

Jesus—Mark 2:1-22

Healing a Paralytic; Matthew Called; Fasting Questioned

I. Additional Scriptures...

1. Parallels...
 - 1) Healing a Paralytic, 2:1-12... Mt 9:2-8; Lk 5:17-26.
 - 2) Calling of Levi, 2:13-17... Mt 9:9-13; Lk 5:27-32.
 - 3) Question on Fasting, 2:18-22... Mt 9:14-17; Lk 5:33-39.
2. Isaiah 43:25
3. Luke 17:22

II. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: **The Period of the Christ.**

III. Summary.

After the cleansing of the leper (and the unwanted publishing of the event), Jesus had to spend some time out in desert places because of the crowds that formed whenever He went anywhere. However, some time had passed and Jesus went back into Capernaum. Immediately a great crowd began to surround the house where He was and there was no room. Jesus preached to the people. Meanwhile, four men carried one who was sick of the palsy to see Jesus. The problem was that with the greatly crowded conditions, they were unable to get close to Jesus. Their ingenious plan was to go on top of the house and lower the sick man in front of Jesus from the roof so that he might be healed. Jesus saw their faith and said to the sick man: “Son, thy sins be forgiven.” When the scribes (and Pharisees, Luke 5:17) heard this, they questioned whether it was right for Jesus to make such a statement. Jesus knew their thoughts and drew attention to them. His response was that He used the expression He used so that all might know that He did have power on earth to forgive sins. The sick man did not need to be carried away from the house because Jesus healed him.

Jesus departs the house for the seaside and is followed by a multitude. He continues to teach them. He encounters Levi (Matthew, Mt 9:9), and asks him to “Follow me.” Levi arose and followed Him.

Jesus had not even the opportunity to eat a meal without crowds watching Him. Some among the crowds, naturally, were publicans and sinners. This fact brought on more criticism and accusations from the religious leaders of the day. Jesus simply pointed out that the sick are the ones who need a physician. According to Matthew’s account (9:13), Jesus includes in His answer an appeal for mercy toward sinners, which seems entirely absent in the scribes.

Further criticism comes to Jesus regarding the fact that his disciples were not fasting as did John’s disciples and as did the Pharisees. Jesus points out that the joy of being with the “Bridegroom” is that which has led them not to fast. Jesus then gives two illustrations (a third in Luke’s account, 5:39), the effect of which is to say that there are times when fasting is not appropriate. There needs to be a purpose for the fasting. There needs to be some connection between the outward act and the inward feeling, rather than simply fasting because one thinks this brings them closer to heaven (cf., Mt 6:16).

IV. Outline.

1. A paralytic is healed with the help of four resourceful friends (Mark 2:1-12).
2. Matthew (Levi) is called to follow Jesus (2:13-14).
3. Jesus is criticized at a feast for having company with sinners (2:15-17).
4. Jesus defends His disciples for their lack of fasting (2:18-20).
5. He illustrates the inconsistency of His disciples fasting while He is with them (2:21-22).

V. Questions.

True or False

01. _____ Jesus rebuked His disciples for not fasting.
02. _____ Jesus took back His statement about forgiving the paralytic of his sins.
03. _____ Jesus ate with sinners.
04. _____ The four men who carried the palsied man demonstrated their faith.
05. _____ Jesus compares Himself to a bridegroom in this reading.

Who Am I? Who Said It? Who Did It?

06. _____ Reasoned in their hearts that Jesus spoke blasphemy.
07. _____ Was told by Jesus, "Follow Me."
08. _____ Jesus ate with them.
09. _____ "We never saw it on this fashion."
10. _____ The ones Jesus came to call to repentance.

Fill in the Blanks

11. "But there were certain of the _____ sitting there and reasoning in their _____,..."
12. _____ 5:39... "No man also having drunk old *wine* straightway _____ new: for he saith, The old is _____."
13. "And as he passed by, he saw _____ the son of Alphaeus sitting at the _____ of custom..."
14. Isaiah ____:25... "I, *even I, am* he that _____ out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not _____ thy sins."
15. "They that are _____ have no need of the _____..."

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week's handout

ANSWERS to Lesson 01-32 ... [01—True, Luke 5:11; 02—False, Lk 4:17; 03—True, Lk 5:3; 04—False, Lk 4:27; 05—True, Luke 5:3; 06—b, Lk 4:23; 07—c, Lk 4:18, 21; 08—c, Lk 5:8; 09—c, Lk 4:22; 10—c, Lk 4:28; 11—5, dipped, Jordan; 12—Elijah/Elias, Lk 4:25; 13—Master, night, Lk 5:5; 14—Matthew, Whence, wisdom; 15—fear, catch, men, Lk 5:10.]

VI. Lessons & Applications.

1. **And straightway many were gathered together,... and he preached the word unto them** (Mark 2:2). Again we find multitudes surrounding Jesus. Jesus knew well that some were not there for the reason of receiving teaching, nevertheless, He seized this opportunity to preach to them God's word. His purpose ever was to preach and teach and save the souls of men, women, boys, and girls. What a noble Example He presents before each one of us. How can we use our own day-to-day experiences in following this example we have from our Lord and Savior?
2. **And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press...** (Mark 2:4). The friends of this palsied man were true friends and their determination to have him healed by

Jesus was not defeated easily. We have to admire their persistence and their ingenuity at making a way to accomplish the goal they had. Most people, likely, would have turned around and given up on the effort when they met such an obstacle. These four friends are an encouragement to us to keep on keeping on when we have a worthy goal to accomplish (1 Cor 15:58).

3. **When Jesus saw their faith...** (Mark 2:5). Bible faith is an active faith (Hebrews 11)! That which these dedicated friends had done was SEEN BY JESUS. They demonstrated their faith that Jesus was able to cure their friend by their persistent effort to get the man before Him.
4. **...who can forgive sins but God only?** (Mark 2:7). This wonderful question (raised by the scribes & Pharisees in derision of the words that Jesus had spoken) served well to highlight just Who this was before them. It is true that only God can forgive sins. The Deity of Jesus is evidenced by the very claim. We should note that Jesus did not back down from the statement He made. He did indeed have the prerogatives of deity **because He was the Son of God!** Had these scribes and the others studied this situation and the powerful demonstration before them, they could have learned much of great value.
6. **...Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves...** (Mark 2:8). Here is another remarkable demonstration of the power of Jesus. He was able to know what they were thinking even before they said it. How could any of these religious leaders of the day engage this One in debate, Who had such great power? How foolish! It ought to be obvious to us that we likewise are read by our Lord. There is nothing about us that He does not know. We can hide NOTHING from Him with whom we have to do (cf., Heb 4:13).
7. **... Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, ... Follow me** (Mark 2:14). There was no group more despised than the tax collectors in this culture. The money was sent off to a foreign land, a constant reminder of the servitude and bondage of the Jews to the Roman government. It was extremely distasteful for them to pay taxes to Rome. Many, if not most of these tax collectors were dishonest. They lived well at the expense of the residents of the land. That Jesus would call such an one as this to be His apostle demonstrates the complete lack of prejudice of our Lord. This is one of the most difficult problems to be overcome by a faithful Christian. Our Example shows us the way in this regard! Our interest and concern in the souls of men ought not be affected by our own prejudices.
8. **...They that are whole have no need of the physician...** (Mark 2:17). The lesson to us is that there will have to be some contact with lost souls in order to get the saving message to them. We need to have the VISION to see beyond what people are NOW to what they might become with “medicine” from the Great Physician!
9. **...Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?...** (Mark 2:19-22). This context all goes together and it seems to me to be a mistaken idea that the last two verses have to do with the relationship between the Old and New Testaments. If so, Luke’s statement in the parallel passage makes little sense (Luke 5:39). The real lesson of these illustrations has to do with Jesus’ defense of His disciples not fasting. There are times when fasting is inappropriate. To do so would be inconsistent! The scribes and Pharisees were accustomed to paying greater heed to outward appearances than having concern about the inner man (Mt 6:16). Note, the new wine in old bottles would burst if kept in the old bottles because of the leftover elements of the fermented wine contaminating the new wine and causing it to ferment.

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.

W S C V B N C M K L P O U Y H N M R F G
 H J S D E F H V B N C X Z E R F V B R T
 D R T Y U X I C V B N M A S X C V B H Y
 U M N E D C L R F R E N T R F B U R S T
 B O L D M V D B V C X Z W A S D R F V Y
 U Q C G V Q R N R T G B W O C V E Y U I
 M N B A V C E Z L J H G F D R P I E C E
 D S A R P O N I U Y M T R E W S Q L K J
 J H G M F D S A M O N B V C X Z E L K J
 H G F E D S A P O I U Y T R E W Q L K J
 S J H N G F D R S A M A R R E D M N B V
 P V C T X Z G L F K H G G N E W F D S A
 I P O I U E Y T R A E W Q L K C J H G F
 L F D S D A M N B V S C X Z L K L H G F
 L D S I A P O I U Y T T R E W H Q O L K
 E J R G F D S A M N B V C X T L K J T N
 D B M N B V C X Z L D J H E G F D S A H
 P O I L K J H G F L M N W V C X Z P U Y
 L K J H G F D S O M N E V C X Z P I U Y
 R B O T T L E S N B S K J G F D S A N B

[The highlighted words from Jesus’ defense of His disciples’ not fasting are also in the puzzle above, see if you can find them all.]

“19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the **children** of the bridechamber **fast**, while the **bridegroom** is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days. 21 No man also **seweth** a **piece** of **new cloth** on an **old garment**: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the **rent** is made **worse**. 22 And no man putteth new wine into **old bottles**: else the new wine doth **burst** the bottles, and the wine is **spilled**, and the bottles will be **marred**: but new wine must be put into new bottles.” (Mark 2:19-22).