

## Borne of Four

Mark 2:1 – 23



~ We know from our study of the Bible that Jesus left Nazareth and made His headquarters in Capernaum when he began His earthly ministry. Jesus had to withdraw in our last report because the healed leper wouldn't keep quiet. The leper actually blazed the matter abroad publishing it! I don't know how long Jesus had to stay gone but He came back, obviously. It would seem the other publishing leper caused the crowd to push in on Christ which hindered Him from doing His work. Anyways, miracles and wonder working are not the defining characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus didn't come to the earth as a Thaumaturgus. Jesus came to die for the sins of the world; but there were healings and miracles done also. The ministry of Christ was not a physical ministry of healing, but a spiritual ministry of His death on the cross.

We're going to keep this real in our safari through the Gospel of Mark, friends - as we always do. This type of thing - the healing ministry - has, of course, become commonplace; and the emphasis is always on tongues and healing or some gimmicky combination like that. Well, it's putting the cart before the horse, quite frankly. You may think they preach the Gospel just like we do and you may think the healing is just a side benefit of some elevated saintly status that I don't have; the problem is: those people are NEVER – EVER known for preaching the Gospel! They are ALWAYS known for the healing or the gimmick. In fact, the only reasons people go to their meetings are for the emotional experience and for the excitement of what might happen that night; because Jesus sure isn't part of their day-to-day life! Okay, let's whittle this down to a very fine point. Our business is but one: to preach the Gospel! ~

***1 And again he entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was noised that he was in the house.***

***2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.***

~ The ministry of the Lord Jesus was to preach the Word of God! That is where we place the emphasis in this Spiritual Safari; we emphasize the integrity, inerrancy and the ability found within the teaching of sound doctrine. The Bible is capable of changing hearts and lives and we have all seen this happen. Because of the things we have seen we should have more confidence than we have, but I don't – maybe you do! As I write these reports, I honestly wonder if it will make any difference to the very few people that actually read the entire thing. God says it will have an impact and God says I should have more faith – but I still don't – I do know this is the Word of God and it doesn't return to Him void! I really love to read that the Lord preached the Word to them! ~

***3 And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.***

***4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.***

~ So, in the midst of chaos in this house we look out a window and see this group of five coming down the dusty road in a cloud of it to "the" house; which is Simon Peter's house - and I always wondered how Peter felt about them tearing his roof off - but I digress. Maybe he didn't say anything because they were preaching "the Word" unto them that were around? Maybe we'll never know until we ask him? Well, either way, these five come to us and one is hanging off of the stretcher. This palsied man never would have made it here on his own volition; never could he have reached the place where Jesus could deal with him personally. Well, these four are carrying the man as we see, and people are also thronging the house.

Most church work today depends upon and is directed and executed by committees and different organizations. A definition for a committee is: a group that wastes hours taking down minutes. A committee is made up of a

group of individuals who, individually, can do nothing; but in a committee group they can collectively decide that nothing can be done – and that is generally the outcome of their wasted minutes. Well, I guess the roof committee came through but notice they had to take this man up to the top of the house to let him back down to the ground on the inside; it just shouldn't have had to have been that difficult, you know? Once they had given all their time and attention to this one endeavor, I think they must have been a little bit embarrassed about the way it went down....

***5 But when Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.***

~ Frankly, it looks like the faith of these men that let the palsied man down through the roof is responsible for the palsied man's sins being forgiven; and that would certainly be a huge problem! We know we are only saved by our personal, individual faith. It's good to come from a Godly family but you're not going to Heaven in a family sedan; you're going to Heaven alone! It's not the faith of these men that carried the palsied man that saved the palsied man; it's the fact that the palsied man got to the place where he could hear the Lord Jesus teach the Word of God and have faith come by that hearing. This is a remarkable, extraordinary nugget of truth we have here in this jewel mine of Mark. We need less ushers in the church and more stretcher bearers. We certainly need men and woman that can go out into the streets and bring in men and women to hear the Gospel. This society is palsied; they're paralyzed, mainly by coldness, indifference, fear and prejudice, but mostly just sin, in general. Most people will NOT reach the place where the Gospel is preached to them properly, correctly and completely unless you're holding up a corner of their stretcher....

***6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,***

***7 Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?***

~ They didn't speak out and ask this question out loud; they only thought this in their hearts – but – they were wrong with the first question and right

with the second. Only God can forgive sins. No judge in our society has the right to let a criminal off without penalty; God is the moral ruler of this universe and even God obeys the laws He made! His laws never change, either, by the way; and you and I are guilty before God. God ONLY forgives us because Christ paid the penalty for our sins! No, what is blasphemy is the man that allows crime and lawlessness to go unpunished thereby oppressing and hurting the poor and sick and keeping them away from healing help. Mankind has this all exactly backwards and wrong! ~

***8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?***

~ Well, this is not the first run-in with Jesus the Pharisees have had, so they don't just falter and speak without thinking as Jesus tries to draw them out. They decided the best thing to do here is keep their mouths shut and let their silence be their wisdom. The problem is: Jesus already knew their hearts! Well, these Pharisees aren't about to answer Jesus questions at all; but their silence won't prevent Jesus from dealing with them, either. John says, "... he needeth no man to testify to that which is in the heart of man." The Pharisees had plenty of questions elsewhere, but Jesus has a few of His own here; the Pharisees tried to put Jesus "on the spot" with their questions - but they failed. Here, Jesus has certainly shut their mouths with His questions to them! The Pharisees know here it is impossible for anyone except God to do any of these things; so, if this is really happening - and it sure was happening - then Jesus would have to be God....

***9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?***

***10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)***

***11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.***

***12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.***

***13 And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.***

***14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.***

~ Levi is Matthew, and he was from the tribe of Levi. We see him as he has become, of all things, a publican. By the way, this debunks any theories about the lost tribes of Israel. This is just one of many places we find individuals that belong to the other tribes besides Judah and Benjamin. These people who say we have ten lost tribes of Israel are lost as far as the Word of God is concerned because they have no idea what they're talking about. We're not on an Easter egg hunt in the Bible; they've all been found and accounted for. Perhaps you don't trust that Christ is capable of keeping track of His children? Well, here's a Levite and he ends up being an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember, in Matthew, we heard nothing about this great dinner or Matthew's friends crowding around and tearing down his house. I should also add that the only kind of friends Matthew had were sinners! Maybe Matthew was trying to ignore that fact? ~

***15 And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in Matthew's house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.***

***16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?***

***17 When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.***

~ Thrice was the statement made that we're hanging out with publicans and sinners. I don't see a decent man on the guest list here at all, except Jesus! This is not the upper echelon of the town, friends; and you may want to notice publicans come ahead of sinners in dishonorable mentions. Publicans were the tax gatherers and the businessmen, of course, in that day. Naturally, because there were no righteous people, this is sarcasm by the Lord Jesus. They were ALL sick sinners, and they ALL needed a physician and a severely palsied man had just walked out in front of their very eyes! ~

***18 And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?***

~ As the Pharisee does naturally, they just bounce from unrelated question to unrelated question. Just as the atheist today, they're not interested in your answer. They only challenge you to discover your weak spot, Biblically speaking, so they can exploit it; but now they've suddenly thought of something new. God never gave Israel any instructions or commands for fasting in the Mosaic system. God ONLY gave Israel FEAST days! Jesus is saying here that it is more important to be related to Him and to have fellowship with Him than it is to fast. It is one thing to put up a religious phony front and it is another thing altogether to have a friendly, real and personal relationship with the living Lord Jesus Christ and in a personal, working, functional and tangibly transactional existence....

***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.***

~ Well, we've had these illustrations before as Jesus says He has not come to patch up the broken law or add more commands to the old law; one they had either forgotten about entirely or had come to despise. Jesus didn't come to refine or redevelop the world; Jesus came to do something totally new! He came to give us a new garment! Under the law, men had to work, and that work had become like an old, moth eaten, garment that had been dry cleaned one too many times and disintegrated. Today, we have a new robe of righteousness that will come down and clothe the sinner who trusts Christ; which will enable that man to stand before Almighty God in Heaven. It is glorious that Jesus didn't come to extent or inject the law with more undoable precepts and statutes! Something new has been introduced now; and that is the fact that Christ will die for the sins of the world! The robe of righteousness can only come down upon those who are willing to become sons of God through faith....

***23 And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the Sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn.***

~ So, this leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God concludes on a Sabbath day in the corn fields with the Lord Jesus Christ, where we have been before. We're going to talk about the Sabbath day in detail; and in this Gospel, we will do so from the perspective of life inside the synagogue. We took this issue up exhaustively in Matthew - and we will do so again with Mark - from his viewpoint. This question of the Sabbath is extremely important because this is the question whereby Jesus broke with the religious rulers. After the Sabbath issue arises, they want to kill Jesus. Here, as we have seen before, He claims that He is the Lord of the Sabbath day. That's claiming to be God. This is another interpretation of that claim, as we shall see moving forward ~

