

Good News From Mark

You're worse off than you think!

Mark 2:1-12

Intro

You know you have missed something when...

- Your mechanic says, “ your alternator is OK but you need a new engine.”
- Your doctor says, “your shoulder looks alright, but are you available for a quadruple bypass this Friday?”
- A similar thing happens when four friends bring a paralyzed man to Jesus and He responds to an obvious physical ailment by zeroing in on the sin that separates people from God.

Setting

2:1-3:6 contains 5 episodes where the scribes & Pharisees form the peanut gallery of Jesus' ministry.

Jesus has slipped back into Capernaum after being on a preaching mission that ends with him unable to enter a town openly because people are coming out of the woodwork for healing and freedom from demonic oppression.

The house where Jesus is staying – probably Peter & Andrew's – is packed because news has spread that Jesus is back in town.

Overview

It is in this setting that we find Jesus...

- Preaching the word
- Granting forgiveness
- Proving His divinity

1. Preaching the word (2:1-4)

A) Jesus keeps coming back to his core activity – preaching.

What is “the word” that he is preaching?

“The time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news” (1:15).

B) Because the house is packed, the four men take their paralyzed friend up onto the roof and dig a hole to let him in.

2. Granting forgiveness (2:5-7)

A) “When Jesus saw their faith...”

- Jesus overlooked the fact that the man was paralyzed and saw a sinner in need of forgiveness.
- The peanut gallery kicks in with their critical response.
- The accusation of blasphemy is eventually what they use at Jesus’ trial (Mark 14:64).
- The scribes were right – only God can forgive sins.

Micah 7:18 (NIV)

Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.

Exodus 34:6-7a (NIV)

And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.

3. Proving His divinity (2:8-12)

A) The teachers of the law should have known better.

Jesus’ ministry is already marked with the evidence of God’s power...

- teaching with authority
- healing the sick
- dispensing with demons

How could they question His authority to forgive sins?

B) Granting forgiveness and commanding a paralyzed man to rise are both things that only God can do.

But forgiveness is the more essential and difficult of the two to do. Yet, in his grace, Jesus would provide another illustration that He, the Son of Man, had the authority on earth to forgive sins.

C) The paralyzed man got up and everyone was amazed & praised God.

Summary & Application

1. The best thing we can do for our friends is to bring them to Jesus.
2. We are often content to deal with surface issues while being unaware of deeper spiritual problems.

Revelation 3:17 (NIV)

You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.

We need God's help to break through to the real issues.

Psalm 139:23-24 (NIV)

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

3. Receiving forgiveness means you can stop beating yourself up and carrying around a load of guilt over your sins and failures. Live in God's forgiving grace.
4. Don't just reach out to God for surface needs when there's a

bigger problem to deal with.
Turn from sin and trust Jesus for cleansing from the sin that
separates you from God.