

Rebel with a Cause

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Date: 01 May 2022

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[0 : 00] We have been working our way through the book of 1 Peter verse by verse.

We're in chapter 2. We won't be in 1 Peter today. I'm in Mark. But I'd like to ask you to turn to 1 Peter as I remind our home folks of what it is that I'm trying to connect by going to the book of Mark and giving you some examples from the life of Jesus.

We did that last week. We'll do it again this Sunday. I'll be out next Sunday. Greg will be preaching, God willing, next Sunday. And then I'll be back to pick it up in 1 Peter and hopefully help you tie Mark and 1 Peter together in terms of our theme.

In 1 Peter chapter 2, we will pick it up, God willing, in a couple of weeks at verse 13 where Peter tells us, Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority or to governors as sent by the king for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.

For such is the will of God that by doing right, you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. Act as free men because we are free in the Lord and yet do not use your freedom in the Lord as a covering for evil, but use it as bond slaves of God.

[1 : 38] Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. Servants. Now, it's funny to me or interesting to me that Peter goes right to servants as people in this society who would have been marginalized and easily exploited.

So he comes right to this with the servants and says this in light of suffering and injustice. Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.

For this finds favor. A very similar sentiment to what we read in Proverbs 3 about finding favor in the sight of God and man.

This finds favor. If for the sake of conscience toward God, a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.

For what credit is there if when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it, you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.

[2 : 58] And then this, for you have been called for this purpose since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in his steps.

More specifically in verse 22, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in his mouth, and yet while being reviled.

You see, what he was receiving was not deserved, and yet he did not revile in return. While suffering, he uttered no threats, but kept entrusting himself to him who judges righteously.

And he himself then bore as a result. This is why verse 24 is here. As a result of Jesus willingly taking on the suffering of that injustice done to him, he bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness, for by his wounds you were healed.

Folks, that is what was at stake for us as Jesus died unjustly, as he willingly laid himself down to suffer the agony of a cross that he himself did not deserve, but took on the punishment of the cross for us as our substitute.

[4 : 27] That is what is at stake. That is what silenced the ignorance of foolish men as he was raised three days later to the glory of Almighty God, and God said to all of the universe, I receive my son and the sacrifice he made on behalf of those who would come to trust me and believe in me for salvation.

That is what the suffering of our Lord and Savior did for us, and that is the example that he's left for us to suffer under injustice for the glory of Almighty God.

And what I'll tell you when we get here, I can't help myself, you're getting a little bit of it now, I'm preaching before I'm preaching, I'm allowed. What we're going to see a couple of weeks from now, Lord willing, is this.

There aren't any caveats, eject handles, or parachutes in that passage about civil obedience.

And that's tough. But I want to help you with that because I've, for those of you who have been here and have known me for a while, I'm a rebel of rebels, and I have to work on that constantly.

[5 : 46] And so I want to come to the life of the Lord Jesus Christ now and give you something of this example that Peter is talking about. Now, Peter specifically is saying, follow the example of Jesus and suffering on the cross.

Our suffering doesn't accomplish the redemptive purposes that Jesus fulfilled for us. We understand that. But we also understand that following in Jesus' example is a very powerful way to demonstrate to the world the humility of our Lord and being willing to suffer for the glory of God.

In other words, it's a way of saying to the world it's not about us. It's about Him. All right. That's what we're interested in. So let's turn to the book of Mark now. Let me offer you, in the way of an introduction, a few ideas that I want you to hold in your minds as we think about this.

The title of my message is Rebel with a Cause. Rebel with a Cause. And yes, I've stolen that from James Dean. Most people living in the 1950s would have been familiar with a very popular actor named James Dean.

It was amazing to me to read up on this and realize how much this young man influenced our culture in a very short period of time because he died at a young age. He was the essence of cool.

[7 : 06] He was the essence of cool even before Sean Connery made cool cool with James Bond. Wikipedia says this about him. Dean is remembered as a cultural icon of teenage disillusionment and social estrangement.

Isn't that interesting? That's what he's known for. He's remembered as a cultural icon of teenage disillusionment and social estrangement as expressed in the title of his most celebrated film, Rebel Without a Cause, 1955, in which he starred as troubled teenager Jim Stark.

He played a similar role in the film East of Eden. Dean's characters in both these films were described as, and here's the point, angst-ridden protagonist and misunderstood outcasts.

Who is Jesus Christ? I'm moving on from James Dean. I don't care. But who is Jesus Christ? Is he an angst-ridden protagonist?

Is he a misunderstood outcast? Who is Jesus? Was he these people's idea of just a loner who could never quite find his place in society?

[8 : 27] Mark 2-3-6 offers us five successive accounts or separate encounters between Jesus and the religious authority of his day, the religious leaders of Israel, the most powerful men in all of Palestine being sent from the Sanhedrin.

They dogged Jesus throughout the three years of his public ministry. You've seen from previous messages that their design on Jesus was to plot to murder him, nothing short of finding a way to take him out permanently.

That's their heart toward Jesus Christ. In each case of these encounters, Jesus' actions in ministry to what we would say would be the hoi polloi, the everyday people, violated certain traditional religious standards.

That's the issue. Jesus was violating certain religious standards established and handed down over centuries by Jewish interpreters of the law, the scribes.

Everywhere that Jesus preached, everywhere that Jesus taught and lived out his ministry, he seemed to upset the status quo.

[9 : 54] He made people uncomfortable, deliberately disarmed them at times. He offended them and he even angered them.

Was this his point? Was this his design and his purpose to do these kinds of things? Why did Jesus do this? Why did he have this effect on so many people?

To the degree that as his ministry ended with the cross, I mean his public ministry, ended with the cross, Jesus then found himself friendless and despised.

As he goes about his ministry, Jesus seems to increasingly rub people the wrong way, especially those in leadership. People seem to grow in their dislike of him with every passing week.

Oh yes, there were many crowds and they lauded him, but when Jesus would teach and talk about the difficult things of what it meant to follow him, people would just fade away. And they continued to do that.

[11 : 03] So that in the final week of his life, as he entered Jerusalem, he was lauded as Jerusalem's new king, throwing off the Roman yoke, finally. How many days later was it before these same people were screaming, crucify him?

And then they murdered him. Was Jesus the consummate Jewish rabbi rebel without a cause? Was he a rebel rouser with a religious chip on his shoulder?

Was he a stuck up know-it-all and just a rabbi show-off, looking for an audience to showcase his own character and power? Was he sincere and perhaps well-meaning, but simply just too naive for the time and culture in which he lived?

Or maybe he was just what we might say today, a religious nerd, someone who was always out of step with the in crowd. He just never could quite fit in.

Maybe Jesus failed sensitivity training. Did they have that in rabbi school? Maybe Jesus just lacked tack. Maybe Jesus just didn't care.

[12 : 19] Maybe he just couldn't quite get what it meant to have good people skills. Maybe he didn't care about what was PC. But this is my favorite one that people have thrown around.

Have you ever thought about what would they diagnose Jesus as as he went into therapy today? Wonder what personality disorder they'd hang on him. Defiant personality disorder, troubled whatever.

What would they say about Jesus today if he was diagnosed? Great goodness. Who is Jesus Christ?

And what did his life look like as he came up against all of these traditions and religious rituals and mandates of men? And what can we glean from our Lord in relation to that, especially given that we will be in 1 Peter soon?

And Peter will say to us once again, follow the example of your Lord. Well, let's read in Mark chapter 2. And we'll begin in verse 18.

[13 : 28] Again, remember, we're picking it up right in the middle of these five encounters with these religious leaders right at the very front of Jesus' public ministry. It says in chapter 2, verse 18, John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting, a common practice among the religious elite in Israel.

They came and said to him, Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?

What an interesting response we have from the Lord Jesus. And Jesus said to him, The Torah says, No, that's not what he does. While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom cannot fast, can they?

So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.

No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, and the new from the old, and a worse tear results. No one puts new wine into old wineskins.

[14 : 44] Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost in the skins as well. But one puts new wine into fresh wineskins.

Boy, he draws these analogies as he often does. He goes to a wedding, and he talks about something that would be very familiar to them, this wine in the wineskins, to answer their questions about why he isn't observing the fasting regulations for the Jews.

Now, you just have to stop and think about that. Now, I would have been tempted if they'd have asked me that to go right to whatever it was that the religious laws or rule-keeping would have said, or whatever.

That's not what Jesus does. It's very interesting. Our passage today describes what is the third incident between followers of man-centered Judaism and followers of the way of the kingdom of God and their leader, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, Mark reveals the differences between following man-made religion and following the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[16 : 02] Now, I hope you picked up on that. We are not talking about even us following the Christian religion. We're talking about following a person.

Do you remember what we are fond of saying here at Grace? This is personal because it is personal. It's between you and your Lord. It's between us as the family of God and our Lord and Savior whom we've come and gathered together today to worship and to honor and to say thank you to.

So, Mark reveals the differences between following man-made religion and following the person of the Lord Jesus. The title of my message, as I said then, is Rebel with a Cause.

Jesus' behavior and commitment are called into question in this passage yet again. By whom? By self-righteous people spiritually blinded by the rituals and the rules of their own man-centered, self-styled religion.

The question being put to Christ in verse 18 is essentially this. How come you and your followers don't follow proper religious customs, traditions, and rituals?

[17 : 31] That's verse 18. In other words, you, you, your leader, and the way you do things are offensive to us.

You're not playing by the rules. And we are offended. In other words, we're not going to have this.

Now remember, they've already decided that they want to take him out. So they're not coming to Jesus asking this question because they have a legitimate concern to be instructed or taught or informed.

They're not looking to change their minds about what they've already judged Jesus to be. An upstart, foolish rabbi who just wants the attention for himself. They're not listening.

And yet, Jesus answers with great wisdom and great grace to these men. Perhaps there's still hope that they'll come to believe in him before it's over.

[18 : 37] Maybe. Maybe. It helps to understand the man-made mandate identified in verse 18. Then you can begin to see why these men were getting so worked up over what they thought were Jesus' repeated religious no-nos.

Alright, what are we talking about when I mention the idea of a mandate? A mandate is an authoritative command. It is an order, instruction, handed down by a superior, or we get the word mandatory, to require from the idea of a mandate.

So the first thing that I want to point out to you from verse 18 is the man-made mandate. John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting and they came and said to him, why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?

Well, it would help to have a little of a brief history lesson here on the oral law and the Pharisaical tradition. The tradition of the Pharisees and what the Jews understood to be the oral law.

It's not that complicated to try and get enough of a grip on it to understand how it relates to this passage, although it is quite extensive. The oral law is quite extensive and hard to grip as a whole.

[20 : 06] Listen to this. The Pharisees developed a system of rules and regulations for life based on their oral tradition. They claimed that Moses left a lengthy set of spoken instructions in addition to the written law of Moses, the Torah, and this oral tradition was said to be the Jewish interpretation of God's written law.

Now, that's important. You understand? The oral tradition is the interpretation of the law, and so in that way, it was elevated to the same plane as the written law, what you and I understand to be the Old Testament, especially the first five books of the Old Testament.

So that's what they're doing. Apparently, the scribes of the Pharisees were continually interpreting, reinterpreting, codifying, and reworking these complex man-made interpretations of the Mosaic law.

These were not Scripture. All right? We want to be perfectly clear on that. These were not Scripture. So they were not binding on people in the same way that Scripture is binding on God's people.

And yet, the scribes of the Pharisees, the Pharisees themselves, were bringing this codified system of oral tradition up to being on a par with Scripture and at times, even saying that it superseded Scripture because it was the interpretation.

[21 : 47] Wow. These were not given to the Jews. These man-made mandates were not given to the Jews by the Lord as binding instructions on their lives.

They were man-made rules, interpretations, and traditions. Now, I want to show you something of this in Mark chapter 7.

We're going to fast forward in the life and ministry of Jesus just a little bit because I want you to see where this is headed. These are the seeds of it right now.

Mark chapter 7 gives us something of the fruition of what this is in Jesus' life with these men concerning rules and regulations and man-made mandates.

Mark chapter 7 and we'll pick it up in verse 5. The Pharisees and the scribes, here they are again on the scene, never far away, asked Jesus, why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders but eat their bread with impure hands?

[22 : 52] Boy, Jesus, he can't do anything right. He can't eat right. He can't wash right. He can't pray right. You know, these guys hound him at every move.

And Jesus said to them in verse 6, now notice how he answers them, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites. Oh! As it is written.

Now Jesus is about to tell, please understand, these are the religious leaders of the land of Israel. And Jesus has just called them religious hypocrites. prophets. And now he's going to tell them that one of the greatest prophets in their history wrote about them hundreds of years before this.

And he's going to read scripture and he's saying, this is you. Oh, you're in the Bible. Be proud of that. But now listen to what the Bible says about you. this people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me.

But in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men. Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.

[24 : 06] He was also saying to them, you are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. What an indictment, friends.

For Moses said, honor your father and mother. This is an example now that Jesus is going to give them of how they do this, how they elevate their tradition, their man-made mandates and set aside the law of the Lord.

Moses said, honor your father and mother. And he who speaks evil of father and mother is to be put to death. But you say, if a man says to his father or mother, whatever I have would that would help you is Corbin.

And he explains that is to say given to God. So if it's Corbin, it's given to God, it's pledged to God. You no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother, thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition, which you have handed down and you do many things such as that.

So he gave them an example and he said one of the ways that you show your lust and your greed is you take what could be helpful to your mom and your dad and you conveniently dedicate it to God and single it out and so nobody can touch it.

[25 : 27] It just stays yours, given to God. Jesus said, you do many things like that. You hypocrites. Now that's fast forwarded into the life of Jesus.

There's going to come a day not too long from now. He's going to square up with them and put it right in their face. This is who you are and this is what you do. Jesus knows. He knows.

Now look a little further with me. Now we can deal with the issue brought out in verse 18. It is a question of religious loyalty or religious faithfulness.

What does faithfulness to God look like in life? It's like the question that we had from last week. What is pure religion in the sight of God?

What does God say is pure about the way that we live a life of religious devotion or spiritual devotion to God?

[26 : 30] These are the questions that are on the table. We're talking then about religious belief that leads to religious behavior. And we need to ground our belief in God's truth and in a sweet devotion to him.

Another way of asking this just to put a little finer point on it is this. What is in the sight of Almighty God a holy life? What does God say is a holy life?

That's what we're dealing with. When Jesus and his followers ate with sinners. Now, for those of you who are visiting, this was last Sunday. The encounter and passage just previous to this one.

Just remember now when Jesus and his followers ate with sinners at Levi's house last week, Matthew's house. They were in violation of the oral tradition of the elders concerning fasting.

Now, this was last week. I'm just bringing out a little more of the nuance of that time. Do you remember? Jesus, Matthew threw a party for Jesus and invited all of his tax collector friends, the most hated people in all of Israel.

[27 : 43] We explained all that. He invited a lot of other sinners and low lives and they're all at the party. And Jesus attends as the host, as the person of honor.

Right. And they're all there together in this party. Well, they were violating these fasting laws, according to the religious elders of Israel.

The entire thing, the entire idea that these men were were putting forward on Jesus and his disciples at that time was that Jewish religious fasting was important.

It's involved. It can't just be set aside because you guys want to have a party. Now, the point is that the Pharisees believed in many types of fasts which were not required by the law of God.

They were fast prescribed by the religious elite. The law of God prescribed only one fast. It was a fast on the day of atonement.

[28 : 53] You'll find that in Leviticus 16 verses 29 and 31. So what right in their sight, what right did Jesus have to break with tradition?

In their eyes, Jesus was not serving God or honoring scripture. Do you hear that? Their tradition had become so important to them that what they saw Jesus doing, they felt like was not honoring scripture.

That's a dangerous place to be. That's where they were. They had so mixed their man-made tradition with the law of the Lord that tradition had become like the law of God to them.

So the Pharisees were convinced. Now, please hear this. The Pharisees were convinced of their cause. Now, you could make a case and I'd be there with you that perhaps there were many of the Pharisees who knew exactly what they were doing.

They were just corrupt people. All they cared about was power, prestige and prominent places. Jesus exposed all of that. That's true.

[30 : 05] No doubt about it. But can we go a little further and say that that maybe just perhaps there were a number of these guys like Saul of Tarsus.

Who held the coats while they killed Stephen. Because he believed he was doing right by God. He will tell us later in Philippians 3, I thought I was doing right.

I was devout. I was a Hebrew of Hebrews. I think there are plenty of the men in the Pharisaical tradition who really believed in their cause and they thought they were doing right by wanting to get rid of Jesus.

Now, here's what I'm saying. They were sincere. They came off as genuine. They could make a sound argument. Their passion was evident to everyone.

But they were sincerely wrong. And that is the evil of sin. That is the blindness of sin that unbelieving people live under.

[31 : 14] We've lived under that before the Lord Jesus, didn't we? I did plenty of things before I was saved that I knew were wrong. And I did other things that I thought I was justified in only to come to Christ and look back and realize that was just as wrong.

Just because I thought it was right, that didn't make it right. Just because I said I don't believe in that didn't mean it wasn't true. Right?

You ever had that? Yeah, well, I don't believe in God. Well, that's fine. But you understand your unbelief doesn't make him go like a bubble popping. And now he's just not there.

This is the kind of thing these men are guilty of in their hearts. The issue here that Jesus is focusing on isn't simply a matter of their behavior or their emphasis on these behaviors.

It's that this stuff is issuing from their heart and their hearts are not for God. What did Jesus say? You worship me, but your hearts are far from me.

[32 : 17] That's the issue. Jesus is trying to expose that to them. That's a gift. That's a gift for us to have the Lord open our eyes in that way.

So, again, they're asking the question, what right do you have to break with tradition? They're convinced in their cause. They're very sincere in what they're saying, but they're wrong.

So for all their religious knowledge, their posturing, for all of their surface spirituality, they did not know the truth when they heard it from God himself.

Can we understand that? This is God speaking this to them. Jesus is God. They aren't accepting the fact that Jesus is the one who wrote all the stuff they're talking about.

That's why he could easily run circles around him when it came to debating theology. He made it up. He created it.

[33 : 26] Well, the criticism that we see coming from the Pharisees is pretty typical of what their own interpretations and traditions had produced in them.

One commentator characterized it this way, and I thought this was worthy of putting this up here for you. These are several characterizations that this particular commentator brought out. They are more active in criticizing and condemning the behavior of others than in correcting their own sinful behavior, their fault finders.

We struggle with that, don't we? That can be something that we struggle with, certainly. How about number two? They believe that their level of spirituality should be the standard by which you measure your spirituality.

They insist that your relationship with them be based on your adoption of their particular customs and forms of devotion. Very insightful. And then finally, number three, they talk about and they compare themselves with others to show how much more they know and to exalt themselves.

The Pharisees loved cornering people, whether it was in the streets, the marketplace, in the synagogue or whatever, and moving the conversation into matters that they were experts at.

[34 : 52] And they knew in doing that that they could keep the other person constantly at a lower level. You ever been around people who do that? It's a way of controlling the conversation, controlling the situation, and it's prideful.

It's a way of putting oneself forward. That's what these men were all about. And they wanted to continue to do that and keep the people in their place.

Well, God help us, folks. I think there's some of the Pharisee in each of us. Right. Well, back to the text, they're asking Jesus why he won't fast and mourn in keeping with the religious custom and tradition of his day.

John's disciples. The Pharisees are fasting. Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees do what's right, but your disciples do what's wrong?

That's verse 18. Verse 19. The Messiah's mandate. Here's what matters. The Messiah's mandate. And Jesus said to them, while the bridegroom is with them, the attendance of the bridegroom cannot fast, can they?

[36 : 04] Isn't that interesting? They cannot. So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. You see how the emphasis here on the bridegroom is Jesus. And he's saying with this emphasis on me, you can't do that.

Did you hear that? When it's all about Christ, you can't give yourselves to these other things in your life.

That's where they are. But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.

But right now, they cannot fast. What's the point? Here it is. Celebrating Jesus is the point. He's given them an analogy about celebration.

This was a wonderful time in Jewish life. You ever watched a movie about the Near East weddings? And have you seen how happy they are? Right?

[37 : 04] Oh, boy, man. They're dancing and jumping and singing. And it's just it's an all day party. Jesus said that's that's the idea he's putting in their mind.

That's the picture. A Jewish wedding in this particular time was seven days of intense celebration, seven days.

I know Rob just made a face. I'm like, I know if I've got three daughters, I'm thinking, Shelly, will we survive this? That's 21 days all out, man.

Yeah. Yeah. Well, hopefully they'd be broken up. You know, you take them a little bit along. Jewish Jewish custom said that those involved in the celebration.

Now, get this were exempt from fasting. And certain other religious duties for that week. So it would be wrong.

[38 : 02] Jesus gave them a picture and an understanding that went right to the heart of the matter that they would have immediately grasped in their culture. They wouldn't have had to work at this. Nobody would have had to explain to them what I'm saying to you right now.

That would have went right in. It would be wrong and even hypocritical. For Jesus followers to mourn and fast while he was with them.

He's the bridegroom. This is time for celebration. His presence with them was reason for joy, hope, celebration. But.

But we see also in the text there would come a day when he would be violently notice taken away. Verse 20. But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away.

Taken away literally means and this is very interesting to lift off of to be carried away by someone. When Jesus was crucified, he was lifted off the cross.

[39 : 13] And buried. And he was taken away by someone and put in the grave. And that's exactly what he's telling them. But there will come a time when the bridegroom will be taken away.

He will be lifted off. He will be carried away by someone. And then they will mourn. Then they will mourn. And they did, didn't they?

They mourned a great deal. Jesus was their life. He brought them to a relationship with God that the law could not bring them to.

He fulfilled God's requirements for us to be rightly related to God according to his law. So God makes Christ's perfect law abiding life available to you by grace through faith.

That is by his undeserved favor and his gift of opening your spiritual eyes to then help you believe and trust in this person who has done this for you.

[40 : 30] Who stood as your substitute. Offering his life so that he could pay the debt for your sin and release you then from the debt that you owe to God.

So God credits then to your life the perfect sinless life that Jesus lived in law abiding. It's as if you live the law of God in perfection as God looks on you because God has credited the perfection of Jesus to you.

You don't deserve that. But that's what God gives to you the moment you are born again trusting in Jesus as your Savior. And Jesus paid your sin debt so that you could then be justified, declared, righteous in the sight of God.

Jesus took care of all of that in his cross and in his resurrection. The word of God says this for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

All of us. Being justified as a gift. By his grace through the redemption, which is in Christ Jesus.

[41 : 47] For we maintain that a man is justified by faith. He is declared righteous by faith apart from works of the law.

You and I could never ever work our way into God's love and forgiveness because it requires perfection. And we can only find that perfection in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is a relationship with him. So our right standing with God. Is not based on how well we keep his rules.

But on how perfectly Jesus lived out and kept those righteous requirements on our behalf. So the Lord was trying to tell these religious people that they could not have this relationship with God through Christ and still cling to their tradition.

They had to give up their idols. They had to look to Jesus as the only one that could do for them what they were looking to the law to do to make them right with God.

[43 : 04] Man-made tradition and new life in Christ were not compatible. This is the very point that Jesus illustrates in the next two verses. Let me just mention them to you.

I think that you'll grasp it very quickly. No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the patch pulls away from it.

The new from the old and then a worse tear results. No one puts new wine into old wine skins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins and the wine is lost and the skins as well.

But one puts new wine into fresh wine skins in order to avoid that problem. So this is the Messiah's mandate illustrated.

Illustrated. The meaning of the parables is this bottom line. You cannot mix the old with the new. We can readily pick up on that.

[44 : 02] Incompatible things are not supposed to be put together. In fact, in this instance, they can't be. They can't be. That's the parable.

Number one in verse 21. You can't sew this patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment or it'll pull away. And it'll result in something worse.

And then in verse 22. You can't put new wine into old wine skins or they'll burst. And again, these are cultural realities and everyday societal realities.

These people would have resonated with immediately. Right. They would have totally understood what he was saying about this. At least on a physical level. They would have.

So, folks, here's the deal. Jesus is new life. Jesus is new life. You can't put the old.

[45 : 02] Into the new. But here's an even more important question. Why would you want to? But we do. This is why in every letter Paul wrote, you'll find him admonishing and exhorting.

The Christians of that time and saying, don't run back to self. As it were as you were before Christ. Put off the old self.

Put on the new self made in righteousness and goodness. Right. This is Paul's constant refrain. Even in Philippians three. This is what I was in my old life.

The Hebrew of Hebrews. This is what I am in my new life in Christ. I consider that dung garbage. Nothing of no worth to me. While I reach out for the prize of the upward call of the Lord Jesus Christ in my life.

Why would you want to mix those two things? Jesus is new life. Your old life of sin, self and empty rituals can't fit into your new life with Jesus. And it shouldn't.

[46 : 14] Your new life of faith in Christ can't be sown into your old life of self. God's gift of new life through repentance and belief are your treasure.

You believe in the gospel. You cannot be poured into the old wine skin of man-made religious traditions, rules, regulations, rituals, customs.

We don't look to those things at Grace Church. We look to Christ. Do we have certain things that we do on something of a repeated or others might say ritualistic way?

Yeah, that might be a fair assessment of our order of service that you've become rather accustomed to. But we don't let our order of service drive our devotion, do we?

Those things help facilitate our worship, not define it. What defines our worship? Our relationship with Christ. Christ. What we know and understand about who He is for us on the cross and in His resurrection.

[47 : 23] And so we don't worship an event as important as those things were. We don't worship those things. We worship Christ.

That's the difference between man-made mandates and the person of the Lord Jesus Christ who is worthy of our devotion. And that's what we want to bring out in the way that we live.

So my friends, hear this last couple of things. Christianity is a counter-cultural religion because new life in Christ is an other-worldly life.

This is not our home, is it, friends? We are pilgrims and sojourners here. We are building treasure, not on this earth, but in heaven. It's heavenly life on earth for us.

Now, I don't mean this is heaven. I mean we're trying to live the life we're being called to. But this new life in Christ doesn't make Christians rebels without a cause or rebels for rebels' sake.

[48 : 38] We are not rebels with a cause of our own making or our own preference. It's a cause based on our Lord and Savior, not our selfish agenda.

We are not even rebels by our own choice. I was a rebel for Jeff's sake before Jesus. I became a rebel in Christ's service when Christ saved me and I trusted him for the forgiveness of my sins by simply asking him to forgive me and make me his child.

Now, I want you to look at this with me. God saves you to celebrate the life of Jesus in you. He lives in you.

Jesus loved God. He refused to conform to all that was ungodly in his age because he loved God.

In living our new life of honoring God, we cannot help, hide, or prevent our life from being an unconventional challenge to the world.

[49 : 54] Friends, they will hate you for it. They will hate you for loving Jesus because they hate Jesus. They will hate you for keeping your mouth closed and trying to love them well, overcoming evil with good, being kind, humble, meek.

Now, you say, Jeff, how do we know that? Because Jesus told us that would be our reality, didn't he? If they did this to me, what do you think they're going to do to you?

Jesus said. What did they do to Jesus for being meek and humble and keeping his mouth closed and not seeking vengeance? What did he say?

Don't you think I could have called all these legions of angels to my aid if that's what the Father wanted me to do? Not my will, but his will be done.

And he suffered to death. And now Peter's going to call us to this example of suffering under injustice to silence the ignorance of foolish men and showcase the meekness of Jesus Christ.

[51 : 08] Christ. And he's saying that will be more powerful than any other thing that we can do. And it's certainly more powerful than anarchy. And the only reason that that would be hard for me to say or live is my pride.

This goes way beyond vaccines and mask mandates and other things that challenge us and make us uncomfortable. Your very life in Christ is unconventional.

It's nonconformist to that of the world. You are a rebel living his cause, not yours. It's a cause much greater than you and me.

And yet you and I have been made part of that cause by grace through faith to the honor and glory of almighty God. Have we not? That's what we're called to live. That's what I hope will be ringing in your hearts even as my brother comes to bring the word to you next week, God willing.

And then as I come back from my trip and stand in the pulpit to be back in 1 Peter with you. Thank you for being so attentive and kind. Thank you for your prayers.

[52 : 22] As far as I know, we're going to sing in just a moment. Greg will close us out in prayer and then we'll immediately begin to rearrange in here, Greg, for our time of fellowship with the Petries.

We've got you can smell it, right? I started smelling it about 30 minutes ago and tried to hurry. I just. All right, let's pray together. Father God in heaven, we thank you so much for your goodness and grace, even as it has been brought to us in the word of the living God through Mark and his gospel.

Good news about the Lord Jesus Christ as he faced down authority and refused to bow to man-made tradition all because he loves you and he wanted to showcase you.

And Father, I pray you would help us to be those humble, meek, and gentle-spirited people who would silence the ignorance of foolish men by simply living in warm-hearted love and devotion to Jesus.

Help us to be those people and to be wise. Help us to know when it's right to speak, and right to be silent. Help us to work through these issues in our own hearts to be good Bereans to see if it's so.

[53 : 37] And in all of the ways that you were honored and glorified through the preaching this morning, God, I pray that you would help us to hold those matters in our hearts and live out those things to the glory of the Lord. Thank you for our visitors today, Lord.

Thank you for leading them to choose to be with us, to be here to hear this message and to worship with us. Thank you for those of us who are homebodies and all that you're doing in our lives as a spiritual family.

May you continue to use us to showcase the goodness and the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.