

CALVARY CHAPEL COSTA MESA

– COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION

Studies in the Gospel of Mark “The Deeper Need” Mark 2:1-12

MAIN IDEA

Life is hard and so many quietly struggle through life with disabilities or terminal conditions that only they, their family, and friends know about. Until you have been personally affected by some kind of debilitating condition, the fast pace of life makes it hard to really give empathy or attention to those who struggle. I like to watch specials on TV where someone has decided to stop their routine and help or bless someone who is disabled. Groups like the Make a Wish Foundation are often shown connecting athletes or celebrities to children who have terminal conditions. The stories are amazing and the MAWF website even has stories how these connections have been so inspiring it encourage a young person to fight through a disease to recovery. Hope is a radical motivator. That is how I kind of envision these buddies of the paralytic man. While he was too weak to get an audience with Jesus, his friends loved him enough that they were willing to take on any obstacle or roof to make this special connection. And Jesus did heal the man, but it was much more holistic than the crowds anticipated. While Jesus always showed compassion to those who were physically hurting, the audience is brought back again to the real purpose of his mission: healing people from their sins.

SCRIPTURAL INSIGHT

As Jesus' popularity grew with the crowds, the disapproval of the religious leaders grew with it. The direct connection of God to the people disrupted the rules and rituals of their religious system. Here Mark introduces the interesting title *The Son of Man*. Used 14x by him and 83x throughout all the gospels, it is a peculiar and a much-debated designation. While commentaries discuss many possible reasons for it, we do know that it was a popular phrase in the prophets of the Old Testament and other contemporary Jewish works. What were the prophets concerned with? They looked forward to a redeemer, who would introduce a new covenant, a new spiritual economy, and who would make God accessible: *No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, "Know the LORD," for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.*" (Jeremiah 31:34)

READ & DISCUSS

Read out loud together Mark 2:1-12 and discuss how this passage can bring us clarity in our mission to help others remove obstacles in their pursuit of God.

KEY PASSAGE

Mark 2:10-12 *But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—He said to the paralytic, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"*

- *Imagine you are the man lying on the mat, being lowered through the ceiling. Consider all the years of not being able to walk, of thinking that your paralysis might be your fault. Jesus moves toward you with so much tenderness and care and with everyone standing around, calls you “my child.” What might it have felt like to be received like this, especially in front of crowds?*
- *Think of a time when you were struggling and resisted talking to God about it. What were you afraid of? How did you think God might respond if you told him the truth?*
- *Describe an experience where originally you felt fear approaching God, maybe because of a mistake or the guilt of it, and you were met with tenderness and compassion?*

PRAYER & TESTIMONY

Our own expressions of compassion can be the bridge someone else needs to move toward God. Try writing down a list of people in your life and next to each name any specific needs you know that they might have (personal, health, financial, spiritual, etc.) Pray and write down next to those needs anything God might be calling you to do in order to show compassion.

SPIRITUAL APPLICATION & DISCIPLINE

Both John the Baptist and Jesus preached repentance. They knew that sin was the handicap that kept people from God. But Jesus’ preaching was couched in kindness and acts of compassion. Compassion is a discipline that fosters spiritual healing in others. Mark gives us insight into Jesus’ feelings and motivations to help: *Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, “If You are willing, You can make me clean.” Then Jesus, moved with **COMPASSION**, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed.” (Mark 1:40-41)*

- *When have you experienced the compassion of Christ in your life personally? How did it help strengthen your pursuit of God?*

RESOURCE

It can be easy to forget the social stigma that the paralytic would have experienced as part of his disability. First century Judaism attached many negative spiritual conations to those who were suffering. Jesus offering forgiveness to the man also relieved him of his shame and the false theology of the religious leaders. He didn’t have to be separate from God or the family of God anymore. See this title from Philip Jamieson regarding our shared mission with Jesus in helping others receive forgiveness: *The Face of Forgiveness: A Pastoral Theology of Shame and Redemption*. Philip D. Jamieson. Downers Grove: IVP, 2016.



Community Group Discussion Guide

Based on Pastor Brian Brodersen’s message from September 23, 2018.

Watch Again: <https://cccm.com/teaching/jesus-christ-son-of-god-savior/video/the-deeper-need/>