

Who Can Forgive Sins? | Mark 2 | 10.7.18

Mark made it clear that it's an honor of the highest calling to be a servant of Jesus Christ.

Mark 2:1-5 *And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. ² Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. ³ Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. ⁴ And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you. (Matthew 9:1-8, Luke 5:17-26)*

The four unnamed friends: (1) **Compassion** (2) **Cooperation** (3) **Courage**

Mark 2:6-12 *And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, ⁷ "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" ⁸ But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? ⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk?' ¹⁰ But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the paralytic, ¹¹ "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." ¹² Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"*

"We can all understand how a man forgives offences against himself. You tread on my toes and I forgive you. You steal my money and I forgive you. But what should we make of a man, himself unrobed and untrodden on, who announced that he forgave you for treading on other men's toes and stealing other men's money? Yet, this is what Jesus did. He told people that their sins were forgiven and never waited to consult all the other people whom their sins had undoubtedly injured." C.S. Lewis

- Skeptics speak of things they cannot understand.
- Skeptics assume forgiveness is easy.
- Skeptics over look God's calls for repentance and restitution.

"Possibly much of the flimsy piety of the present day arises from the ease with which men attain to peace and joy in these evangelistic days. We would not judge modern converts, but we certainly prefer that form of spiritual exercise which leads the soul by the way of the weeping-cross, and makes it see its blackness before assuring it that it is clean. **Too many think lightly of sin, and therefore think lightly of the Savior.** He who has stood before his God, convicted and condemned, with the rope about his neck, is the man to weep for joy when he is pardoned, to hate the evil which has been forgiven him, and to live in honor of the Redeemer by whose blood he had been cleansed." C.H. Spurgeon 1832-1894

Mark 2:10 can only make sense if Jesus were truly the Son of God, the one whose commands were broken and whose heart was grieved over every sin. Each sin we commit is foremost a sin against God. God is the one first sinned against, and the one sinned against in the greatest degree.

Mark 2:14-17 *As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office. (AKA – Matthew) And He said to him, “Follow Me.” So he arose and followed Him. ¹⁵ Now it happened, as He was dining in Levi’s house, that many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him. ¹⁶ And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, “How is it that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹⁷ When Jesus heard it, He said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.” (Matthew 9:9-13, Luke 5:27-32)*

The religious leaders rebuked Jesus for eating with tax collectors and sinners. Eating in the New Testament was much more than just sharing a meal; it assumed fellowship, approval of one another’s lifestyle. This gives insight to the “do not eat” command on those under church discipline. **(1 Corinthians 5)**

Mark 2:24-28 *And the Pharisees said to Him, “Look, why do they do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” ²⁵ But He said to them, “Have you never read what David did when he was in need and hungry, he and those with him: ²⁶ how he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the showbread, which is not lawful to eat except for the priests, and also gave some to those who were with him?” ²⁷ And He said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. ²⁸ Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.” (Leviticus 24:5-9)*

Jesus wasn’t approving David’s behavior; he was telling the Pharisees that His disciples had not broken any God given commandments. They only violated their man-made rules and tradition.

Legalism is seductive and destructive; seductive in that it has an appeal to the flesh in some bizarre fashion, and destructive in that it sucks the joy out of the heart of those who fall prey to it.

“Did Jesus make a mistake when He mentioned Abiathar as the high priest? The record in 1 Samuel 21 names Abimelech, the father of Abiathar (1 Sam. 22:20), It’s possible that father and son each had both names. Also it is likely that our Lord used “Abiathar” to refer to the Old Testament *passage* about Abiathar rather than to the man. This is the way the Jews identified sections of the Word since their manuscripts did not have chapters and verses such as we have today in our Bibles (see Mark 12:26).” Warren Wiersbe

Jesus would say to us, **the commands of God are not only right, they are good;** it’s how some people view them and use them that is bad.

Psalm 119:18 *Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law.*

- Read **Psalm 119** to get a perspective on the value of God’s commands.