

WEEK 8: MARK 2 - ISRAEL IS DIVIDED OVER JESUS' AUTHORITY

HIGH SCHOOL

GOAL

To develop a better understanding of Mark 2:1-28

LESSON

Materials Needed: Orthodox Study Bible, whiteboard, dry erase markers

Extended Learning Opportunities:

The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact of the Holy Gospel According to St. Mark pages 24-30

The Gospel of Mark the Suffering Servant by Fr. Lawrence Farley pages 36-46

GOSPEL OF MARK - CHAPTER 2

Read Verses 1-12 and then discuss:

There were a great number of people who came to see and listen to Jesus - to the point there wasn't even room in the doorway because the house was so full! The huge crowd of people did not inhibit the four people who carried the paralytic (*someone who is paralyzed*) from seeing Jesus. Even when the crowd made it absolutely impossible for them to bring their friend inside the house, they found another way - by making a hole in the roof and lowering down the paralytic. Jesus healed the paralyzed man because of the great faith of those who brought him and the paralytic's faith as well.

In those days, it was believed that your body could only be healed after your sins are forgiven - because our body and soul are one. "It may not be the case in every instance that a specific sickness is caused by a specific sin; but, in general, sickness has afflicted our race because of sin and, to be completely whole, a person needs both healing and forgiveness. With His divine insight, it would seem, the Lord knew that this man particularly needed forgiveness, and the power of the Kingdom of God coming to him included this forgiveness as well as the requested healing." (Fr. Lawrence Farley, pg 38)

This miracle is a big deal because it sets the stage for His foes to ask - Who is this man and what authority does he have? Ultimately, it ends in Christ's death and Resurrection.

Verses 13-17:

We read here Jesus calling Levi to follow Him. Levi is St. Matthew the Evangelist. (Just like we learned that St. Mark the Evangelist has two names - John Mark.)

Tax collectors were seen as men that were equally as bad as robbers and murderers. They would strategically place themselves in important roadways and when merchants tried to pass with their merchandise, the tax collectors would not let them continue down the road until they paid whatever amount they required of them. The tax collectors were notoriously dishonest people and oftentimes increased the taxes imposed by the government in order to get extra money for themselves. You can easily see why, in general, people did not like them.

But yet, Christ called a tax collector to be one of His disciples! On top of it all, Levi has a big party and invites Jesus to have dinner with him and all of his friends, who are tax collectors as well. The Jews were downright scandalized by this. Jesus was eating dinner with sinners! Then Jesus tells them that He came to call every single one of us to repentance (*deep sorrow and seeking forgiveness of our sins*). He calls both the righteous (such as Symeon in the Temple) and the sinners (such as the tax collector, Levi) to repentance.

Verses 18-22:

Jesus explains with a parable. It was understood that Jews fasted on Mondays and Thursdays and it was also understood that weddings lasted 7 days at this point in time. Inevitably, the celebration would occur during a fast day, but there wasn't any fasting while you were celebrating a wedding because you were joyously in the presence of the bridegroom. Jesus is telling them that He is the Bridegroom and therefore while His disciples are with Him, there isn't any fasting. (Do you remember what we call the services at the beginning of Holy Week? They are the Bridegroom Services.) Fasting, for the Jews, was an expression of mourning of sin and was not capable with rejoicing. When you have Jesus by your side, there is only joy and no need of fasting! He explains, but they didn't understand at the time, that His disciples will fast later because He will no longer be by their side.

This was like trying to merge two ways of thinking that were incapable with one another, just like a patch of unshrunk or new cloth with an old, shrunken garment. The fabric used for clothes today tends to be a blend of multiple types of fibers to help prevent shrinking when you wash it. If you attached a piece of fabric that had never been washed to a shirt that had been washed many times over, the two would pull apart from one another and

create a split between the them. They cannot merge with one another, just as the two ways of thinking.

Verses 23-28:

The Jews observed the Sabbath on Saturday and were not allowed to do any work on that day. When the Jews saw Jesus' disciples picking wheat and eating it, they were horrified and demanded an explanation for why Jesus was allowing this disobedient behavior! The practicality of the situation was that Jesus' disciples were constantly working and were just hungry. They were eating what was available to them as they were walking. Jesus was explaining to the Pharisees that human need took priority. These Jews were more concerned with keeping the rules of the Sabbath instead of taking care of these men. Jesus told them that the Sabbath was created by God to take care of man and give them rest. The Pharisees were completely missing the point!

REVIEW:

- Why is the story of the paralytic significant to us?
- Who is Levi?
- Who did Jesus call to repentance?
- What is repentance? How do we go about it?
- Who is the Bridegroom in this chapter?
- Why do the disciples not fast?
- Why did God create the Sabbath?

WEEK 8: MARK 2 - ISRAEL IS DIVIDED OVER JESUS' AUTHORITY

MIDDLE SCHOOL

GOAL

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LESSON

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GOSPEL OF MARK - CHAPTER 2

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In those days, it was believed that your body could only be healed after your sins are forgiven - because our body and soul are one. "It may not be the case in every instance that a specific sickness is caused by a specific sin; but, in general, sickness has afflicted our race because of sin and, to be completely whole, a person needs both healing and forgiveness. With His divine insight, it would seem, the Lord knew that this man particularly needed forgiveness, and the power of the Kingdom of God coming to him included this forgiveness as well as the requested healing." (Fr. Lawrence Farley, pg 38)

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Tax collectors were seen as men that were equally as bad as robbers and murderers. They would strategically place themselves in important roadways and when merchants tried to pass with their merchandise, the tax collectors would not let them continue down the road until they paid whatever amount they required of them. The tax collectors were notoriously dishonest people and oftentimes increased the taxes imposed by the government in order to get extra money for themselves. You can easily see why, in general, people did not like them.

But yet, Christ called a tax collector to be one of His disciples! On top of it all, Levi has a big party and invites Jesus to have dinner with him and all of his friends, who are tax collectors as well. The Jews were downright scandalized by this. Jesus was eating dinner with sinners! Then Jesus tells them that He came to call every single one of us to repentance (*deep sorrow and seeking forgiveness of our sins*). He calls both the righteous (such as Symeon in the Temple) and the sinners (such as the tax collector, Levi) to repentance.

Verses 18-22:

Jesus explains with a parable. It was understood that Jews fasted on Mondays and Thursdays and it was also understood that weddings lasted 7 days at this point in time. Inevitably, the celebration would occur during a fast day, but there wasn't any fasting while you were celebrating a wedding because you were joyously in the presence of the bridegroom. Jesus is telling them that He is the Bridegroom and therefore while His disciples are with Him, there isn't any fasting. (Do you remember what we call the services at the beginning of Holy Week? They are the Bridegroom Services.) Fasting, for the Jews, was an expression of mourning of sin and was not capable with rejoicing. When you have Jesus by your side, there is only joy and no need of fasting! He explains, but they didn't understand at the time, that His disciples will fast later because He will no longer be by their side.

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create a split between the them. They cannot merge with one another, just as the two ways of thinking.

Verses 23-28:

The Jews observed the Sabbath on Saturday and were not allowed to do any work on that day. When the Jews saw Jesus' disciples picking wheat and eating it, they were horrified and demanded an explanation for why Jesus was allowing this disobedient behavior! The practicality of the situation was that Jesus' disciples were constantly working and were just hungry. They were eating what was available to them as they were walking. Jesus was explaining to the Pharisees that human need took priority. These Jews were more concerned with keeping the rules of the Sabbath instead of taking care of these men. Jesus told them that the Sabbath was created by God to take care of man and give them rest. The Pharisees were completely missing the point!

REVIEW:

- Why is the story of the paralytic significant to us?
- Who is Levi?
- Who did Jesus call to repentance?
- What is repentance? How do we go about it?
- Who is the Bridegroom in this chapter?
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WEEK 8: MARK 2 - ISRAEL IS DIVIDED OVER JESUS' AUTHORITY

3RD - 4TH GRADE

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GOSPEL OF MARK - CHAPTER 2

Read Verses 1-12 and then discuss:

Once again, there was a huge crowd that was gathering around Jesus! There were so many people that there was absolutely no way for the 4 people bringing the paralytic to get inside the house to see Jesus. Did they give up? No way! They climbed on top of the roof, took apart some of the roof, and then lowered the man who was paralyzed down into the house. Jesus healed the paralyzed man because of the enormous amount of faith of these four men and also the great faith of the paralyzed man that God would help them.

Verses 13-17:

We read here that Jesus asks Levi to be one of His disciples. Levi is St. Matthew the Evangelist. (Just like we learned that St. Mark the Evangelist has two names - John Mark, so does St. Matthew.) Levi enthusiastically tells Jesus yes and even throws a big dinner party in His honor.

You have to understand that tax collectors were seen as men that were equally as bad as robbers and murderers. They would strategically place themselves in important roadways and when merchants tried to pass with the stuff they wanted to sell, the tax collectors would not let them continue down the road until they paid whatever amount they required of them. The tax collectors were notoriously dishonest people and oftentimes increased the

taxes imposed by the government in order to get extra money for themselves. You can easily see why, in general, people did not like them.

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Verses 18-22:

Jesus explains with a parable. (*A parable is a story to teach others about God.*) They understood that Jews fasted on Mondays and Thursdays and they also understood that weddings lasted 7 days then. Inevitably, the party would occur during a fast day, but there wasn't any fasting while you were celebrating a wedding because you were joyously in the presence of the bridegroom (groom) and bride. Jesus is telling them that He is the Bridegroom and therefore while His disciples are with Him, there isn't any fasting. (Do you remember what we call the services at the beginning of Holy Week? They are the Bridegroom Services.) When you have Jesus by your side, there is only joy and no need of fasting!

Verses 23-28:

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REVIEW:

- What happened during the story of the paralytic?
- Who is Levi?
- Who did Jesus call to repentance?
- Who is the Bridegroom in this chapter?
- Why did God create the Sabbath?

WEEK 8: MARK 2 - ISRAEL IS DIVIDED OVER JESUS' AUTHORITY

1ST - 2ND GRADE

GOAL

To develop a better understanding of Mark 2:1-28

LESSON

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GOSPEL OF MARK - CHAPTER 2

“Jesus heals a paralyzed man” - page 187

You can read the story to your students from the book or you can have them act out the story as you read it to them.

REVIEW: USING THE ICON ON PAGE 186

- Where is Jesus on this page? Where is the paralytic? Where are his friends?
- Did the four men give up when they saw a big crowd around Jesus? Did they walk away and say, “Oh well, we tried” or did they find a clever way to get their friend close to Jesus?
- How did the four men get their friend close to Jesus? What did they do?
- What is a paralytic?
- What did Jesus do when He saw the paralyzed man?

WEEK 8: MARK 2 - ISRAEL IS DIVIDED OVER JESUS' AUTHORITY

PRE-K - KINDERGARTEN

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