

# DISCUSSIONGUIDE

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## **OPENING QUESTIONS:**

When was the last time you were in the emergency room?

## **DIGGING DEEPER:**

**Read Mark 1:40-2:12**

Why is the leper unsure of Jesus' desire to help? What is significant about Jesus touching the leper before healing him?

What would you be seeing and feeling if you were in the crowded house?

If you were one of the four friends and saw the barrier to get to Jesus, what would you have likely done? Why?

- How would you feel if you were the paralytic and your friends came up with this plan to dig through the roof to give you access to Jesus?
- What impresses you the most about the four friends?
- Tell the group about an experience similar to this where your friends pressed to find you help when you were hurting? Or vice versa
  - Are you more open or closed to receiving help from your friends?
  - How do you need to change to be more open to receive help?
- How does Jesus respond to the four friends who dig a hole in the roof and lower their friend down in front of him?

Why didn't Jesus just heal the man like everyone expected?

Everyone was surprised that Jesus' first words to the paralyzed man were words of forgiveness. How is the forgiveness Jesus offers sometimes different than the forgiveness we offer?

- What are the different responses to Jesus' offer of forgiveness and healing? Why are the scribes and teachers so upset? Do they have a right to be? Why?

The paralytic was pushed to the margins and excluded in the social and religious life of the community. In what ways do our structures and attitudes, whether intentionally or unintentionally, keep people out of the fellowship of the church?

The two main questions to be asked during each study in Mark are:

- 1) Who is Jesus? Or, What does this passage teach us about Jesus? What new insight do we gain about the kingdom and Jesus?
- 2) What does his life mean for our lives and how we should live today? What does God want me to do? How should I respond?

Discuss any observations or challenges from the weekly devotionals.

## **PRAYER TIME:**

Close your time together by sharing requests and praises, and praying together. Those who feel comfortable can pray as they feel led.

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# COREGUIDE

2/11/2018

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*One Good Turn Inspires Two More :: Mark 2:1-12 :: Pastor Dave Bach*

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*Things I want to remember from today's message*



## MONDAY

**Mark 1:40-45**

In Jesus' day, lepers were not permitted to come near others, rather they were outcasts, pushed to the margins and isolated. Lepers were never to be touched, but Jesus broke proper protocol and reached out to this man to heal and restore him. Notice the leper's prayer, "If you choose, you can make me clean." He put his desire into the larger scope of God's plans and purposes, and did not assume that Jesus would heal him. He had faith Jesus could heal him, but was not obligated to do so. It troubles me that once Jesus answered his prayer, the leper ignored Jesus' instructions. He wanted the blessing without the obligation. Maybe this leper goes unnamed because he is representative of a lot of us. We want the benefits Jesus brings, but we push back on what he asks of us. Lord, help me with this.

## TUESDAY

**Mark 2:1-12**

Jesus connects actions with his words; he connects healing and forgiveness; intuitively he knows that guilt and shame can paralyze our spirit as much as physical illnesses can paralyze our bodies. Everyone expected Jesus to heal the man, and he did, but I'm struck by the words Jesus first speaks, "Son, your sins are forgiven." How long had it been since that man had heard the endearing and loving embrace as a son who is whole and welcome? As a standard practice in the Jewish religion, this man had been excluded from full participation in society and in the synagogue, so I wonder how long it had been since he heard the words 'you are forgiven.' The system kept him out, but Jesus welcomes him in. Let's go and do likewise.

## WEDNESDAY

**Luke 7:36-50**

Jesus' ministry is often summarized as a three year span where he traveled around with his disciples and spent time teaching, preaching, and healing. He also practiced preemptive forgiveness, freely forgiving sin of people who didn't even ask for it. What a distinct contrast to the conditional forgiveness we like to practice. Jesus' model gives us a tangible example of his teaching "*If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins*" (Matthew 6:14-15). When someone hurts you, do you forgive freely before any apology; or do you hang on and wait for them to beg for your forgiveness?

## THURSDAY

**Isaiah 35:1-10**

Is it true? Do you believe all this? These are questions people have been asking about Jesus and Christianity for centuries. How could it be true when there is so much hate, brokenness and suffering in the world? Some of John the baptist's disciples approach Jesus and ask him if he is the one they were expecting, or if they should look for another. Jesus responds, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them" (Luke 7:22). Scan back through the beginning of Mark's gospel, and take note of all the ways in which Jesus is fulfilling the words of Isaiah's poetic visionary expectation that God would reverse the curse of death and exile and redeem the people.

## FRIDAY

**Ruth 1:16-17**

Sometimes I just need, what we call in our family, shoulder time. Sitting in each other's presence, knowing there are others who love us and care about us. The declaration of love, loyalty and faith that Ruth makes is one of the great statements of sacrificial love in all the Bible. Giving up one's own preferences to help someone else models love like Jesus. When you are down and out, who are your trusted friends who will walk with you through the shadow of any valley you may encounter? Job had three friends who came and sat with him in silence for seven days (Job 2:11-13). Words do not always have to be exchanged to know you are spending quality time with another. Who might benefit from some 'shoulder time' with you today?

### PRAYER CORNER:

As you pray this week, focus on a phrase of the Lord's Prayer each day:

- SUN: Pray for the hallowing of God's name in worship
- MON: Pray for the reign of God to be evident as you return to work
- TUE: Pray for an accurate understanding of God's will that leads to your obedience and holy discernment in daily decisions
- WED: Pray for God's provision of your material needs, remembering to intercede for those who lack basic resources necessary to sustain their existence
- THU: Pray for God's guidance in seeking reconciliation
- FRI: Pray that God will intervene graciously in the affairs of nations, states and cities to bring true deliverance from the overwhelming powers and structures of evil
- SAT: Give thanks for all that God has accomplished in your week, offering praise for the victories that are already evident