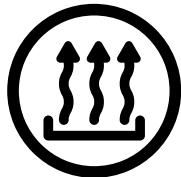




The Gospel of Mark



WARM-UP

When was the last time you tried to change a habit? What helps and what doesn't?

Pray for your time together as a group.

Read out loud as a group

MARK CHAPTER 1

In Mark chapter 1, we saw Jesus beginning his ministry by being baptized by John the Baptist and anointed with coronation language in the presence of the other members of the Trinity. Jesus then begins his work. He calls disciples out of old lives to follow Him, he preaches and teaches, he casts out demons, and he heals physical infirmities. Still, he does it all in unexpected ways.

Read out loud as a group

MARK 2:1-17 (NIV)

1 A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. 2 They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. 4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7 "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? 9 Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk?' 10 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the man, 11 "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." 12 He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Read out loud as a group

MARK 2:1-17 (NIV)

13 Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. 14 As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.

15 While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. 16 When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

17 On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."



What stands out to you?

Possible Answers: Answers will vary.



Jesus starts with teaching the crowd, then is moved by compassion to spiritually heal (forgive sins). It is then in the face of the unbelief of the Pharisees that he moves to a physical healing. What does this show us about Jesus?

Possible Answers: Jesus came to teach, he's merciful and compassionate, he IS the Son of God, he has the authority to heal and thus has the authority to forgive sins, Jesus' priority is still on the spiritual not the physical (healing the ultimate need over the immediate physical need), this shows he came for all people (He's trying to teach the Pharisees too!).



To recline at the table indicates personal friendship. Jesus does this with Levi, a tax collector. How does Jesus engaging in personal friendship with sinners flip the script on what the Pharisees believe?

Possible Answers: Jesus comes close and touches the unclean when Pharisees pull away from the unclean. Jesus not only interacts with but enters into relationships with those considered unworthy by the religious. The focus is on Jesus and relationships with him, not on anything we bring while the religious leaders focus on themselves and their actions.

Read out loud as a group

MARK 2:18-28 (NIV)

18 Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, "How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?" 19 Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. 20 But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast. 21 "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. Otherwise, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. 22 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins."

23 One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. 24 The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" 25 He answered, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? 26 In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." 27 Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. 28 So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."



Fasting is often associated with mourning death or mourning sin. Why does it matter that Jesus uses Bridegroom language here when answering the question about fasting?

Possible Answers: The bride and bridegroom is often used to describe the union between Church and Christ. It is in this union that sin and death are defeated and are no more. So how can people mourn sin and death when the person who will fix it is present? Bridegroom is also a future reality and new reality when we are not condemned but saved. This reality is completely new!



What are the repeated words in the two mini parables Jesus gives in vs 21-22? What does this tell us about Jesus' work?



Possible Answers: Old and New. Jesus is bringing something entirely new. Not something that works with the old way of doing things. Jesus is not reforming Judaism, he is bringing something entirely new. The traditional system cannot be worked with, to do so would destroy both.



vs 27 says that the sabbath was a gift for man to enjoy not something that man is forced into at the cost of themselves. What are other ways we turn gifts into requirements or costs?

Possible Answers: Answers will vary.

DISCUSSION FOR ACCOUNTABILITY



- In what ways are you trying to put your new self/habits/life on top of our old self/habits/life? How can we lean into our new identities this week?
- How can you respond to your relationship with Jesus this week?