

Mark 2:23-3:6
Pastor Joe Valenti
November 9, 2025



SERMON NOTES & QUOTES

When Gifts Become Gods (2:23-28)

The Ten Commandments are gifts to help us live the best possible life in relationship with God and others. They are meant for human flourishing – not to be a burden.

Humans have a bad habit of taking what God created as good gifts and making them gods.

- We make them gods by misusing them - like sex.
- We make them gods by managing them - like sabbath (here are all of the rules you need to follow.

For the Jews, Sabbath was....

- their national identity
- their moral compass
- their religious tradition
- their social structure (shaping their work, rest, and community)

There is nothing in American life that does this, so we can't quite capture the holistic view that the Jews had of sabbath.

When Rules Replace Relationship (3:1-6)

Questions to Consider:

1. What good gift have I turned into a grind or a god (rest, prayer, Scripture, community, marriage, serving)? Name it before the Lord—and ask, “What one specific act of trust will I practice this week to receive this gift as grace rather than manage it as law?”
2. Who in my life has a “withered hand” I’ve been asking to hide—someone I silently expect to “come back when...”? Name the person and the fence I’ve built—and ask, “What one tangible move of mercy will I take toward them this week that reflects Jesus’ authority and compassion?”