

“Burden or Blessing?”

Mark 2:18-28

Introduction

- Have you ever been made to feel like you were breaking some rule you didn't know existed
 - It was years ago now, but when I was a youth pastor here, I was invited to play golf with well to do friends of a guy in the congregation here, down at Fairbanks Ranch in Rancho Santa Fe
 - I was really blessed to be able to do that because although I have played golf my whole life, Oceanside Municipal is more in my budget range, I have never made country club kind of money, especially not a country club in Rancho Santa Fe

So I got off work early and headed down that direction, pulled in their parking lot and started doing what I normally do – and that is to open up my trunk, get my clubs out, get my golf shoes and start putting them on as a sit on the back on the car

- I have done this ritual over and over again since I was 16 traveling to High school matches
 - But I was noticing members riding by on their carts giving me dirty, and dismissive looks
 - I would try to wave, be friendly and I would get a scowl – friendly place!!!
- Well I got the first shoe on and started with the second when I saw the guy I knew from church, who was a friend of a member, and he pulled up and said, what are you doing?
 - And I said, “Ah, I'm putting my golf shoes on”

And He said, “No, you don't do that in the parking lot here, you do that in the locker room.” Well by that time I was done, and so I thought oh well, I didn't know, Oceanside muni doesn't exactly have a locker room

- so I walked toward the proshop where you check in, and an employee says to me, “were you the trunk slammer?” – Some members were complaining – “Are you the trunk slammer”
 - and I again have been around golf for all of my life and I have never heard the term “trunk slammer”
 - so I asked –what's a trunk slammer?? – and the employee said, “you know, people who change in the parking lot out of their trunk”

What? - I wasn't changing? – it's not like I was wondering around your parking lot pantless, I was changing my shoes

- But they were really serious about that – and I felt totally uncomfortable which was not normal for me at a golf course
 - I mean I have been playing for a longtime - I speak the lingo – I know the difference between a birdie and a bogey, I know the difference between a lob wedge and a gap wedge
 - But that day I was made to feel like a total goober

And I was wondering if the disciples of Jesus ever felt that way

- here they are following their master, their leader, their teacher
 - and they are enjoying themselves, learning, having a good time

Yet all of a sudden the Pharisees show up and say, “Hey we fast, the disciples of John the Baptist fast” – why don’t you guys fast?

- why are you guys a bunch of trunk slammers?
 - What????

You know they are just walking through a field on a Saturday afternoon, Jesus plucks a little head of grain and begins to eat it

- as His disciple, you think, awesome, I am hungry, you do the same thing Jesus is doing and all of a sudden Pharisees jump out the bushes, literally
 - why are you violating the Sabbath?!!!!
 - Little creepy that they were following them around, but...

At times the disciples must have thought, why don’t we fast?

- What’s wrong with us?
 - are we dishonoring the Sabbath??
 - Are we breaking the law??

And of course we can look at this passage and wonder the same thing

- why isn’t Jesus fasting like the Pharisees or John the Baptist’s disciples were fasting?
 - Why is He seemingly violating the Sabbath laws
 - We know He is the Son of God
 - We know He doesn’t sin
- So where is the disconnect?

Well, in order to understand what is going on here, we need to work our way through this outline

Mark 2:18-28 – Burdensome or Blessing?

#1 – The Purpose of Sabbath and Fasting

#2 – The Problem Jesus was Facing

#3 – Avoiding the Frustration

- Let’s consider those one at a time

Mark 2:18-28 – Burdensome or Blessing?

#1 – The Purpose of Sabbath and Fasting

- On the surface it seems like Jesus is really casual with the law of God
 - But we need to understand what the purpose of God’s command to fast and honor the Sabbath really was

Let’s take fasting

- Why does God want followers of His to fast?
 - Well, let’s consider why the Bible says we are to fast

3 General Reasons for Fasting

#1 – For repentance and mourning

David said, “I humbled myself with fasting” – Psalm 35:13

- part of the reason biblically to fast is to humble yourself, repenting, being dependant on the Lord
 - we see with David, with...

With Ezra...

“At evening I arose from my fasting; and having torn my garment and my robe, I fell on my knees and spread out my hands to the Lord my God. And I said: “O my God, I am too

ashamed and humiliated to lift up my face to You, my God; for our iniquities have risen higher than *our* heads, and our guilt has grown up to the heavens.” – Ezra 9:5-6

With Nehemiah

“Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, in sackcloth, and with dust on their heads.” – Nehemiah 9:1

With The Prophet Joel

“Now therefore says the Lord, turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning” – Joel 2:12

I am not saying fasting saves you or removes your sin in any way

- but it does humble you before the Lord
 - if any of you have fasted for a couple of days, you know, you are weak, your mind isn't clear, my body starts to run a fever as my body burns away all the stored Twinkies “burn off, clean that out”
- people have said to me, I can't fast, I feel awful when I don't eat – I know!!!!
 - It can be pretty miserable – you know as a type I diabetic I really can't fast longer than 7 to 10 days, and my friend Pastor Dave Anderson, who was here at Calvary Vista and now pastors a Calvary chapel in Mount Pleasant Texas, he would say to me, I feel so bad for you – he would every year do a 40 day fast to start the year and he would say to me, I feel bad for you, because the first seven days are just miserable
 - And they are

But at the same time, you have to depend on the Lord

- God, I need You to strengthen me for the tasks of the day
 - I need You to keep my mood in check, so I don't jump all over people
 - Lord I need you
- And that is great thing to learn to practice

3 General Reasons for Fasting

#1 – For repentance and mourning

#2 – To hear the Lord more clearly

“Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.” – Daniel 9:3

Daniel wanted to hear from the Lord, he knew the Word, he knew that the time the people of Israel were to be in bondage in Babylon was 70 years, he knew that time was near, so he needed to know what to do

- so he fasted, to quiet his heart in order to hear the Lord

We live in a world that is so busy, that has so many bells and whistles – that it is important at times to turn some of those things off and hear from the Lord

- that is our heart for this upcoming 3 days as a church body
 - to take some extra time to pray and seek the Lord and quiet our hearts before Him
 - now, you don't have to fast in order to do that – the average American has 4 to 5 hours of screen time a day, between TV, face book, email returning

- and maybe for you, these next three days are a great time to turn some of those things off to quiet your heart in order to pray and hear the King

You don't have to fast in order to quiet your heart, in order to get some extra time to seek the Lord

- but if you can fast, I have found that fasting adds a sensitivity to the Lord's voice
 - I am a little bummed I am not teaching Wednesday Night, because I love to end a fast right after a Bible study – because the Bible study to me, seems so much more powerful after a day or two of fasting
- I don't know why, I can't really explain it, I just know I have experienced a heightened sensitivity to the Spirit of God through the discipline of fasting

We see that in Daniel, like I mentioned, we see it with Cornelius in Acts chapter 10

“So Cornelius said, “Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and I saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying, “Cornelius!” – Acts 10:1,30

- He fasted and then he saw clearly...
 - Fasting makes you dependant on the Lord
 - It helps to hear clearly His voice
 - And thirdly...

3 General Reasons for Fasting

#1 – For repentance and mourning

#2 – To hear the Lord more clearly

#3 – Spiritual victory for you and others

“Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?”... “this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.” – Matthew 17:19,21

- You guys know the story, Jesus was up on the mountain with Peter, James and John, but the rest of the disciples were facing a father whose son was being tormented by a demon
 - Those disciples tried everything to get victory, but to no avail
- Well, Jesus comes back down the mountain, they bring the boy to Jesus, He immediately deals with the evil and the boy is set free
 - The disciples then ask, why were we so powerless
 - Jesus answers – this kind only comes out by prayer and fasting

And pastors have debated endlessly whether Jesus is talking about the faith or the demon, but the lesson no matter how you view it is the same – there are things you are going to face in your life that you don't have the ability to deal with in your flesh

- to deal with those things in your life and in the life of others, you need to have a lifestyle of prayer and fasting
 - that is why on the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 6, it's not if you pray, but when you pray, here is how you do it
 - and it is not if you fast, but when you fast, here is how to do it

- because at its very core, fasting is learning to say no to your flesh
 - you want your coco puffs, but you are fasting and you tell your flesh no
 - and the more you learn to tell your flesh no when it comes to something it needs like food, then it becomes easier to tell your flesh no when it comes to something it doesn't need, like sin
- Jesus was telling these men, if you want to be a disciple, praying and fasting must be part of your life

But that brings me back to the original question

- okay then, so why were they not fasting? – if it is so important, why were they not doing it???
- The reason - Because it wasn't the time
- Jesus makes this connection to a wedding – He is saying, I am the groom, this is my wedding, my disciples are my friends – a wedding is not the time to be fasting

In other words, fasting was to be a super important part of the disciples lives, but the timing has to be led by the Lord

- Jesus was saying, now is not the time
 - Why? – well, back to the reason for fasting

Jesus was there, they didn't need to learn to depend on Jesus through afflicting themselves – He was right there

- they didn't need to fast in order to be sensitive to His voice, He was right there
 - and they didn't need in that moment to have power to deal with what they couldn't deal with, because again, He was right there

You see God's word commands us to fast, but the heart of it is to be a blessing to your walk

- the act of not eating food is not a blessing
 - God has given us all things freely to enjoy
 - I mean how good is God for creating food, huh?
- I mean have you ever just thanked the Lord for making food taste good
 - He didn't have to, you know
 - He could have figured out some way for us to have an intake of calories in a way that wasn't fun
 - But He didn't, He created steak – because God is awesome
- Aw, you are vegetarian, I'm sorry – okay for you He created cantaloupe and cauliflower – not as amazing to me as steak – but I appreciate a good fruit or vegetable as well
 - And God could have helped your digestive system by having eat grass like some animals, but He gave us fruits and vegetables, because God is awesome

Food is to be a blessing

- the act of not eating in and of itself it not a blessing
 - it is what it produces in me, a disciple of Christ
 - and so in order to be a blessing, it must done in God's way, and in God's timing
- and it just wasn't His timing yet for the disciples

Mark 2:18-28 – Burdensome or Blessing?

#1 – The Purpose of Sabbath and Fasting

#2 – The Problem Jesus was Facing

- Now I understand we haven't talked about the Sabbath yet, so we will come back to number one in just a second, but understand the problem Jesus was facing when it came to how the Pharisees approached fasting

God gave reasons in His word to fast

- and when there is a need for one of those things, Amen, be led by the Lord, it will be a blessing it was meant to be a blessing
 - but God in the Word only gave one day a year He required people to fast
 - that doesn't mean there weren't occasions when God would lead, we saw that with Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah
- but there was only one day required by the Law of God, the Day of Atonement – Leviticus 23 – that one day Israel was required to fast, “to afflict themselves” it literally says

But that wasn't good enough for the Pharisees

- you see, they were legalist, they were religious people
 - and let me define my terms
 - a legalist, a religious person is one who follows the laws of God in order to make God love them, in order to feel Holy, in order to earn points in heaven
- and if that is the reason you are obeying the Law of God, well then one day isn't enough
 - that doesn't make me very holy
 - that isn't going to make God love me
- I sin lots, so I need lots of law keeping to make up for that sin

So the Pharisees, we are told from history, would fast for 24 hours, two days a week – 104 days a year with no food

- No wonder they were so grumpy
 - And more than being grumpy the problem with relating to the law of God, thinking you are making God love you more or earning points in heaven is either you don't keep the law
 - And you now feel guilty, God doesn't love me
- Or, maybe worse, you actually do keep your disciplines and then you start to look down on others
 - Why can't you be like me
 - And that is where the Pharisees were at
 - Remember this guy Jesus told the story about in Luke 18...

“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ – Luke 18:10-12

- Now understand it was not the things they did that Jesus preached against
 - In other parts of the Scripture, Jesus commended them for their tithing, for their fasting
 - It wasn't the activity

- It was the heart behind it – they were doing it to earn favor with God, and because they thought they were achieving, they prayed prayers like the Pharisee in Luke 18
 - That was what was wrong with them

You see the laws were meant to be a blessing, but when I start acting like a religious person...

Remember religious people follow the rules to make God love them, the opposite is to follow the rules, because God already does – fundamental difference

- This verse changed my life...

“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.” – I John 5:3

- We normally see the law as something to avoid, “ah the Law will restrict me and make my life so hard”
 - But the New Testament, John the apostle, the disciple whom Jesus loved says,
 - No – His commandments are the Love of God
- We experience the love of God as we keep His commandments, they are not burdensome, they are a blessing!!!

You see as a Father who loves my kids, I tell them, don’t run in the house. Why – because I don’t want them to experience the joy of running?

- no, I want them to have fun
 - I want them to run to soak up some of that energy
 - I don’t want them to run in the house, because they fall and smack their face
- My commandments are not to be burdensome, they are to be a blessing

My kids go for a sleepover, I say, go to bed, get some rest

- ah Dad, you are trying to steal my joy of staying up all night
 - no – it’s that I’ve done it – it makes the next day horrible
 - my commands are not to be burdensome, they are to be a blessing

And friends, guess what – that goes for Lord as well

- He is the greatest father!

And He says, listen son, listen daughter, I made you, I made this world, I know how it works

- He is what you should do, here is what you should avoid
 - “Ah the rules, they are a burden”
 - No – they are to be a blessing!

Now they won’t be if you add a bunch of your own rules to them

- God says, when you fast...
 - When you need to learn to depend on Me
 - When you need to quiet your heart to hear Me more clearly
 - When you need to learn to have victory over your flesh
 - Fast!!!!
- And when I do fast, in His way, for His reasons, in His timing
 - It is a blessing – not that not eating is fun, that’s horrible, but its what it does in me - blessing

But if I am going to be a Pharisee, “you have to go without food 104 days a year”

- Well, God would say don't be a dummy, “food is good, I made you to want to eat it”
 - who wants to not eat for 104 days?
 - you have made something I wanted to be a blessing and you have made it a bummer and a burden
 - stop it!!!

Now stop it, doesn't mean you never fast

- “I don't want to be religious, I am saved by grace, so I never fast”
 - I think Jesus would say to you, “No, why? – you are missing out on a blessing!
 - You are to fast as I lead, for My reasons, in My timing

The same thing was true about the Sabbath

- Jesus again at the end of Mark chapter 2 is walking through some fields and the disciples take some and eat it
 - And these Pharisee, creepy as they were, pop out of the bushes to declare, “You are breaking the Sabbath”
 - And, we might think, is Jesus breaking the Sabbath
 - Well, back to our outline

Mark 2:18-28 – Burdensome or Blessing?

#1 – The Purpose of Sabbath and Fasting

- why God created the Sabbath?
 - Well, what is the Sabbath? – it's a day off
 - God says you shall work 6 days and then rest on the seventh
 - You have six days to get all your stuff down, at work, at home, take one day in seven and please rest
- God created the Sabbath to once again be a blessing to you – we see that in the Command

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the Lord your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates. For *in* six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” – Exodus 20:8-11

- All God is saying is take a day off
 - Which you think would be a blessing
 - But not when religious people get a hold of it!

Mark 2:18-28 – Burdensome or Blessing?

#1 – The Purpose of Sabbath and Fasting

#2 – The Problem Jesus was Facing

- The problem was once the Pharisees got a hold of this law, they added some many additional rules as to what entailed work
 - The Bible is very limited to the explanation

**The Bible explains what “do no work” means
Don’t kindle a fire for cooking (Ex. 35:3),
Gather fuel (Num. 15:32),
Carry burdens (Jer. 17:21)
Transact business (Neh. 10:31; 13:15, 19)**

- Now this simple list we can understand and say “Amen” to
 - Preparing meals is work
 - A few Christmases ago my wife and I decided that from now on, she is going to make Lasagna the day before Christmas, we are going to make a breakfast casserole the day before, and we are not going to cook on Christmas
- You see the tradition in my family had always been to a remix of Thanksgiving – Turkey, gravy, stuffing – all the fixing again on Christmas
 - And my poor wife tried to keep that up, but what ended up happening, is she spent all day Christmas working – it was no fun, no family
 - So we said, forget it – Cooking like that is work

Gathering fuel, carrying burdens – you ever transport fire wood, you ever help somebody move – is there anything worse than helping somebody move?

- It’s not something you want to do on your day off
 - Hey, I have a free day this weekend, anybody wants me to carry a couch – no – it’s a burden

Transacting business can be burdensome – you know I start out answering one email and then reminds me of something else I need to do, just real quickly of course

- but then the day is gone
 - it is burden, its for the other six days
 - God is trying to give you a day off

So the rules are simply from the Bible – just take a day off, really take it off

- but the Pharisees added at least 39 additional restrictions to what “do no work” means
 - and most of them were just ridiculous
 - you couldn’t put in your false teeth
 - you couldn’t walk more than a mile – the reason they came up with that is remember when Joshua was invading the promise land, on that Sabbath they were to walk around the city of Jericho seven times – so some Rabbi took that verse figured it was just under a mile, and so said, God has to mean we can’t walk more than a mile
- today if you go to Israel all the major hotels have a Sabbath elevator – now the first time I was over there I didn’t know what meant – what it means is it stops on every floor whether you want it to or not, because they say, if you push the button for a floor, you are creating an electrical charge and that is kindling a fire for cooking
 - you see how ridiculous
 - and so if you are in Jerusalem and you are staying at a 20 story hotel – good luck getting to your tour bus on time on the Sabbath

And so what happened?

- they took something that was supposed to be a blessing – take a day off – they made it a burden

“Well, I want to take a day off, but I don’t know if Mom’s house is less than a mile, I really want to eat steak but I can’t put in my false teeth”

- oh well

Friends - You don’t need rules for a day off

- that is like rules for Birthday cake
 - here is your cake – yeah
 - but you have to eat it between 9:00 and 9:03
 - you have to use a spork, that is a spoon fork for those of you taking notes – the ultimate single man utensil – don’t use a spoon, don’t use a fork, only a spork
 - you have to chew your bites exactly 15 times before swallowing
- All of sudden Birthday cake is no fun – it’s a burden, not a blessing
 - Same thing with a day off

You don’t need rules for a day off, you just have a need to do it

- It’s like what Jesus says to the Pharisees at the very end of chapter 2, and I love the New Living Translation of this verse to help us understand clearly what Jesus was saying

Then Jesus said to them, “The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, and not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath.” – Mark 2:27 (New Living Translation)

- God’s rules were supposed to be a blessing to you
 - Now that doesn’t mean you ignore them – you need to fast in the Lord’s time, in the Lord’s way, and if you do, it will be a blessing
 - You need to take one day in seven and rest – not to earn salvation, not to make God love you – so you don’t fall apart – it’s a blessing

But again, what we can do, is take something God intended to be a blessing and we can add all our rules to it, making it a burden or we can ignore God’s rules which is just reverse religiousness

- “I don’t want to be a religious person, so I will never fast and never take a Sabbath, and I will do that religiously”
 - Ah – you are still being religious
 - Either way – to take God’s rules and add to them, or to ignore them, both leads to life being a burden, not a blessing
 - So what do we do??

Mark 2:18-28 – Burdensome or Blessing?

#1 – The Purpose of Sabbath and Fasting

#2 – The Problem Jesus was Facing

#3 – Avoiding the Frustration

- The danger all of us will face in our Christian walks is sliding from the understanding “God’s rules and dictates are a blessing” to a burden as we become religious in one way or another

“Religion is the default mode of the human heart” – Martin Luther

- we always head toward religion

- Whether we do it by taking something that used to be a blessing in our lives, and adding a bunch of non biblical regulations to it
- or by ignoring it completely, religiously

So how do we avoid this?

- Well, Jesus gives an illustration right in the middle of having to deal with the Pharisees on Fasting and Sabbath concerning new clothes and new wineskins
 - [read Mark 2:21-22](#)

New Wine must be put into New Wineskins

- you see in the days before pre shrunk clothes, if you had a tear in your shirt, you wouldn't patch it up with a piece of cloth that hadn't been washed and shrunk yet
 - if you did, the first time you washed the shirt, the new cloth would shrink down and the shirt would rip worse

And you wouldn't take new wine and put it into old wineskins

- in those days they would ferment wine in stomach lining skins of animals sown together
 - Now I am not a wine drinker at all, but I imagine that would effect the taste, don't you think?
 - Doesn't wine take on the flavor during the fermentation process? I don't know, I am just speaking in ignorance here but...
 - What flavor does goat stomach give wine??
 - But anyway... things I think about during the week

But as that wine would ferment it would stretch out the wineskin

- But if you took unfermented wine and put it in an old rigid wineskin, well the wineskin would burst and you would loose the wine and the wine skin

Now this illustration of Jesus explains why most of the time, God has to do something new in every generation

- God works radically in our grandparents, they had never heard worship to the tune of an organ before – this is awesome – this is radical
 - And their parents said stuff like – “you can't worship to the sound of an organ”, that is what they play in bars
 - And God had to raise up new churches

Because the previous generation said, “God only wants to be worshipped through chants”

- and they become so rigid as the human heart default mode is religion
 - God wants us to worship, but you can't worship that way
 - Well the chanter begin to die off and then

And God did a great work in that generation through worship by the sound of an organ

- but then you come along, and you hippie, yuppie freaks who want to worship God with guitars and drums
 - and what do the parents say, “you can't worship God with guitars and drums that is what those rock and roll heathen use in bars”

- and so God has to raise up new churches, new wineskins because it seems each generation can't handle the new work that God wants to do
- They can't handle it because the default mode of the human heart is religion and you take a simple principle like "God is spirit and He is seeking such to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth" – God wants to be worshipped
 - It is a blessing for us to worship
 - But it becomes a burden and a hinderance to the next generation getting saved, when we say, but this is how God has to be worshipped, He only wants us to worship this way
 - And what was once a blessing, a fresh work of God, we add something to it He never intended as it becomes a burden

So what do we do? – Are we just destined to eventually become religious, stale and irrelevant – is that just the destiny of all of us, so why try? – No, No, NO – here me on this church...

I think this is such an important word for this church, Calvary Chapel Vista who has been around for a while, whom God has used incredibly for years and years

- we too are not immune to become religious
 - in fact I think it is a huge danger for a church with a great heritage such as this one
 - so what do we do?
- (you have asked that question 10 times would you just answer it, I'm hungry)
 - hey don't get religious on me!!!!

Jesus says, New Wine, must be put into New Wineskins

- but there is more than meets the eye to what Jesus is saying
 - when Jesus says, "New Wine" he uses the Greek word "neos" – and it means Brandnew

"Neos" = Brand New

- but when Jesus says, "New Wineskins" – He uses and different Greek word for new – "Kainos" – which means "renewed" wineskins

"Neos" = Brand New

"Kainos" = Renewed

And why is that important???

- Well, our hearts are always tending toward religion
 - Taking something God meant to be a blessing and turning it into a burden
 - And when our methods and the way we do ministry becomes more important than the Master
- We will end up being an old wine skin and God will have to find some new vessel to put His new work in

But.... But if we will stay as a church and as individuals renewed wineskins, we will always be in a place where God's commands are a blessing and not a burden

Well, how do we stay renewed?

- Well, the way they used to renew the wine skins is to soak them in water
 - And water in the Bible is a picture of really two things

Water in the Bible

#1 – Picture of the Word

Paul says in Ephesians 5:26 – “sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word”

- The word is one picture for water in the Scripture and the other...

#2 – The Spirit

Jesus said in John 7:37-39 – “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” But this He spoke concerning the Spirit”

We stay renewed by staying in the Word and staying filled with the Spirit

- Lord, I want to be sensitive to You, I want to see the things You are telling me to do as a blessing and not a burden as they become to the Pharisees
 - Okay – well, stay in my Word – (isn't that religious, only if you make it, isn't supposed to be a blessing)
 - Stay in the Word, and keep being filled with the Spirit

And the Lord will be able to soften our hearts – make us sensitive when we are getting religious about something He desires to be a blessing

- stay in the Word
- stay in the Spirit
- be renewed – and at any age, at any point in your spiritual walk – you will see walking with God as a blessing, not as a burden – let's pray