

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 31ST–JUNE 1ST, 2025 // GOSPEL OF MARK

## SIN AND SICKNESS (MARK 2:1–12) STANDING ROOM ONLY

Jesus went to Peter's hometown and spoke to crowds packed into houses. As He was teaching, a paralyzed man was brought onto the roof in hopes of getting close to Jesus.

- Palestinian roofs were flat, thatched, and covered with tile. So, getting through would have been quite an ordeal.

### "DIGGING THROUGH IT"

Imagine the people below getting debris on them as four men tore apart the ceiling. The desire and faith of the four friends and especially the paralytic man got the attention of Jesus.

- Jesus is always attentive, but **He starts to move in our lives when we take initiative and desire to be close to Him.**

### "SON, YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN"

"Son" expresses how much Jesus cared for the man. Most would assume Jesus' first act would be to heal the man, but instead He absolves him of his sin.

- **Jesus looked past the temporary problem and addressed the eternal and deeper problem first. THE RELIGIOUS PEOPLE DID NOT LIKE IT**

Scribes were the keepers of the law (think SCOTUS). When Jesus forgave sin, He was proclaiming He was God. This would have been the greatest blasphemy at this time.

- Their shock was somewhat justified. The problem was their hearts were hard, so they missed the prophecies being fulfilled.

### JESUS KNEW THEIR THOUGHTS

Jesus asking the Scribes "Which is easier..." before they spoke would've proven His claim of divinity because He knew their thoughts.

- Jesus also healing the man's body and telling him to walk showed that **He cares for both spirit and body.** This further proved His claim of equality with God.

### "WE HAVE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS!"

The people were "astounded and gave glory to God" because of the miracle. This is **the point of the work of Jesus, to save and bring glory to God the Father.**

- They were amazed because they witnessed the **real authority of God that contrasts the borrowed authority of man.**

## MATTHEW (MARK 2:13–17) THE LOWEST OF THE LOW

Levi was another name for Matthew. He was a tax collector in a toll gate probably on the road to Damascus near the Mediterranean Sea.

- Tax collection was a lucrative business franchised out by Rome. The collector could charge whatever they wanted to recoup expenses. The Jews hated these people.

### HATED SO MUCH THEY WERE EXCOMMUNICATED

The Jews hated tax collectors so much they would not let them into the synagogue or religious community. Knowing this makes Jesus seeking Matthew out even more intriguing.

- **We were all enemies of God.** Matthew shows us **regardless of how evil we have been, anyone can be forgiven and changed.**

### HANGING OUT AT MATTHEW'S HOUSE

Matthew invited Jesus to a dinner party at his home. This was probably so Matthew could introduce his circle of friends and business associates to Jesus.

- When we experience salvation, we should want to tell others about what an amazing gift we have been given!

### "EATING" WITH SINNERS

Jesus was criticized by religious people for being around rebellious and sinful people. Like Jesus, **we are to love and get to know people who are lost.**

- There is balance in this. **We are not to put ourselves into situations that tempt us or mislead others. We must be wise!**

### ACTUALLY, WE ARE ALL SICK

Again, Jesus addresses the religious people with practicality. If God and the people of God truly care about the "sick," shouldn't they try to aid them into spiritual health?

- The true irony of Jesus' statement is that **we're all in need of the Great Physician, but not everyone admits they are sick.**
- 1 Corinthians 5:9–11 (CSB)

## MISSING THE POINT (MARK 2:18–22) FASTING

The Pharisees fasted twice a week and made sure everyone knew it. Some of them asked Jesus why His disciples weren't fasting.

- Jesus is pro-fasting (Matthew 17:21, NIV), but **if one's heart is not in the right place or they do it for bragging rights, they miss the whole point.**

## THEY WILL, BUT IT IS NOT THE RIGHT TIME

"The wedding guests cannot fast while the groom is with them" refers to being exempt from religious observations during a wedding so everyone can be joyous.

- Jesus' ministry was like the union of a bride and groom and was meant to celebrate the invitation of salvation/marriage.

### "BUT THE TIME WILL COME..."

Jesus refers to the time when the honeymoon period of salvation is gone and how His followers will experience suffering for the truth.

- **Joy and suffering are connected. It is through the willingness to work and suffer for what is true and holy that we gain the reward of true joy.**

### THE NEW DOES NOT FIT IN THE OLD (VS. 21–22)

The new cloth and wine is a reference to the contrast between the old order of religion and the new order of salvation through Jesus.

- It is also a reminder that **our old ways of living and thinking are not compatible with the fresh Spirit and new identity God gives us at salvation.**

## LORD OVER LAW (MARK 2:23–27) SABBATH

Jesus and the 12 were "reaping" from the designated corner of a field on a Sabbath.

- From sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday, Jews could not do any kind of work and were ordered to rest. This law was stringently enforced by the Pharisees and could be punishable by death.

### THEY CONTINUE TO MISS THE POINT

Jesus referred to David in 1 Samuel 21 when he was fleeing from Saul and ate the ceremonial bread because he needed food.

- The point of this was to show God's grace and that common sense plays a large part in our faith. Essentially, **what good is religion if people's needs are not met?**

### "THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN..."

Jesus was making the point that **Sabbath was created by God not to be a burden but to help relieve people of the burdens of life.**

- "The Son of Man is Lord...of the Sabbath" implies Jesus can interpret and apply His rule as He sees fit. It also implies the focus of Sabbath is to refuel and connect with God.

### MIND, BODY, AND SOUL

- Mark 2 demonstrates that **Jesus is most concerned with the state of our souls and minds** (Romans 12:2), but there are also times He miraculously heals our bodies.
- We are not promised physical healing in this life, but **we must pray, believing it is possible, and trust that God knows best.**

### EVERYONE IS INVITED

- In the calling of Levi (Matthew) we learn that **even the most atrocious people can be saved, changed, and used by Jesus.**
- We also learn that we are to **build relationships with people who don't know Christ.** In this, we must be **wise, above reproach, and uncompromising** in our faith.
- We are often quick to identify everyone else's "sicknesses" (Matthew 7), but **we must also realize we are all in need of the Great Physician's help.**
- We are to also distance ourselves from those who proclaim Jesus but knowingly live in opposition to Him (1 Corinthians 5:9–11).

### HEART CHANGE IS THE GOAL

- Religious action is not altogether bad, but **religion is meaningless if our hearts do not long to honor and grow in Christ.**
- Being saved means we have chosen to walk a new path. **If we are truly saved, our old ways cannot be blended with the new faith we have discovered.**

### THE PRACTICALITY OF CHRISTIANITY

- **The laws of God are immovable**, but they are given to us not to be a burden but to keep us from burden, heartache, and eternal consequences. In essence, **the commands of God make sense and enrich us in every way if we will honor them.**
- God is also gracious. People are the point of everything He does, and He and others should be the main point of the Church.
- Jesus said **He "desire[s] mercy and not sacrifice"** (Matthew 9:13). This means **relationship with Jesus and others is the catalyst to change, not repetitious religious behavior.**