

SATAN'S COUNTERFEIT OF THE GOSPEL

Mark 2:18-22

INTRODUCTION: Satan, God's Word tells us is a master deceiver and he continually counterfeits every good gift that comes from God. Satan counterfeits love with lust, obedience with legalism, and confidence with pride. But Satan's greatest counterfeit has been the counterfeit of the Gospel with religion. Religion and the gospel both promise the same thing; a relationship with God. Religion is man's way of getting to God and the Gospel is God's way of getting to man. Religions home rests in human effort. But the Gospel's hope rests in the cross of Jesus Christ. The difference between the Gospel and religion is that religion says "DO". The Gospel says "DONE." Religion is about "you do." The Gospel is about what "Christ has done!" Mark 2:18-22.

I. THE GOSPEL BRINGS CELEBRATION!

Religion brings condemnation. The Gospel brings celebration! When Levi, the tax collector got saved through faith in Jesus Christ he threw a party for all his friends: Mark 2:15. Religious people must compare themselves to others in order to feel good about themselves. Religion says "They are not as good as us!" Mark 2:18. In God's Word only one day a year was mandated for fasting: the day of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. The Pharisees fasted 104 days a year. Religion takes what God has said and tries to use it to wrestle blessings from the hand of God. The Gospel puts Jesus in the spot light. Religion puts man in the spot light. Jesus taught that our fasting should be private, not public: Matthew 6:16-18. Jesus explained why His disciples were not fasting at present: Mark 2:19. A Jewish marriage celebration often lasted for a whole week. Jesus in this party is saying I am your Messiah, your creator God! Mark 2:20. Jesus is saying He will be violently taken away and then His disciples will fast. But three days later their mourning will be turned to joy at Christ's resurrection. The true Christian life should be more like a wedding celebration than a funeral. The Christian life is not to be a burden but a joy: Matthew 11:28-30.

II. THE GOSPEL PRODUCES NEW LIFE!

Man's religion produces a repaired life and that is the best religion can do. Religion can never make a new man: Mark 2:21-22. Jesus is saying He did not come to repair us but to make us new: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. The true Gospel message is unlike any other religion on this earth. The Gospel is exclusive: John 14:6; Acts 4:12. Scripture says that man's religion is a counterfeit. Jesus is saying He didn't come to repair the Old Testament or the Old Covenant with Israel, He came to replace it! Hebrews 8:6-13. When the New Covenant came, the Gospel, the old, Judaism, is obsolete. We don't need to be repaired, we need to be reborn!

III. THE GOSPEL MAKES US FLEXIBLE!

Religion makes you brittle: Mark 2:22. Jesus is saying the new wine of the Gospel must be put into people who are new or reborn, someone who has been transformed with the Gospel message. The Gospel of Jesus Christ cannot be put into someone locked up with religion. As true believers in Christ we are not in control any longer. It is that new wine of the Gospel now that compels us to live in a new way. The good news of the Gospel is that Jesus Christ perfectly fulfilled the law, sacrificially died for our sins, physically rose from the dead to permanently reconcile His people to a holy God through their repentance of sin and faith in Christ. We as Christians simply rest in what our Lord Jesus has already done!