



Gospel of Mark Bible Study

Session #3 September 29th – Oct. 4th Mark 1:40-2:17

Tuesday 6am @LW – Tuesday 5:15pm @AV

Wednesday 10am & 6:15pm @LW

Sunday 10:30am @AV

A Man With Leprosy - Mark 1:40-45 Life Application Notes

1:40-41 In keeping with the law in Leviticus 13-14, Jewish leaders declared people with leprosy unclean. This meant that lepers were unfit to participate in any religious or social activity. Because the law said that contact with any unclean person made a person unclean too, some people even threw rocks at lepers to keep them at a safe distance. Even the mention of the name of this disabling disease terrified people. But Jesus touched this man who had leprosy.

The real value of a person is inside, not outside. Although a person's body may be diseased or deformed, the person inside is no less valuable to God. No person is too disgusting for God's touch. In a sense, we are all people with leprosy because we have all been deformed by the ugliness of sin. But God, by sending his Son Jesus, has touched us, giving us the opportunity to be healed. When you feel repulsed by someone, stop and remember how God feels about that person-and about you.

1:43-44 Although leprosy was incurable, many different types of skin diseases were classified together as "leprosy." According to the Old Testament laws about leprosy (Leviticus 13-14), when a leper was cured, he or she had to go to a priest to be examined. Then the leper was to give a thank offering at the temple. Jesus adhered to these laws by sending the man to the priest, demonstrating Jesus' complete regard for God's law. Sending a healed leper to a priest was also a way to verify Jesus' great miracle to the community.

Study Questions:

1. What childhood memories do you have of a peer being ridiculed or rejected?
2. What do the man's words to Jesus tell us about his attitude or spiritual condition? (1:40)
3. Why did Jesus heal the man who came to Him? (1:41)
4. What happened to the leper? (1:42)
5. Who are the outcasts or untouchables in today's world?
6. In what ways can Christians serve or help people who have great need?
7. To what person in your church or community could you reach out this week? How?

Jesus Heals a Paralytic - Mark 2:1-12 Life Application Notes

2:3 The paralytic's need moved his friends to action, and they brought him to Jesus. When you recognize someone's need, do you act? Many people have physical and spiritual needs you can meet, either by yourself or with others who are also concerned. Human need moved these four men; let it also move you to compassionate action.

2:4 Houses in Bible times were built of stone. They had flat roofs made of mud mixed with straw. Outside stairways led to the roofs. These friends may have carried the lame man up the outside stairs to the roof. They then could easily have taken apart the mud and straw mixture to make a hole through which to lower their friend to Jesus.

2:5-7 Before saying to the paralytic, "Get up," Jesus said, "Son, your sins are forgiven." To the Jewish leaders this statement was blasphemous, claiming to do something only God could do. According to the law, the punishment for this sin was death (Leviticus 24:15-16).

The religious leaders understood correctly that Jesus was claiming divine prerogatives, but their judgment of him was wrong. Jesus was not blaspheming because his claim was true. Jesus is God, and he proved his claim by healing the paralytic (Mark 2:9-12).

2:10 This is the first time in Mark that Jesus is referred to as the "Son of Man." The title *Son of Man* emphasizes that Jesus is fully human, while *Son of God* (see, for example, John 20:31) emphasizes that he is fully God. As God's Son, Jesus has the authority to forgive sin. As a man, he can identify with our deepest needs and sufferings and help us overcome sin (see the note on +Mark 8:29-31).

Study Questions:

8. What do you think would be most difficult about being paralyzed?
9. What dilemma did the paralytic man and his friends face? (2:2-4)
10. What motivated Jesus to respond to the paralytic man's plight? (2:5)
11. Why did Jesus heal the paralytic man? (2:10-12)
12. What connection is there between a person's faith and God's working in his or her life?
13. What problems, needs, or weaknesses in your life are there that God can use?
14. What specific steps can you take this week to show faith in Christ?

The Calling of Levi - Mark 2:13-17 Life Application Notes

2:14 Levi is another name for Matthew, the disciple who wrote the Gospel of Matthew. See Matthew's Profile for more information.

2:14 Capernaum was a key military center for Roman troops, as well as a thriving business community. Several major highways intersected in Capernaum, with merchants passing through from as far away as Egypt to the south and Mesopotamia to the north.

Levi (Matthew), a Jew, was appointed by the Romans to be the area's tax collector. He collected taxes from citizens as well as from merchants passing through town. Tax collectors were expected to take a commission on the taxes they collected. Most of them overcharged and vastly enriched themselves. Tax collectors were despised by the Jews because of their reputation for cheating and their support of Rome. The Jews must also have hated to think that some of the money collected went to support pagan religions and temples.

2:14-15 The day that Levi met Jesus, Levi held a meeting at his house to introduce others to Jesus. Levi didn't waste any time starting to witness! Some people feel that new believers should wait for maturity or training before they begin to tell others about Christ. But like Levi, new believers can share their faith right away with whatever knowledge, skill, or experience they already have.

2:16-17 The self-righteous Pharisees were indignant that Jesus would eat a meal with such sinners. But Jesus gladly associated with sinners because he loved them and because he knew that they needed to hear what he had to say. Jesus spent time with whoever needed or wanted to hear his message-poor, rich, bad, good. We, too, must befriend those who need Christ, even if they do not seem to be ideal companions. Are there people you have been neglecting because of their reputation? They may be the ones who most need to see and hear the message of Christ's love in and from you.

Study Questions:

15. What feelings or attitudes do most people have about the Internal Revenue Service?
16. What was Levi's status among his neighbors? (2:14)
17. Why is it significant that Jesus went to Levi's house for dinner? (2:14-15)
18. What was it about Jesus' life-style and attitude that made the Pharisees so uncomfortable? (2:15-17)
19. Why do you think Jesus chose to ask Levi to be one of His followers?
20. How should we treat the outcasts of our society?
21. In what specific way can you honor or recognize a person of "lower status" this week?

Bible Memory Verses: 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'?" 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."