

2.4.24 / His Authority Over Illness and Sin / Mark 2.1-12

Internet search: What is the best-selling book of all time?

- Don Quixote – 500 million
- Tale of Two cities – 200 million
- Fellowship of the Ring – 150 million
- Harry Potter Sorcerer's Stone – 120 million #5
- Lion Witch and Wardrobe – 85 million #10
- **Bible – Guinness estimates 5 billion**

Mark Series: best-selling book ever about most impactful man ever

I love how stories invite us to set into a different set of circumstances and examine life from that set of circumstances.

Read **Mark 2:1-12**

Context: Jesus grew up in Nazereth (43 miles from Capernaum)

- Begins his ministry by getting baptized by John the Baptist
- Off into the wilderness / Returns
- Gathers followers/disciples
- Starts preaching and healing people / draws large crowds

V1 “A few days...” or “Some time later...”

Home: (v1) “*Jesus again entered Capernaum*”, “*heard He had come home*” – Could be Peter and Andrew's home. In any case, he returned there presumably for some rest.

Packed House: (v2) “*So many gathered*”. House is packed – people crowded around exterior near open doors and windows all trying to see and hear Him (consider sights and smells). Population of the town is guessed to be about 1000. So if even 50 people had gathered at/around his home – that's 5% of the town's population at one person's residence. Perspective – WL 45,000/2250. This was a big event. He starts teaching.

(v3) Some friends of a man who is paralyzed: they've heard the stories. This Jesus heals people. “Let's take Abia to see Him.” Try to shove in – no success. Idea – the roof. Are you crazy? No; just determined. This guy can heal Abia – it's worth it.

Dig a hole (tell about roof). How long?

(v5) Jesus response: Mark passes right over the hole in roof thing.

What came next must have been amazing. Mark (Author) “skips” a fascinating part of the story – and focuses on what happens next.

Vs 5 **saw their faith** (knew what they were thinking) ... “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

What's would you be thinking in this moment?

Some – damage calculation / irritated by interruption / patient guy.
Others – huh... can he do that?

Teachers of the law – He can't say that!

- That's for us not him. We're the ones... (who can declare forgiveness for the people on behalf of God – that's a priest job) – Jealousy and fear motivated. *Do you ever respond like that (jealousy, pride)?*
- Can't say anything – it will sound jealous. Maybe He's implying that **he** is forgiving sin: Blasphemy!

(v8) Knows their thoughts

- He knew the friends thoughts – he saw their faith
- Knows the teachers thoughts – He sees their jealousy and fear. He asks, "*why are you thinking these things?*" Of course he knows why but perhaps He wants them to notice why.

A brilliant question: (v9) He asks, "Which is easier... sins forgiven or take up mat?" *So... which is easier?* Why?

- Sins are forgiven: can't falsify it
- Take up mat: must immediately validate it.

Jesus spells it out for them in v10 with **an astounding claim:** Son of Man – (that's a Daniel 7 reference). In the Daniel 7 prophecy about the "Son of Man", this Son of Man has authority to dispense God's judgement. Jesus claims that with the authority to dispense God's judgement comes the authority to forgive sin – which He – as the Son of Man – has! And the sign that I'm about to do, he says, will prove that authority. So... **v11-12.**

Response? The people are amazed and they praised God! This man has authority over sin and disease... so they praised God.

Well... not everyone. Not the teachers of the law – they were fighting this *supposed* authority. *Would you have been praising God and following this teacher or fighting his authority?*

Interestingly... this is not just a story; it's an eye witness account of events that really happen. So the question isn't simply what would you have done but what will you do?

How are you responding to Jesus now?

Fight His authority / Ignore His message / Praise & follow Him

Fight: When it comes down to it, you just want to be in charge of you so you fight *His* authority.
Illus: Accustomed to the fight (follow selfish desire).

Ignore: Sometimes... we ignore His message. We just want to... have fun and not have to think about spiritual things right now? You'd rather just be a 15 year old and enjoy life (22, 45, 65).

We can try to convince ourselves of this... but deep down we know this is an empty way to live – to ignore a deeper examination of spiritual things.

Praise: Some respond with (or in our best moments we respond with) Praise. This praise is wrapped with Astonishment – being astonished by who Jesus is – He has authority to forgive sin and heal disease. He has the authority to **save me**.

To praise Him... ultimately is to recognize His authority and - with gratitude - give Him our allegiance.

This story invites us to stop fighting His authority. Stop ignoring message. And start praising God that He sent a savior who has authority over sin and disease – start following Him.

Enter a time of prayer and response.