



Mark: Following Jesus Immediately- God in a Box

Introduction: There are times where we think we understand exactly what God is like and what He will do. That thinking can help us keep God at arms-length and reduce pleasing God to just following the rules. What happens when our understanding of the rules and God's actions seem to be in conflict?

Discussion Questions

1. Can you think of some unwritten rules from your church background? How can those rules be helpful and how can they miss the point?
2. Read **Mark 2:13-17** Why was the calling of Levi/Matthew so controversial? What is the problem with Jesus eating with Levi's friends? What is the tension between spending time with those who don't share your values to influence for good versus the idea of bad company corrupting good character?
3. Read **Mark 2:23-28** Why are the Pharisees concerned with the disciples "harvesting" grain on the Sabbath? In the sermon, it was mentioned that there were over 1,500 rules for behavior on the Sabbath. Why had that become such a focus? Jesus answers them by pointing out a time David broke the Law. What point is Jesus making?
4. Read **Mark 3:1-6** Again there is tension between Jesus and the Pharisees on the Sabbath. Why were they furious that he would heal the man that day? How can religious ritual get in the way of human need?
5. What are some of the problems that arise due to legalism? Jesus was full of truth and grace. Where do you feel tension the most – the truth side or the grace side?
6. The story arc in these 2 chapters of Mark show the Pharisees move from curiosity, indignant, to murderous intent. How does that happen so quickly?
7. Do you think the idea or rhythm of Sabbath still matters to us? How would your life or spiritual life be better if you had a regular rhythm of rest and refocus?

Shaping Your Mind – *So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath. Mark 2:28*

Moving Forward – Always choose love over legalism