

# SENT TO SERVE

## *Seeing Jesus in the Gospel of Mark*



PART 3

Mike Taylor [www.TaylorNotes.Info](http://www.TaylorNotes.Info)

## Man-Made Rules vs. God's Plans

**Mark 2:23-28**

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### Main Idea

As Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus releases us from legalistic pressure and frees us to joyful obedience.

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"One Sabbath he was going through the grain fields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. And the Pharisees were saying to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?" And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath." Mark 2:23-28 (ESV)

### I. LEGALISM

#### A. Definition:

1. Legalism is the excessive and improper use of the \_\_\_\_\_
2. It is a doctrinal position emphasizing a system of \_\_\_\_\_ for achieving both salvation and spiritual growth.

B. Forms of legalism

1. Attempting to keep the Law in order to attain salvation. (Cp. Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).
2. Attempting to keep the law in order to maintain one's salvation. (Cp. John 10:29)
3. A Christian judging other Christians for not keeping certain codes of conduct that s/he thinks need to be observed. (Cp. Romans 2:1; 14:13-14)

C. Examples of legalism

1. One must not eat meat offered to idols (1 Cor. 8).
2. One must worship only on Sunday.
3. One must worship only on Saturday.
4. One must give 10% of their income to the church.
5. One must fast in order to be a truly spiritual person.

D. Dangers of legalism

1. It is \_\_\_\_\_ in that it can impede the spiritual growth of the believer.
2. It is \_\_\_\_\_ in that it has a natural allure for the flesh that causes us to look at ourselves rather than to Christ for our spiritual status before God.
3. It is \_\_\_\_\_ because it makes us think we are the spiritual elite when actually we are sin-aholics.

## **II. LEGALISM AND THE SABBATH (2:23-24)**

A. Pharisees complained that Jesus and his disciples were *traveling* on the Sabbath.

B. Pharisees complained that Jesus and his disciples were *reaping* on the Sabbath.

C. Pharisees were effectively clashing with Jesus about who makes the rules concerning the Sabbath.

## **III. THE LORD'S DAY IS TO BE A BLESSING, NOT A BURDEN (2:25-28)**

A. Jesus turns to an event in the life of King David (1 Sam. 21:1-6).

1. While it was not lawful for David and his men to eat the bread of the Presence, God did not want them to starve. Scripture nowhere condemns their actions.
2. Jesus is also inviting a comparison between David and himself.

B. His point: The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

1. Jesus puts himself in the place of and with the authority of God.
2. Legalism does not determine what the Sabbath is about.

## **IV. DIGGING DEEPER**

A. Other than the examples given above, what other legalistic practices have you observed in a church?

B. Why do some churches still practice legalism today?