

Mark: Chapter 2

I. The First Challenge: Forgiveness of Sins (v.1-12)

A. Returning to Capernaum (v.1-2)

1. Returning to “his own city” (Matthew 9:1); people still seek healing (Mark 1:32-33, 37)
2. “And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door.” (Mark 1:33)
3. But, Jesus’s focus was preaching the word
 - a) His primary purpose was to preach & perform the gospel of God (Mark 1:15), not political leadership, casting out demons, healing, etc.

B. Request for Jesus Christ (v.3-5)

1. Complete paralysis, having had to be carried by four men
2. Challenge of the crowd - faith drives action
3. Construction of houses at the time - no simple task
 - a) Flat roof, accessed by outside stairway or from adjacent house
 - b) Variety of constructions often involving material over supporting beams
 - c) Beams ~3 feet apart then stone slabs or burnt clay across
 - d) Then a coat of clay to keep out the rain
4. Deepest need is for forgiveness
 - a) Jesus notes the faith of the friends

C. Refuting the scribes (v.6-12)

1. Scribes and Pharisees
 - a) Scribes were authorities on Jewish law, professional scholars
 - b) Pharisees were one of the sects of the Jews known by their strict observance of ceremonial fine points of the law.
2. The challenge - only God can forgive sins
 - a) They are right, but Jesus is God (John 1:1,14)
 - b) Tension here, no middle ground; Jesus is a liar and lunatic, or the Son of God
3. Jesus perceives their hearts
4. Jesus’s authority as the Son of Man (Daniel 7:13-14)
5. The paralytic’s faith

II. The Second Challenge: Dining with Sinners (v.13-17)

A. Calling of Levi

1. Emphasis on teaching
2. Levi as Matthew (Matthew 9:9)
 - a) Levi as a *mokhe*, one of two categories of tax collectors

3. Response reminiscent of Peter, Andrew, James, John (Mark 1:16-17)
 - a) A tax collector who left would never return
 - B. Challenge of the scribes (v.15-16)
 1. Not a question in the heart (Mark 2:6-8) but to the disciples
 2. Tax collectors
 - a) Seen as traitors; collected taxes and made a living by collecting extra and keeping the difference
 3. Sharing a meal with sinners seen as a scandal
 - C. Clarification of Conduct (v.17)
 1. Those who are well, those who are sick
 - a) Jesus was more aware of the spiritual condition of the tax collectors and sinners than the Pharisees
 - b) Jesus was the Great Physician (1 Timothy 2:4)
 2. Not the righteous, but sinners
 - a) Self-righteousness of the Pharisees
 - b) Jesus did not merely come to spend time with sinners or to take part in gatherings but to call them to repentance and belief
- III. The Third Challenge: Lack of Fasting (v.18-22)
- A. Asking about fasting (v.18)
 1. Fasting on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:29, 31) - prescribed by God
 2. But it took place for other purposes, like mourning or supplication (Esther 4:16; Judges 20:26; 1 Kings 21:27)
 3. True fasting involved humility and often deep emotional heartache
 4. True and false fasting contrasted in Isaiah 58, Matthew 6, Luke 18:12
 5. The true question being asked is why do Jesus and his disciples not follow the religion of the Pharisees
 6. Pharisees + John's disciples (Matthew 9:14)
 - B. Answering with reality (v.19-20)
 1. Jesus the bridegroom (John 3:28-29; Ephesians 5:32)
 2. Jewish custom exempted Jews from ritual fasts during weddings
 3. "They cannot fast" because the bridegroom is here
 4. First instance in Mark of Jesus prophesying his death
 - C. Addressing through analogies (v.21-22)
 1. Gospel of God is entirely distinct from the religiosity of the times
 2. External religion of the Pharisees has no power to save (Galatians 2:20-21)
 3. Clothes were not made of synthetic materials and therefore can shrink when washed

4. Fresh wineskins from the skins of goats; old ones could not handle the fermentation of wine (Joshua 9:4, 13)

IV. The Fourth Challenge: Lord of the Sabbath (v.23-28)

A. Excitement of the Pharisees (v.23-24)

1. Larger, main roads, and wide paths neighboring or going through pastures / fields
2. Sabbath from *sabbaton*, root “to cease” (Genesis 2:3)
3. Original law required ceasing of work, and didn’t define it further (Exodus 20:11; 34:21), meant to be a time of rest, restoration, reflection, and worship of God (Deuteronomy 5:15)
4. Gift of mercy after no Sabbaths under Egyptian oppression
5. Plucking the grain (Luke 6:1) was a violation of Pharisee Sabbath law
6. This challenge directly to Jesus

B. Exposition of the Old Testament Scriptures (v.25-26)

1. Jesus uses the example of 1 Samuel 21:1-6
2. Abiathar versus Ahimelech (1 Samuel 22:18-19)
3. Bread of presence (Leviticus 24:5-9)
4. Act of David not condemned anywhere in Scripture
5. “I desire mercy, and not sacrifice” (Matthew 12:7; Hosea 6:6; 1 Samuel 15:22; Psalm 51:17; Isaiah 1:10-17; Micah 6:6-8; Psalm 50:7-15)

C. Explanation of the Sabbath (v.27-28)

1. Mercy to man for physical rest and spiritual nourishment
2. Oppressive and numerous rules from the Pharisees perverted the intent
3. Jesus’s authority as the Son of Man

V. Homework

- A. Write out one challenge to your faith - resolved or unresolved - and briefly write how you might respond to it.

Mark: Chapter 2

I. The First Challenge: Forgiveness of Sins (v.1-12)

A. Returning to Capernaum (v.1-2)

B. Request for Jesus Christ (v.3-5)

C. Refuting the scribes (v.6-12)

II. The Second Challenge: Dining with Sinners (v.13-17)

A. Calling of Levi

B. Challenge of the scribes (v.15-16)

C. Clarification of Conduct (v.17)

III. The Third Challenge: Lack of Fasting (v.18-22)

A. Asking about fasting (v.18)

B. Answering with reality (v.19-20)

C. Addressing through analogies (v.21-22)

IV. The Fourth Challenge: Lord of the Sabbath (v.23-28)

A. Excitement of the Pharisees (v.23-24)

B. Exposition of the Old Testament Scriptures (v.25-26)

C. Explanation of the Sabbath (v.27-28)