

THE GOSPEL PROJECT

# UNIT 23

# THE WAY OF JESUS



MATTHEW; MARK; LUKE



MEMORY VERSES

“But I say to you who listen: Love your enemies,  
do what is good to those who hate you, bless those  
who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”

—Luke 6:27-28



# FAITH AND FORGIVENESS

CORE PASSAGE: MARK 2:1-12

## CONTEXT

In his account of the life of Jesus, Mark wasted no time getting to the action. Jesus came on the scene proclaiming that the kingdom of God had come near to God's people through Him, and it was time for people to respond. Jesus immediately began backing up His claim with power, performing miracles. In today's passage, Jesus revealed something deeper about who He is and what He came to do. Even greater than miraculous healings, Jesus came to do something about humanity's greatest problem—sin.

## KEY CONCEPT

**Jesus has the power to forgive, especially when He sees committed faith.**

As you examine Mark 2:1-12:

- Note that because of the faith demonstrated, Jesus forgave the man who was paralyzed.
- Contemplate the significance of Jesus's declaration of forgiveness followed by His miraculous healing of the paralyzed man.



## TIMELINE

Jesus Demonstrates His Authority  
in Capernaum (Mark 1:21-34)

Jesus Heals a Leprous Man  
(Mark 1:35-45)

**SESSION STUDY:**  
Jesus Forgives and Heals a  
Paralyzed Man (Mark 2:1-12)

Jesus Teaches About and Heals on  
the Sabbath (Mark 2:23-3:6)

Jesus Appoints His Twelve  
Disciples (Mark 3:7-19)

### Daily Readings

- Day 1:** Mark 2:1-12
- Day 2:** Mark 2:13-17
- Day 3:** Mark 2:18-22
- Day 4:** Matthew 9:1-8
- Day 5:** Matthew 9:9-17
- Day 6:** Psalm 121



Scan this QR code  
to access this session's  
Scripture passages.

## PERSONAL PREPARATION

MARK 2:1-5

### COMMITTED FAITH LEADS TO FORGIVENESS.

*As you read, underline details that demonstrated people's faith.*

**1** When he entered Capernaum again after some days, it was reported that he was at home. **2** So many people gathered together that there was no more room, not even in the doorway, and he was speaking the word to them. **3** They came to him bringing a paralytic, carried by four of them. **4** Since they were not able to bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and after digging through it, they lowered the mat on which the paralytic was lying. **5** Seeing their faith, Jesus told the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

#### THEOLOGY CONNECTION

**GOD IS GRACIOUS:** God's nature is to delight in giving unmerited favor to those who are undeserving (Ephesians 2:8-9). His grace toward sinners is found most clearly in the salvation He has provided through Christ. Because of sin, humanity is undeserving of salvation—all of us have turned our backs on God, and as a result, we deserve death (Romans 6:23). Instead of leaving people in their sins, God demonstrated His graciousness by providing atonement and forgiveness for our sins through the death and resurrection of Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:21).

**Key Concept:** Jesus has the power to forgive, especially when He sees committed faith.



Today's passage gives an example of faith. A man who was paralyzed was trying to get to Jesus. He and his friends had perhaps heard about this Man who works miracles, and they hoped for one of their own. When the man who was paralyzed came face to face with the One who could heal him, Jesus was moved by "their faith," the faith of the friends and the man. This man and his friends believed in the reality of what they hoped for, and they pressed on to see proof of what they had not yet seen, as seen in the definition of faith in Hebrews 11:1-2. Because of this faith, they were approved.

**If someone who knew nothing about Christianity asked you to define "faith," what would you say?**

So what is faith? Faith is confidence and trust, but it's a vehicle. It's the thing that connects us to the One who can save us. In faith, we acknowledge that we need saving and that Jesus is the One who does the saving. This is why faith and salvation go together in the Bible. Faith is not some magic trick. If the paralyzed man had come to someone other than Jesus, his faith wouldn't have mattered. What made the difference was to whom he directed his faith. Faith by itself cannot save us. Only Jesus can save us. Therefore,

when we put our faith in Christ, we find ourselves in the presence of the One who can heal our hurts and forgive our sins.

Jesus came to heal souls and forgive sins. Though He healed physical ailments, His main purpose was to bring salvation to the world, and salvation comes through forgiveness. Jesus always knows our deeper and greater need, even when we don't. That's why we need to trust and have faith in the One who is able to do it all. He has the power and authority to do so because He is God.

**What deeper need do you want Christ to satisfy in your life right now?**

#### WORD STUDY

**FAITH:** The Greek word for "faith" used in this passage comes from the same root as the verb translated "to believe." The word does not just mean head knowledge or intellectual ascent as we sometimes describe faith. Faith carries the nuance of absolute confidence that leads to obedience.

## PERSONAL PREPARATION

MARK 2:6-12

### JESUS HAS THE POWER TO HEAL AND TO FORGIVE BECAUSE HE IS GOD.

*Underline the events in this passage that show Jesus's authority.*

**6** But some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts: **7** “Why does he speak like this? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” **8** Right away Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were thinking like this within themselves and said to them, “Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? **9** Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take your mat, and walk’? **10** But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he told the paralytic—**11** “I tell you: get up, take your mat, and go home.” **12** Immediately he got up, took the mat, and went out in front of everyone. As a result, they were all astounded and gave glory to God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”

#### GOSPEL CONNECTION

Jesus, as God, has the power to heal a person spiritually and physically. This is ultimately seen through His resurrection that gives us salvation and forgiveness of sin through our faith and trust in Him. One day our bodies also will be gloriously resurrected.

**Key Concept:** Jesus has the power to forgive, especially when He sees committed faith.

The Jews had heard of prophets and men of God who could work miracles before, but they had not seen a man who claimed the authority to forgive sin. They questioned in their hearts Jesus's authority and called Him blasphemous, knowing rightly that only God "can forgive sins" (v. 7). If they could only believe that Jesus is God, they wouldn't have called it blasphemy.

But to prove to the skeptics that He could both forgive sin and heal a paralytic, Jesus told the man to get up and go home. We also see Jesus's divinity in the fact that Jesus could perceive in His spirit what the scribes were thinking. All these things point to Jesus as God; His power and authority revealed it all. And the response? "They were all astounded and gave glory to God" (v. 12).

**What has Christ done recently that causes you to be astounded and give Him glory?**

The main point of this passage is not that a man who was paralyzed went away walking and forgiven. The point is that God healed and forgave this man, or more precisely, Jesus as God healed and forgave this man. This passage is a key moment in the story of the Bible because, ever since Genesis 3, we've been waiting for someone to arrive in the story who could actually do something about humanity's sin. Mark 2:1-12 declares Jesus to be that someone!

**What is better—to be healed of a physical ailment or a spiritual one—and why?**

#### VOICES FROM CHURCH HISTORY

"When Jesus called Himself the Son of Man, He was not practicing humility. . . . That title was pregnant with theological significance concerning Jesus' deity and office. That was why Jesus used it here; He wanted to show His divine authority to forgive sin."<sup>1</sup>

—R. C. Sproul (1939–2017)



## JESUS'S POWER OVER ALL

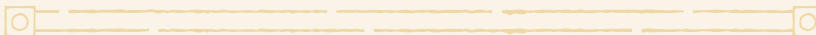
*Read the passages below. Write down what Jesus did to show His authority and how people responded.*

AUTHORITY OVER	JESUS'S ACTIONS	PEOPLE'S RESPONSE
<b>EVIL SPIRITS</b> (Mark 1:23-28)		
<b>SIN</b> (Mark 2:1-7)		
<b>PHYSICAL AILMENTS</b> (Mark 2:8-12)		
<b>RELIGION/TRADITION</b> (Mark 3:1-6)		
<b>NATURE</b> (Mark 4:35-41)		
<b>DEATH</b> (Mark 5:35-43)		

When is it difficult for you to receive the forgiveness Jesus has the authority to give you?

Even with having faith in God's forgiveness, when is it difficult for you to forgive others?

**Key Concept:** Jesus has the power to forgive, especially when He sees committed faith.



## HEAD

How does God's Word challenge your preferences and preconceptions?

### PRAYING SCRIPTURE

Read Psalm 121. Identify situations in your life in which you are looking to the Lord for help right now. Thank God for the ways you have seen His protection in your life before, both physically and spiritually. Praise God for all the ways He is a helper and protector in all things.



## HEART

Where in your life do you need to believe that Jesus is able to deal with sin, whether yours or someone else's?

### PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



## HANDS

With whom can you share that Jesus clearly claimed to be God?

