

Take ACTION

Weekly Sermon Insert and Devotional

LOVE • LEARN • SHARE • SERVE

Week of January 11th

Action Point: Mark 2:1-22

LOVE God and One Another: Epiphany has now passed and we have jumped into the main encounters of Jesus' ministry. This week we will take a closer look at Mark 2 and consider the deeper meaning behind what is happening.

LEARN From the Journey: Prayer for each day: *God, thank you for your Word. Help me to see new things today so I can love others in new ways. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

SHARE the Word of God: What would it look like to share the word in action and not "quotes?" Look for a passage this week that you can share that helps you better understand God's love or God's presence in your life.

Monday Read Mark 2:3-2:5; Matthew 4:24 and Luke 7:48. Note in Matthew what territory responded to the healing power of Jesus. We know Jesus later heals the man in Mark, but what do you think about the forgiveness of sins taking a higher priority than physical healing? Do hold the same priorities in our culture today, or do we pray for physical healing and miracles more than reconciliation of the human spirit to God? (Jesus taught that it is both/and, instead of either/or, yet the forgiveness came first)

Tuesday Read Mark 2:7, Isaiah 43:25. What do you think about Isaiah's words in light of Mark 2:7? As God is speaking through the prophet Isaiah, the way is being prepared as to the mission of Christ. Why do you think it is important for God to tell us that our sins are forgotten in addition to forgiven? Perhaps our greatest struggle in forgiving others is that we know we can never forget how they hurt us? Christians are not called to remain in abusive and unhealthy

situations based on this notion of "forgive and forget." We can never do things the same way that God does, only to try our best to not allow hurt to harden our hearts or bitterness to define our outlook on life. It is also a powerful reminder of grace that God won't keep bringing up our sins long after we confessed and received forgiveness.

Wednesday Read Mark 2:13, Luke 5:15, and John 6:2. Jesus keeps drawing crowds and he teaches them. What were they seeking? Were they curious about someone with the power to heal and forgive sins? Were they intrigued for entertainment value because of the way he spoke? Our scripture for the past two weeks has shown us that Jesus engages within the church (synagogue—man with unclean spirit) and outside with the crowds. What ways do we draw people to Jesus inside the church? What ways do we draw people to Jesus within our community? Are their encounters through us such that they are closer to Christ and receiving his grace and forgiveness and are they exposed to salvation?

Thursday Read Mark 2:16, Acts 23:9, Matthew 9:11. When Jesus is spending time with sinners and tax collectors, he isn't doing it as a mission. He really enjoys spending time with them and he knows they have been left out, sometimes by their own choices or mistakes. Who are the people Jesus would eat lunch with today? How do we do the same?

Friday Read Mark 2:17, Luke 19:10, and 1 Timothy 1:15. After reading these verses, what is Jesus' mission? Why does he need to seek? Aren't all the people coming to him? Perhaps not everyone knows that they are lost.

Saturday Read Mark 2:18, Matthew 6:16-18, Acts 13:2. What are some religious rules or traditions that can easily become stumbling blocks? How do we preserve the holiness of a tradition without making it a sacred cow? Do you think there was any connection between Jesus' words on fasting and his knowledge that he and his disciples were poor and without a great deal of money?

SERVE: Show kindness to someone Jesus would eat supper with.