

Freedom For Real

Mark 2:18-28

November 16 2025 | Pastor Michael Foster

Big Idea: Jesus frees us from performance-based striving and offers us the joy and rest of promise-based serving.

⇒ **Get used to Jubilation – because Jesus is the Bridegroom**

⇒ **Get used to Rest (with a capital “R”) – because Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath**

⇒ **Serve from acceptance (promise-based) rather than for acceptance (performance-based)**

For Further Action & Reflection

Take the “SHAPE Test” at www.freeshapetest.com

Memorize Matthew 11:28-30

Read Mark 2:12-3:6, Colossians 2:6-15, Hebrews 4, Galatians 5:1-6

Read about Jesus’ invitation to rest – bit.ly/InvitationToRest

Read more about new wineskins – bit.ly/NewWineskins1

Read “The Joy of Serving” – bit.ly/TheJoyofServing

Listen to “Jesus My Treasure” – bit.ly/JesusMyTreasure2

Listen to “Come Find Rest” – bit.ly/ComeFindRest

Read *The Rest of God* by Mark Buchanan

Questions for Reflection

1. What stood out to you most from the message?
2. In your own words, describe the difference between performance-based striving and promise-based serving.
3. Review the narratives in Mark 2:18-28. How do you think the disciples felt when they were questioned? How do you think they felt upon hearing Jesus respond? What thoughts or questions might have been in their heads?
4. What are some “old wineskins” that threaten our freedom in Christ? How can we guard against them? (Consider Galatians 5:1-6)
5. We noted that Jesus is good at weddings (makes them longer) and not so good at funerals (makes them shorter). Has your Christian life ever been more like a funeral (hard, heavy, sad) than a wedding (easy, light, happy)? How can we walk in the “jubilation” offered to us by Jesus? (Consider Psalm 51:12 – Restore to me the joy of my salvation)
6. Read Matthew 11:28-30. Describe how you came to know Jesus’ rest. What difference has it made for you to be able to rest in Jesus and his salvation by faith rather than striving for it by works?
7. Read Luke 9:23-25. How can we balance the call to rest in Jesus with the call to take up our cross and follow Jesus? (Be sure to distinguish salvation from serving!)
8. How might serving for acceptance rather than from acceptance lead to frustration, discouragement, and burnout?
9. What are some practical ways we can make sure we aren’t serving out of a motivation to earn the acceptance or approval of God or others?
10. Spend some time thanking God together for our freedom in Christ – and praying God protects us from the yokes of slavery that tempt us back to performance-based religion (Galatians 5:1).

