

Week 2: Jesus has Authority – over EVERYTHING

Overview: Mark 2-3 contains some of the most confrontational moments in the Gospel – Jesus forgiving sins, eating with sinners, healing on the Sabbath, and being accused of working by the power of Satan. Every conflict sharpens the identity question. Who does he think he is? Today we answer it: he is exactly who he claims to be, and his authority extends to everything that we believe has power over us.

Passages covered this week: Mark 2-3

Key Scripture: Mark 2:1-12

CONTENT

Key Takeaway: Jesus has authority to forgive sin, redefine religion, and call anyone to follow him – including people everyone else has written off.

Key Points

- **Authority to forgive sin (Mark 2:1-12) – primary focus**
 - Four friends dig through a roof to get their paralyzed friend to Jesus. This is faith with legs.
 - Jesus forgives since before he heals – he goes for the deeper problem first.
 - The scribes are right that only God can forgive sins. They're wrong about who they're talking to.
- Authority over religious categories (Mark 2:13-22)
 - Levi the tax collector called – Jesus recruits from the socially disqualified
 - Eating with sinners: Jesus doesn't avoid the broken. He eats with them. "It is not the healthy who need a doctor."
 - New wine, new wineskins: what Jesus brings cannot be contained in old religious structures
- Authority over the Sabbath (Mark 2:23-3:6)
 - Picking grain and healing on the Sabbath – both occasions for conflict with Pharisees
 - The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath. The institution exists to serve people, not the other way around.
 - The Pharisees plot to kill him after the man with the shriveled hand is healed – note the irony: they won't save a life on the Sabbath but they'll plan a death.
- Crowds, opposition, and the Twelve (Mark 3:7-35)
 - Crowds come from everywhere – his fame is spreading beyond what can be managed
 - He appoints the Twelve: authority is being shared and delegated
 - Accused of demonic power – the blasphemy against the Spirit passage (3:28-30)

- Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?: Jesus redefines family as those who do God's will

Gospel Application: Jesus eating with sinners isn't just a nice story about inclusion. It's a preview of the cross. He doesn't stay clean at a distance from the unclean – he moves toward them and absorbs the cost. That's what the cross is. His holiness reaches us; our sin doesn't disqualify us.

Key Question: What in your life do you most need the authority of Jesus over? Are you willing to let him have it?

APPLICATION

Activity Suggestions

- Who would Jesus eat with?
 - Have students brainstorm: who are the “sinners and tax collectors” at your school – the people no one sits with? What would it look like to move toward them?
- Journal: Reflect on Mark 2:1-12. What do I need Jesus to fix? What might he say is my deeper problem?

Community Group Questions

- Why do you think Jesus forgave the man's sins before healing him? What does that tell you about what he thinks your biggest problem is?
- The four friends went to extreme lengths to get their friend to Jesus. Who are you carrying? Who is carrying you?
- Jesus ate with people everyone else avoided. Who does your life say you're willing to sit with?
- The Pharisees got increasingly angry as Jesus helped people. How can religious rules become more important than people? Do you see that today?
- Is there anything else in your life you haven't given Jesus authority over yet? What's stopping you?