

BRIARCLIFF CHURCH

Small Group Study Guide: Mark

Week of September 23 (Week 6)

Mark 2:13-17



Sermon Overview

When Jesus says he is not for the “righteous”, does he mean that some people don’t need him? No, this is actually a slam to the self-righteous. The clue is his reference to himself as a physician. When do you go to a doctor? Only when you have a health problem which is getting beyond your control – only when you feel you can’t get better through self-management. What do you want from a doctor? Not just advice, but intervention. You don’t want a doctor to simply say, “Yes, you sure are sick!” You want some medicine or treatment.

Jesus calls people “righteous” who are in the same position spiritually as those who won’t go to a doctor. “Righteous” are people who believe they can “heal themselves”, make themselves right with God through following ethical teaching. They don’t feel the need for a soul-physician, someone who intervenes and does what they can’t do themselves. To them, Jesus may be an example or even an instructor, but he is not a Savior.

For those committed to self-righteousness, Jesus’ claims of salvation are viewed as unnecessary, or even insulting. Refusal to understand Jesus’ mission and authority results in continued conflict with those who refuse him, and deeper intrigue with those who pursue him.

Getting Started

[Listen to recent sermons](#)

[Visit Mark Resource Page](#)

1. Imagine if Nazi Germany or Imperial Japan had been successful in World War Two. What kind of thoughts would occupy your mind about the occupying forces? What would the loss of liberty in our country feel like? This is the situation we find in Mark 2:13-17. The Romans occupy the land once ruled exclusively by the Hebrews. Now, Levi (Matthew) collects taxes for the Romans from his countrymen. Why would Jesus select a person like this?

Starting with God

2. In Mark 2:13-17, what do the terms “sinner” and “righteous” mean as used in these verses? How is this unexpected and surprising? What is Jesus teaching here?
3. In Mark 2:13-17, how does Levi and his calling differ from the earlier disciples and their callings (see 1:16-17)? What similarity is there? What does that teach us about Jesus? About us?
4. Reread Mark 1:35-2:1-17. Make a list of things that you find surprising, and/or people in Jesus’ time would have found surprising.

Living God’s Word

5. Consider the types of people Jesus attracts and is attracted to in the first two chapters of Mark. For those who follow Jesus, is there a certain type of person we should look for to share the gospel, show compassion, or invite to our church? For those who have not made a commitment to follow Jesus, what kind of hope can be taken from this passage?

Prayer

*Father, God,
Thank you for your grace. Please free me from thinking I need to do or be something for you to love me. Guide me, also, to extend this kind of gospel-driven love and grace to others that they may surrender as well to your gracious healing and compassionate power.
Amen.*