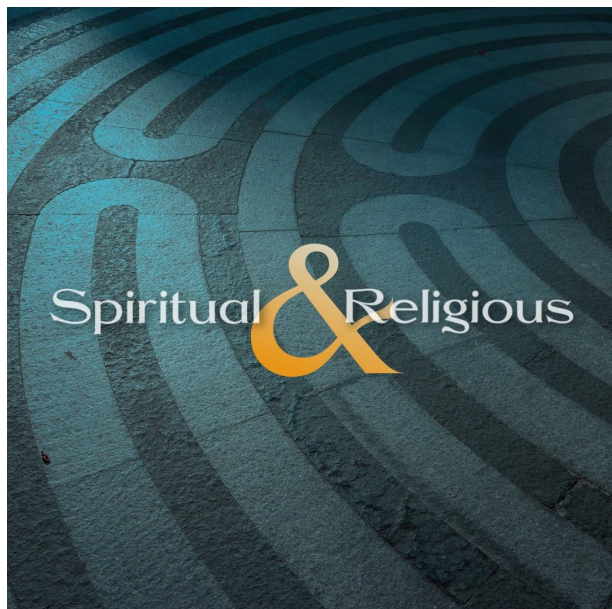


SPIRITUAL & RELIGIOUS

September 4, 2022

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Mark 2:23-28

One sabbath he was going through the grainfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?" And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need of food? He entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and he gave some to his companions." Then he said to them, "The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath."

REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase or image stands out to you?
2. What do the terms "spiritual" and "religious" mean to you?
3. What is it about "organized religion" that turns people away? If you feel comfortable, share a hard or hurtful experience you have had with religion. Where or how did you find healing?
4. Is Jesus rejecting religion or the religious practice of Sabbath-keeping? If not, what might he be doing here?
5. Jesus shows us an important kind of freedom that is often overlooked: freedom *within* religion. This is the freedom to interpret and readjust our own religion in a way that makes it more humane: "The sabbath was made *for humankind.*" What do you think about this kind of freedom? Have you experienced it?

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