**4.7.24 / Mark 2:13-3:6 / Astonishing things He said about Himself**

… Walking through the Gospel of Mark last few months…

Mk 1:27 / What He **did** / Followed that theme to the Resurrection

Mk 1:22 / What He **said** / Now following that them…

**Authority:** We might define ***authority*** as the place we go to get the final word on something. If Jesus **is** who he revealed himself to be in the first half of this series - the divine One in human flesh, Lord over every domain of human existence - then it's right that we see His teaching as **authoritative**. Mark 2:13-17

**Tax collectors:** Despised and hated by Jews

* Roman tax system was complicated. A portion of tax collection was contracted out to local collectors who bid for this position (mention pay structure).
* Usually ethnic Jews, not Torah observing Jews
* Jews **working with** the enemies of the Jews
* Popular Rabbinic teaching saw tax collectors in the same category as thieves and murderers.
	+ They were expelled from the synagogue,
	+ a disgrace to their family.
	+ **Jews** were forbidden to receive any money from tax collectors as alms
	+ one was considered unclean if they touched a tax collector.
* Tax collectors ***were*** traitors and thieves.

**Pharisees:** Highly revered, collected best students…

Jesus (a Rabi) called Matthew, a tax collector to follow him.

Jesus ate with Matthew in his home

and with *many other* tax collectors and sinners… *Unclean!*

It *seems* as though Jesus is trampling over the Pharisees’ system of order just to get a rise out of them. Why on earth would a religious leader call a **traitor and thief** to be his follower and then go out of his way to break several Jewish laws with no apparent personal benefit?

The Pharisees are understandably **perplexed and offended**.

Illus: Muddy Visitor – blatant disregard for common practice.

**I think that’s how the Pharisees felt.**

**Pharisee background:** Law was given in the OT **to point to Jesus** – Reveals the heart of God / Reveals our need for a Savior.

As time went on people built a structure of regulations around the law that would help them keep the law. The **Pharisees** where the men who learned the law ***and*** these regulations. They became the keepers of this structure of regulations which ***they*** had largely created. They were revered in Jewish culture because no God-fearing Jew would dare **question** religious leaders who *seemed* so committed to following God’s law.

**But Jesus** sees that somewhere along the way, the Pharisees had **lost** sight of the **one** to whom the law was designed to point and had become fixated on the structure they had built to help people keep this law (i.e. work – travel >800 yds). They were no longer looking to the **Lord as Savior**, they were looking at the **law as their religion**.

Jesus comes in and he is trampling over the structure/religion the Pharisees were striving to maintain and inforce.

* He invites a tax collector to be his disciple.
* He goes into the home of a tax collector.
* And spends time with *many other* tax collectors and sinners.

The Pharisees are befuddled, angry, offended - ask *Why is Jesus doing this?*

Jesus responds to the Pharisees, *“It is not the healthy…”.*

Jesus doesn’t see filthy lawbreakers. **He sees broken, hurting people and he shows them love.**

*“Not come to call the righteous”* – Says this ironically. Scripture is clear, in other places, that no one is actually righteous on their own. Jesus is saying He has come not for those who ***think they are righteous*** (wrongly so) but for those who **know they are broken** and hurting.

The structure that the Pharisees had built around the law and the culture they had created of everyone looking to ***them*** as the authorities on these regulations and the law… this structure and culture had led to a **very comfortable** place in society for them. They were revered and richly compensated. For Jesus to threaten this structure, was for him to threaten their livelihood. This was personal.

* ***They*** are fixated on maintaining their livelihood.
* ***Jesus***, on the other hand, is taking no concern for his own livelihood. He’s seemingly, haphazardly, offering compassion to wicked people who don’t deserve it.

Jesus and the Pharisees **could not be** in a more different frame of mind… so I think they struggled to really take in what Jesus is saying.

**I want to step away** from the Pharisees for a moment to see if ***we*** can take in what Jesus is saying. The sick (not the healthy) need a doctor. He came to call **not the righteous** but the sinners.

* Are you fixated on maintaining your comfortable/known/somewhat controlled structure of life while proving/showing/depending upon **your** righteousness?
* Or are you ready to admit that you are sick and broken and hurting and you **need a doctor**?

And I ask for this reason… because when we know we’re sick, we long for a doctor and we’re willing to **change** (even at a cost) in order to be healed. If we’re not convinced that we’re sick, we don’t really think we need to change – and we’re actually annoyed if not offended when someone recommends we do change. So we stay in our comfortable patterns.

When you know that you are broken and hurting and in need of healing… is there any more extravagant (albeit humbling) experience than to step into the gracious and capable hands of a doctor offering to heal you? Illus: Gerry Keen / Mt 11:28

**Are you weary and burdened?** Are you broken and a sinner?

**Jesus** makes it crystal clear that it does not matter who you are or what you’ve done or what you’re struggling with, he has come to offer you healing.

Child - blind / abused / suicidal / homeless / addiction / broken relationships / financial stress / loved ones struggling…We (our church/Tippecanoe county) are hurting

Jesus has come to heal the hurting. *(pray)*

**Prayer**

Hurting – comfort and protection

Hurting – would receive your invitation of healing

*Righteous* – soft hearts

I want to take another moment to reflect silently on two questions:

1. Are you sick and in need of healing or are you righteous and doing just fine? Think about this. Talk to God about this.
2. How might you respond this week to Jesus who invites you to follow Him and experience His healing? Think about this. Talk to God about this.