

your pallet and walk'? 10 "But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — He said to the paralytic — 11 "I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." 12 And he rose and immediately took up the pallet and went out in the sight of all; so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

You get some glimpses into the daily life of Jesus, here Mark says he was **“at home.”** Apparently where He was staying at the time, possibly the home of Peter. But notice, even here the people are crowding Him. **“1 And when He had come back to Capernaum several days afterward, it was heard that He was at home. 2 And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, even near the door; and He was speaking the word to them.”** It is interesting to note that Jesus spent much time in **Capernaum**, yet in the end the people there are **rebuked** by Jesus for their **unbelief** (Matt 11:23-24). Let us pay careful attention that our hearts do not become hard as theirs, who so long heard the Gospel preached, and the power of Jesus displayed yet their hearts were not converted. Yet there were some who were zealous to be touched and healed by the Lord. **“3 And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic, carried by four men. 4 And being unable to get to Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had dug an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic was lying.”** Wow, that we would be so forceful in bringing our sick to Jesus! But this story is more about the man’s spiritual healing than physical. **“5 And Jesus seeing their faith said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven."** 6 But there were some of the scribes sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, 7 **"Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone?"** It is interesting that Jesus immediately addresses the man's need for forgiveness, and as they have come to Him for healing, He grants a far better gift. And see some religious leaders the scribes are there and begin questioning Jesus authority to make such a claim. And what is even more profound I suppose than the scene so far, Jesus is reading their hearts and minds like movie screen. **“8 And immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, "Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts? 9 "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven'; or to say, 'Arise, and take up your pallet and walk'?"** One very amazing thing about Jesus, **He knows everything** we think, and every motive of our hearts before we ever expose it with our words, and anyone who knows Jesus knows this to be true. He is **God**, He is **omniscient** possessing all knowledge, and our hearts are opened and laid bare before Him.

Hebrews 4:13 - 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.
NASB

Psalms 139:4 - 4 Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O Lord, Thou dost know it all. NASB

Now see here Jesus having already established in chapter one that He had **authority** to call men to Himself to follow Him, and that He had power over **sickness, disease** and even **demons**, here He establishes an even more important authority, to even forgive sins! **"10 "But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" — He said to the paralytic — 11 "I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." 12 And he rose and immediately took up the pallet and went out in the sight of all; so that they were all amazed and were glorifying God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this.""** And we see here the proof at least in Jesus mind that He has authority to forgive sins, is seen in His power to **heal** a paralytic with a spoken word. And let us learn here, that **no one has power like this but God** alone, and when the **man Jesus** wields this power at will, He must be God! Let us now believe and confess that He is the Christ!

Mark 2:13-14 - 13 And He went out again by the seashore; and all the multitude were coming to Him, and He was teaching them. 14 And as He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax office, and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he rose and followed Him.

Here again Jesus is crowded by a multitude, and how willing he was to teach them. **"13 And He went out again by the seashore; and all the multitude were coming to Him, and He was teaching them."** See that our Lord was greatly concerned that people would learn God's Word, and He gave Himself tirelessly to teaching it. **"14 And as He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting in the tax office, and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And he rose and followed Him."** Jesus now calls yet another to be a personal disciple of His, but this time he is one of those dreadful and despised **tax-gatherers**. These tax gatherers were **hated** by the **Jewish people** who saw them as betrayers and always assumed them to be deceitfully collecting more than was required for personal gain. They are referred to several times in the Gospels as some of the most hated by the Jews (Luke 5:30, 7:34, 18:11). Now see in this the great mercy of Jesus displayed, and the willingness of God to save sinners from every class of life. The glory of God's grace reaches down to save even the worst of sinners. Levi is better known as Matthew, the author of that Gospel account.

Mark 2:15-17 - 15 And it came about that He was reclining at the table in his house, and many tax-gatherers and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of them, and they were following Him. 16 And when the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax-gatherers, they began saying to His disciples, "Why is He eating and drinking with tax-gatherers and sinners?" 17 And hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Now to make this **calling** of **Levi** even more **scandalous**, Jesus has entered his house and is now eating and drinking apparently with the rabble who are his friends. More than this, people from Levi's motley crew are being saved and apparently following Jesus. **"15 And it came about that He was reclining at the table in his house, and many tax-gatherers and sinners were dining with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many of them, and they were following Him."** See here Jesus is not your run of the mill religious Pharisee, but apparently hangs out in some questionable places, and that for good reason. This earned Him a reputation as a **"glutton and a drunkard"** (Luke 7:34) because there is always some legalist somewhere to question His motives. **"16 And when the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with the sinners and tax-gatherers, they began saying to His disciples, "Why is He eating and drinking with tax-gatherers and sinners?" 17 And hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.""** In first century Israel sharing a meal together was a sign of social acceptance and friendship. For the Messiah to eat with these kinds of people was beyond outrageous in the minds of the religious leaders. Here we have that famous statement from Jesus, that He came to call **"sinners"** and not the **"righteous."** The only problem here is their **no one** who is **righteous**, not even one (Rom 3:10). What Jesus is really saying here is He only calls those who realize that they are sinners and come to Jesus to be forgiven. Those **self-righteous** and **religious people** who look down on others thinking they are spiritually elite and good enough to please God on their own are **not** the kind of people that **Jesus saves**, but only those who know themselves to be **ungodly**. Even that great Pharisee the Apostle Paul includes himself in the ungodly whom Christ saves.

Romans 5:6-8 - 6 **For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.** 7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.** NASB

Surely Jesus planned the whole scene to expose the hearts of those who are self-righteous as an illustration to see that Jesus calls and saves those who are truly sick and sore with sin, **“17 Jesus said to them, “It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”**” Thank God for His mercy, for without it which one of us would have hope to be saved?

Mark 2:18-22 - 18 And John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they came and said to Him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?" 19 And Jesus said to them, "While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom do not fast, do they? So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20 "But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day. 21 "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; otherwise the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear results. 22 "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."

Without fail you know when the **Pharisees** come to **Jesus** with **questions** they are trying to catch Him in some fault of their religious system. Such is the case here. **“18 And John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and they came and said to Him, “Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?”**” Fasting was a custom of first century Judaism that was practiced continually, as the Pharisees often fasted twice a week (Luke 18:12), even though the Law only required one annual fast. They would also do it publicly as if to show off their religious devotion. Jesus rebuked them for that in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 6:2-6, 16-18) calling them hypocrites, teaching that it was something to be done in **secret**, along with **prayer** and **almsgiving**, so that only God could see your devotion and you wouldn't appear as self-righteous. Jesus here answers in a similar way, yet also trying to answer John's disciples who no doubt had different and better motives in their fasting. **“19 And Jesus said to them, “While the bridegroom is with them, the attendants of the bridegroom do not fast, do they? So long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20 “But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day.”**” Jesus is here explaining that what ought to be a joyful occasion of celebration as they receive Jesus as the bridegroom, they must be careful not to turn into a somber one of mourning. Yet He also refers here to the day of His crucifixion when He will **“taken away.”** This should have caused them alarm, but they apparently didn't even notice His words.

He continues with the illustration of the new and old wineskins, meant to distinguish between the **old system** of legalistic rabbinic **tradition** with the new message of **salvation** by **grace** through **faith in Him** which He would bring. He wasn't interested in repairing Judaism but bringing a radically **new** and **living hope**, here symbolized as the **new wine**. **"21 "No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; otherwise the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear results. 22 "And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and the skins as well; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."** The true worship of Judaism had been so modified by the traditions of the overly religious, it could hardly be recognized by the faithful. Jesus was bringing a **true** and **better** way of **worship**, a true and better **sacrifice**, a true and better **temple**, where God lives by His Holy Spirit.

Mark 2:23-28 - 23 And it came about that He was passing through the grain fields on the Sabbath, and His disciples began to make their way along while picking the heads of grain. 24 And the Pharisees were saying to Him, "See here, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" 25 And He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and became hungry, he and his companions: 26 how he entered the house of God in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the consecrated bread, which is not lawful for anyone to eat except the priests, and he gave it also to those who were with him?" 27 And He was saying to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. 28 "Consequently, the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

The longer time lapses in **Jesus'** ministry, the greater the **conflict** grows with the **Pharisees** and other **religious leaders**. Jesus was exposing their false religious system for what it was, a system of **works righteousness** meant to exalt men in spiritual pride. Moved by hatred of His teaching which assaulted their pride, they would **follow Jesus** to **scrutinize** His behavior, solely to find something for which they could **accuse** Him. **"23 And it came about that He was passing through the grain fields on the Sabbath, and His disciples began to make their way along while picking the heads of grain. 24 And the Pharisees were saying to Him, "See here, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?""** Here they lay a direct accusation against His disciples as **violators** of the **Sabbath**, for which the penalty by the way was death. Even though what they did was only a violation of their **tradition** and **not** the actual **Law**, Jesus was **openly defying** their man-made tradition regarding the Sabbath. In doing this Jesus put Himself in direct conflict with the religious leaders at their most sensitive point as the Sabbath was the high point of their religious worship. God had intended the Sabbath to be a day

of a day of spiritual reflection with rest and recuperation for the people. They had turned it into a day of rigid rules and intense requirements. They were the real violators of the Sabbath. Nevertheless, Jesus gave them an answer meant to point them to the reality of what the Sabbath was for. **“25 And He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and became hungry, he and his companions: 26 how he entered the house of God in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the consecrated bread, which is not lawful for anyone to eat except the priests, and he gave it also to those who were with him?"”** MacArthur comments, *“Jesus point, as illustrated by the Old Testament account, was that showing compassion in God’s sight, always trumped strict adherence to ritual and ceremony. end quote”* The Sabbath was intended for the people to have a day of worship and rest, not to so burden them with religious ritual as to restrict them from doing the necessary things of daily life. Here Jesus has caught them with the Scriptures in a way that silences their accusation about His disciples. But what Jesus says next puts them face to face with who He really is and confronts them in a way that puts before them an undeniable claim to be the Son of God. **“27 And He was saying to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. 28 "Consequently, the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.””** Here Jesus makes two claims that no doubt establishes Him as the Messiah. By claiming to be the **Lord** of the **Sabbath**, Jesus essentially claimed **authority** over the whole **Jewish religion**. More than this He refers to Himself as the **“Son of Man,”** which of course was the Messianic title of the divine King from Daniel 7:13-14. Here Jesus is saying His authority is the highest authority of the King of God’s Kingdom, who also presides over the worship of God on the Sabbath. In Matthew’s account of this scene, Jesus even claims to be greater than the Temple itself.

Matthew 12:3-8 - 3 But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did, when he became hungry, he and his companions; 4 how he entered the house of God, and they ate the consecrated bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those with him, but for the priests alone? 5 "Or have you not read in the Law, that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple break the Sabbath, and are innocent? **6 "But I say to you, that something greater than the temple is here.** 7 "But if you had known what this means, **'I desire compassion, and not a sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent.** 8 "For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." NASB

In this altercation with Pharisees, Jesus has **revealed** His **true identity** to which the Pharisees must either bow in reverence, or ruthlessly seek to destroy Him. There can be **no middle ground** after these claims He has laid before them. The sad truth is, they will seek to destroy Jesus, and in so doing they will seal their own deadly condemnation. Indeed, something **greater** than the **Temple** is **here!**