RULES ABOUT THE RULES

Following their exile and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the Jews determined not to repeat their forefathers’ errors that had led them into captivity—in particular, Sabbath observance, returning a faithful tithe, and marrying unbelievers (Nehemiah 13). They made rules about the rules to make sure that they would not fall into those sins again. Not only would they refrain from marrying unbelievers, but they would avoid interacting with Gentiles altogether (cf. Luke 10:25–37). They would be meticulous in returning their tithe (cf. Matt. 23:23). And they made rules to guide what was and was not permissible behavior on the Sabbath (cf. John 5:10).

By the time Jesus came to earth, the Sabbath was so weighed down by humanity’s requirements that He had to ask so rudimentary a question as, “Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?” (Luke 6:9, KJV). The Sabbath was, for the Pharisees, more about what you ought not do than it was about what you should experience.

Throughout this study we have highlighted the importance of the Sabbath. We end the study by reorienting ourselves to the purpose of Sabbath. This week, we consider Christ’s assertion that the Sabbath was made for humanity and not the other way around.
Write out Mark 2:23–28 from the Bible translation of your choice. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map the chapter.
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Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

Circle repeated words/ phrases/ideas

Underline words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

Draw Arrows to connect words/ phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?

Memorize your favorite verse in Mark 2:23–28. Write it out multiple times to help with memorization.

How do you distinguish between principle and practice?

What are situations where it is unclear what the principle is behind a practice required by God or by your church?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/sab13-3
After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks seem to point to overall?

What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

How do you reconcile God’s requirement for strict obedience to His law with His promise of perfect freedom?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/sab13-4
What relationship do the following verses have with the primary passage?

Galatians 4:1–5:1
John 10:10
Exodus 23:12
Matthew 11:28–30

What other parables come to mind in connection with Mark 2:23–28?

Review your memorized verse from Mark 2:23–28.
In what ways can Sabbath observance make your life more fulfilling?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

Prayer: How do you respond to seeing Jesus in this way?

Meditate on Mark 2:23–28 again and look for where Jesus is.
Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

After this entire lesson’s study, what are applications you are convicted of for your personal time?

What are applications you are convicted of in your social life?

Read more inSight from the Spirit of Prophecy at www.inversebible.org/sab13-7
Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

How have you had a miserable experience by keeping the Sabbath “in your own way”?

How would the principles of the Sabbath be broken by keeping it “in your own way” as well?

What are examples of practice following principle? What are examples of principles erroneously following practice?

What are the current vacuums that you have in your life?

How has or how can the Creator fill in these vacuums?

What Sabbath traditions do you hold, and what are the principles behind them?

Why does humanity need the Sabbath?

How has this topic increased the quality of your spiritual development and biblical understanding?