

# To Praise or Reject Jesus

Mark 2:1-3:6

## 1) Forgiveness Factor vs. 1-12

Although the teachers of the law struggled with Jesus behaving like God, Jesus revealed that he is God through providing the forgiveness of the paralytic's sins that was verified through being healed. The entire crowd were amazed and praised God.

Jesus revealed that He is the God of Israel as God forgives those who call on him and delights to restore, renew and provides the opportunity for those who are opposed to Him to reconsider their approach towards Him; to experience God's forgiveness.

### Question

- What does this story tell you is the difference between true spirituality and counterfeit spirituality?
- What we think of God affects how we live and approach life. How is God's forgiveness not like the way humanity practices forgiveness?

## 2) Grace Embrace vs. 13-17

Jesus full of grace, invited Levi the tax collector to follow him, and then had fellowship with him, other tax collectors and sinners by having dinner together. Although the Pharisees were opposed to Jesus associating with sinners, Jesus revealed that the grace of God overcomes all the forms of human depravity.

Jesus is full of grace and calls the church to be full of grace and truth. As a church we should not shun people as a pharisee would but have the Grace Embrace and when an opportunity arises, to share the good news of Jesus that overcomes all the forms of human depravity.

### Question

- How do churches tend to treat people like tax collectors?
- What are specific ways that we can share the good news to others through embracing people the way Jesus embraced Levi and his friends?

## 3) Arrived Kingdom of God vs. 18-22

People noticed that Jesus' disciples did not participate in fasting compared to John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees. Why? Because the kingdom of God is here! Jesus is the salvation the Jews have been waiting for.

Context: The fasting by the disciples of John and of the Pharisees was focused on calling out to God to bring about the kingdom of God; the fulfillment of God's saving promises.

In Jesus, the kingdom of God has arrived! God has triumphed over death, sin, and the devil through Jesus' death and resurrection. Although Jesus has ascended to His heavenly throne, His absence brought a new way through sending the Spirit (John 16:7; Romans 8:9). We celebrate Jesus' presence with us by His Spirit, but we still wait for our Lord Jesus return.

#### **4) Authoritative Teaching 2:23- 3:6**

The Pharisees understanding of the Sabbath was one of restriction and had become a heavy burden. Jesus, the Lord of the kingdom of God, corrected their understanding, as the Sabbath was supposed to be a gift that brought refreshment, joy, and encouraged goodness to be practiced with others.

Under the lordship of Jesus Christ, our lives are not oriented by constraint and limitation but by freedom to live new life with our God.

Questions:

- What man-made traditions or expectations am I tempted to adopt that the Lord is not requiring of me? We need to watch out for expectations or traditions that will cause restriction or become a heavy burden to our lives.