

MARK CHAPTER TWO

In Chapter Two, the story we hear “the first rumblings of a conflict whose climax is the crucifixion.” (Lamar Williamson, Jr. *Mark: Interpreter’s Bible Commentary*). We also hear the first mention of faith as a noun.

Jesus heals a paralytic (2:1-12) – Topic of Sunday’s sermon (6/2)

In this section, there is a profound linking between sin/healing. The only other gospel story where paralysis/illness is equated with sin is found in John 5:1-15. Elsewhere in the Gospels, Jesus is careful to clarify that sin and sickness are not intertwined (John 9:2 and Luke 13:1-5).

Why might Jesus equate sin and healing in this circumstance?

Who has paralysis in this story? Anyone besides the man on the stretcher?

Are there places in your life where you have experienced paralysis where God has invited you to stand up and move?

Jesus Calls Levi (13-17)

Jesus challenges the status quo repeatedly in this Chapter. Tax collectors were infamous for exploiting their neighbor for the sake of personal gain. The Romans “paid” Jews to collect the tax for them by allowing them to surcharge their neighbors’ tax and keep the profit. Marginalized and hated, those who were outside of the righteous, normative community became their own counter culture. These folks were grouped into the term “tax collectors and sinners”.

What is the ‘sickness’ that these folks suffer from? And how did Jesus model healing it?

How do boundaries get challenged or dis-established in this story?

Fasting and Sabbath Controversies (2:18 – 28)

The chapter explores ways in which Jesus undermines traditional understandings of faithful behavior. Who one eats with, when one should not eat because of religious observance, and what one should do on holy days. Jesus challenges the status quo by breaking the rules, or allowing his disciples to do so.

What overall message would you say Jesus is giving about being a faithful person?

What kind of lifestyle was Jesus encouraging? What kind of lifestyle was Jesus challenging? How would you evaluate your own lifestyle in light of these texts? Where might the Spirit be inviting you to grow?