

Mark 2:1-12 Bible Study

1. Discuss some different attitudes to sickness that you have encountered (Christian and non-Christian)

Read Mark 2:1-12

2. What happened the last time Jesus was in Capernaum? See 1:21-34
Cast out demon in synagogue, people amazed, healed many sick, drove out many demons.

3. a. Why do you think Jesus healed people?

Allow some discussion on this. Compassion would be a key factor. But then read Isaiah 35

- b. Now read Isaiah 35. What does this suggest about why Jesus healed people?
Signs of the new age –the curse and its effects are being undone.

- c. What other than healing does Isaiah 35 say will happen?

Judgement/vengeance & restoration. Jesus' healings point to this too!

4. What was Jesus main purpose in coming? See 1:35-39. How do you use this being worked out in 2:1-12 (a passage often primarily associated with Jesus' healing of the paralysed man – see NIV sub-heading).

Jesus 'preaches the word' to them v2. When he responds to "their faith", he forgives the man, and then only heals him in response to the grumbings. But healing and forgiveness are bound up – this is not merely a miracle of compassion (though not less than that!), Jesus heals him "so that you may know the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins". Sickness is a reminder and expression of the Fall and Curse for sin, healing is a sign of God's solution. The new age is dawning, forgiveness of sins is on offer, but judgement and vengeance are coming too.

5. Why do you think the men brought the paralysed man to Jesus?

*We can't be certain – Mark doesn't tell us. But if it was only for healing, see verse 5, why does Mark say "When Jesus saw their faith"? If they came with faith for healing, why not heal him straight away? Mark records this account at the conclusion to chapter 1, where although Jesus could have had a big ministry as a healer, he says "I've come to preach", and that's what he's doing here (v2), so perhaps the men brought the paralysed man to **hear** Jesus. And what Jesus gave him is the fulfilment of the Word he came to preach – forgiveness of sins and relationship with God.*

6. Think back to the discussion from Question 1. How would you respond to the different attitudes expressed there in light of Mark 2:1-12?

Perhaps read James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:6-9; Rom 8:18-25

*It's good to pray for healing; it's right to give thanks when God heals someone. **But** we ought not be surprised when sufferings come, and pray for God to work in us or the sufferer what he desires for us most of all – that we become more like Christ and long all the more for glory when all things are renewed and the curse is fully removed – Rom 8:28-30. Perhaps this is what the friends were doing bringing the man to Jesus – not a bad example for us to follow when our friends are unwell.*

7. Perhaps you could finish by praying (in the light of this study) for some friends you know who are suffering.