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# *“The sabbath was made for man not man for the sabbath”* Mark 2:23-28

The sabbath (a day of rest and no work on the 7th day of the week) was a big deal for the Jewish people. It was an even bigger deal for the religious leaders. Their whole lives were about observing and keeping the Jewish laws that was given to Moses by God. The religious leaders wanted to keep the law so much that they took things to the ultimate extreme. This is seen particularly with the sabbath day. They believed you couldn’t walk a certain number of steps because that was considered working. They were creating many laws from this one law that God gave the people to rest. Because of their man-made traditions concerning the sabbath the sabbath no longer became a day of joy that the Lord intended to give his people, but rather the sabbath became a burden. So, in Mark 2:23-28 Jesus disciples where hungry, so they picked some grain from the grainfield to eat which was not illegal, there is nothing in the law that forbids a person to do this. But according to the religious leaders and their man-made tradition it was breaking the law. The religious leaders saw this as reaping which was work. The religious leaders were welling to disregard human needs just to keep the sabbath.

Cleary, they misunderstood what the sabbath was all about. Luckily for them they approached the one who created the sabbath and could give them the right intention of the sabbath. Jesus makes it clear that the sabbath was given as a gift to man, not for man to take the sabbath and reinvent it, this was what the religious leaders where doing. Jesus explained how human need always comes first and reminded them of the story of David and his men eating the bread from the temple that was only meant for the priest. Jesus clearly had the authority to overrule the Pharisees’ traditions and regulations because He had created the Sabbath—and the Creator is always greater than the creation.Furthermore, Jesus claimed the authority to correctly interpret the meaning of the Sabbath and all the laws pertaining to it. Because [Jesus is Lord](https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-is-Lord.html) of the Sabbath, He is free to do on it and with it whatever He pleases.

**For discussion**

1. In my sermon I gave some examples of how we have sometimes added or taken away some truths from God’s word, unintentionally or deliberately. Can you think of some more examples?
2. How do you think the practice of a sabbath could help Christians today?
3. Can you think of some more ways we can encourages rest in the church?
4. In our vision statement we have noted that we want to be a contemplative church. How has the passage or Denzil’s sermon helped your understanding of this?