cause Jesus grief and anger? Why is this justified?

Put yourself in the position of the man with the withered hand. What would you have been thinking through this confrontation, and what would Jesus have taught you about God's law through His miracle of healing?

The Pharisees were content to continue their life of dead religious duty, and prepared to kill Jesus in order to do so. As Christians, we find this shocking. Hopefully our sins would never lead to such a sinister outcome. Yet, are there ways in which we subtly "eliminate" or "downgrade" Jesus because He threatens us in some way?

