



FIRST LIGHT CHURCH

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Date: 9/4/22

Series: Who is this man?

Text: Mark 2:1-12

BIG IDEA: Jesus brings healing to our lives.

ICEBREAKER: What's the worst injury you've ever had?

CONTEXT: Mark is focused in his Gospel account in showing his audience that Jesus is the Son of God. Mark wants us to know that when we follow Jesus, we are not just following a man; we are following God. Mark is intent on proving to us that Jesus is God through His authoritative teaching and also the authority He has to forgive sins and heal the sick.

PASSAGE: Have a volunteer read Mark 2:1-12.

DISCUSSION:

1. Why were people coming to Jesus?
2. What might be some reason people come to Jesus today?
3. Mark tells us in verse 5 that Jesus saw "their faith." How did Jesus see their faith?
4. How can people see our faith today?
5. Why is it important to note that Jesus first forgives the paralytic's sins before healing his body?
6. What does it show about Jesus that He addresses both the spiritual and physical needs of people?
7. Why do the Pharisees have an issue with what Jesus did?
8. What in this passage shows us that Jesus is in fact God?

APPLICATION:

9. Where have you experienced the healing hand of Jesus in your life?
10. How can we as a group minister both to the physical needs and spiritual needs of others?

K4 CONNECTION:

Jesus again displays His power and authority by forgiving sins and bringing healing to the lives of people. It's important that we as the people of God also care about the physical needs of others as well as their spiritual needs. As we continue to help people experience restoration in their lives, we must remember that restoration includes both external and internal brokenness. The Gospel impacts every area of our lives. So let us go into the world declaring and demonstrating the life changing message of the Gospel!

CARE AND PRAY:

- Take some time to share prayer requests with one another.

COMMENTARY

[v.2] The popularity of Jesus continues to grow (see also 1:33; 2:15; 3:20; 6:31). At the most, fifty people may find room in the house; the other listeners must do so from the outside. Jesus' central concern continues to be the proclamation of the "word."¹⁰⁴ In Mark, the "word" refers to the proclamation of the imminent reign of God, which calls for repentance and trust in Jesus' person and teaching.¹⁰⁵ To receive the word ultimately means to accept personally the sacrifice of Jesus, to follow Him (8:34; 10:45; John 1:14), and to be transformed by Him.

[v.3-5] The flat roof of a common two-story house may be accessed by an outside staircase. The roof usually consists of intertwined branches or sticks, combined with clay. Jesus identifies the multifaceted effort (see the many verbs in Mark 2:3-4) of the friends and the hope of the paralytic as "faith" (cf. 5:34; 10:52). He addresses the paralytic with words of tender compassion ("son"; 5:41; 10:24).

Forgiveness of sins (cf. comment on 1:4-5) conveyed by a prophet (e.g., 2 Sam. 12:13; Isa. 6:7; Zech. 3:4) would not be surprising or represent a serious theological problem. Jesus, however, claims to have the authority to forgive sins directly, a notion that is the sole prerogative of God.¹⁰⁶ In contrast to Judaism's beliefs at the time of Christ, Jesus does not necessarily imply here a causal and particular link between paralysis and sin, while nevertheless insisting that the effects of rebellion against God are pervasive in sickness and death. In John 9:3, Jesus clearly rejects a presumed causal link between sin and blindness. It is thus advisable to be careful in drawing causal connections between sickness and sin.

[v.6-7] Jesus' opponents conclude, therefore, that Jesus is "blaspheming," that is, speaking directly against God, since He claims to have the forgiving authority particular to God alone (John 10:33). Such action is to be punished by death (Lev. 24:10-16; Num. 15:30-31; cf. Mark 14:62-64). The opponents of Jesus do not, however, consider the alternative, namely, that Jesus is indeed a member of the triune God, as suggested in various OT texts.

[v.9-12] Jesus could have corrected their perception by stating, for example, that they were inadvertently misunderstanding Him. He could have said that He only forgives sins as Nathan forgave the sins of David, thus merely mediating the mercy of God. In sharp contrast to this, Jesus directly challenges His opponents (Mark 8:17; 12:15; cf. John 2:25), reinforcing His audacious claim to "forgive sins" with direct divine authority. By doing so, Jesus continues to expand the reach of His authority.

This bold act acquaints the reader of Mark with the theme of opposition to Jesus early on in the account. The growing opposition derives primarily from the spiritual and political leaders of Israel (see especially Mark 2:7) and is mentioned frequently in Mark. One reason for opposition is that the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians seek to maintain a policy of preserving their respective political, economic, and religious power (3:6, 22-30; 6:4; 8:11-15). Additionally, Jesus' own natural family will resist Him (3:20-21, 31-35). Judas will also seek to remove Jesus from the public eye because of his own culpability to Satan and disapproval of Jesus' political stance (14:10; Luke 22:3; John 6:70). Finally, Peter will deny Jesus so as to save his own life (Mark 14:30). Amid these different

forms of opposition to Jesus, a constant contrast arises, namely, that of self-preservation versus the purposes of Jesus.

From the vantage point of Jesus as the eternal Son of God, it is “easier” (i.e., dearer to his heart’s concern) for the “Son of Man” to forgive sins directly, since He intends to pay the penalty for the sin of mankind (10:45). The phrase “Son of Man” communicates here exalted authority (2:28; 8:38; 14:62; cf. Dan. 7:13–14). Contrast this with Mark 8:31, where “Son of Man” expresses the motifs of humiliation, atonement, and vindication (cf. Isa. 53:1–12).

Besides His ever-present compassion for the needy and the sick, Jesus heals the paralytic here in order to affirm His divine right (cf. Mark 1:22; 2:28) to forgive sins directly. As is often the case, the miracle points to Jesus (John 5:8–9; compare this with the Johannine “miracle-signs”). The reader will often be reminded in Mark’s account that the general populace, in contrast to the scribes, is “amazed” (but not necessarily moved to faith) by Jesus’ authority.

Commentary used from the ESV Expositors Commentary - Mark 2:1-17

WHERE’S THE GOSPEL

Jesus continues to display His authority in the spiritual and physical spheres of our world by directly forgiving the sins of a paralytic, as well as healing him. This act introduces early in Mark the theme of opposition to Jesus on the part of the spiritual and political leadership of Israel (see esp. v. 7). The theme of human opposition will continue in Mark: the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians pursue a policy of preserving their political, economic, and religious power (3:6, 22–30; 6:4; 8:11–15). Jesus’ own natural family will resist Him (3:20–21, 31–35). Judas will oppose Jesus on account of Judas’s openness to Satan and his political disappointment over Jesus (14:3–11; Luke 22:3–6; John 6:70). Peter will deny Jesus in order to preserve his own life (Mark 14:30, 66–72). Throughout the various forms of opposition to Jesus, the constant theme is self-preservation versus Jesus.

As disciples, we learn that Jesus’ authority to forgive sins is unique, since only God has such authority (2:7; Neh. 9:17; Isa. 43:25; Ps. 103:2–3; 130:4; Jer. 31:34; Dan. 9:9). And this gospel of forgiveness, which Jesus ultimately accomplishes through being punished as our substitute on the cross (Mark 10:45), is of greater value to human existence than anything else. The gospel serves as the basis for personal healing, with the call to live in reconciled relationships in all areas of personal and corporate life.

Commentary used from the ESV Gospel Transformation Study Bible - Mark 2:1-12