

Who Jesus Is

Mark 2:1-13

Sunday 9/28/2008

My mom used to make some pretty wacky sandwiches. Cream cheese, water-cress and raisins. Nobody at school wanted to trade. She also made some great sandwiches. I could start salivating over her roast beef sandwiches. She would chop up fresh roast beef, into little chunks, mix them with some mayo and Grey Poupon Dijon mustard, lettuce tomatoes, good bread... The whole sandwich was good but the feature was the beef.

Today we have a passage that is arranged like a sandwich: two pieces of bread, lettuce and tomatoes, and beef on the inside. I see this arrangement as a literary device used to draw attention to the beef. The two pieces of bread are found in verses 1-2 and verse 13; the lettuce and tomatoes are verse 3-5 and 11-12; and the meet is verses 5-11.

We have been taking a look at who Jesus is and why He matters to us. If you are interested in what we have discovered so far I encourage you to get the CD's by calling the church office or print out the messages off our web site.

Let's put the whole sandwich on the table and then we'll take a closer look at each of the layers.

[Read Mark 2:1-13]

[Pray for the Holy Spirit help us understand the passage.]

The first thing this passage teaches about Jesus' identity is that...

Jesus Is The Teacher

Mark 2:1-2 & Mark 2:13 – The Bread

Note First that Jesus taught

Next Note what He taught

“the word”

What was Jesus speaking to them about? What has the content of His teaching? In John 1:1 we read, “In the beginning was the word (τον λογον...) and in verse 14 of that same passage we discover that Jesus Himself was the word. We see that “the word” that Mark has in mind is ultimately the truth of Jesus Himself, and can certainly be regarded here as

the message that Jesus wanted to communicate; and so far in Mark the extent of that message revealed is that “the time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God (KOG) is at hand” in His coming, therefore we should repent and believe in this gospel. (Mark 1:15) In Mark 4 we will encounter Jesus teaching a parable about the sower who went out to sow. When Jesus unpacks this parable for the disciples He shows that the seed sown in the parable stands for “the word” about the mysteries of the KOG. You can study Mark 4 if your interest takes you there. But we can let it be enough to understand **“the word” that Jesus was teaching was the truth God wanted people to know about Jesus and the KOG.**

How the Teacher’s Teachings Affect Us

If God sent Jesus as a teacher, what logically follows is that we should be Jesus’ students. If God sent Jesus as a teacher of “the word”, we should be Jesus’ students learning “the word.” This calls for us to develop the attitude of a learner – one that is proactive. Because of the importance of the teacher and what He has to teach us, we should be on the edge of our seats, leaning in with attention, taking responsibility for learning all that He wants to teach us.

Jesus is the teacher and we are His students. Yeah, yeah; blah, blah... so what? You may be feeling, “Frankly I don’t feel like I’ve learned anything worthwhile as of late. There is nothing new and exciting.” We grow weary. I grow weary. Does anything I learn or do matter or have any affect? Yes it does! Let me encourage you to continue learning from Jesus. Don’t fall into the trap of thinking the same old thing should be replaced by something new and exciting. Consider breathing. It is something you do over and over, and it gives you life. So too, learning from Jesus, day by day, gives you life. How cool it would be; no, how cool it **WILL be** when we are found doing what Jesus has called us to do.

You see He is coming back! (You may want to read Acts chapter 1 in regards to that.) There will be a time in your life when you stand before Jesus and He will either find you to be a good student knowing and obeying Him; or He will find you to be a poor student, having not valued His teaching, either not having taken the time to understand it or choosing not to obey it.

How sweet for those who are found doing what He has taught; and how bitter for those who have learned not.

Beloved, cry out: Teacher, teach me how to love my wife, my husband, my child, my parent. Cry out: Teacher, teach me how to follow You. Cry out: Teacher, I have made a mess out of my life, what am I to do now? Teacher, what do I do with my anger? Teacher, where can I find peace? Teacher, what do I do with all You have given me?

This life is hard. This life is confusing. This life is full of things we wish were different. Yet, this life is where God has allowed us to live, for a season. It is where Jesus has taught us how to live with meaning and purpose. This life will soon be over. What

will be it's epitaph? "Loved by God, He loved not?" Or "He loved like Jesus taught?"
May it be the latter for you and for me.

Who is Jesus? He is THE Teacher. He is THE Teacher of what God wants us to know of Himself and of His will for our lives. Will you move this truth of Jesus as THE Teacher from distant understanding to core value. May it grow from a fact you know, to a passion that drives you to run hard after God. May you become the life long student of Jesus who, when fully taught is like Him in every way. (Luke 6:40)

Jesus Is The Healer

Mark 2:3-5 – The Tomato

Jesus Ups the Significance of His Healing Ministry

From Fever to Paralytic

From Peter's mother-in-law's fever to paralysis. I'm sure the people in 1st century had seen fever's come and go and regarded them as we do in the 21st century: a normal part of life that can go away with out miraculous intervention. Where a fever was probably regarded as a common temporary sickness; being paralyzed, was much less common, and much more permanent and more severe. The skeptics were probably chuckling to themselves as this much tougher case was laid before Jesus. Just how good is this guy?

Faith's Noteworthy Role in Healing

Where there is healing there is **faith!** Here we can not miss the faith of the paralytic's friends. He could not walk; so they carried him to Jesus. They could not get through the crowd; so they dug through the roof. They did not want him separated from Jesus even by the distance from roof to floor, so they lowered him down right in front of Him (see Lk 5:18-26). I want friends like these!

How does one see faith? Invisible **faith manifests itself in visible action of those who possess it.** Mark had to note their faith, Jesus chose to respond to their faith. And, I find myself to pray, "Lord, increase My faith!"

Mark 2:11-12 – The Lettuce

Jesus' Commands Come with Power

"I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." Observe here that Jesus does not touch the paralytic, He does not apply medicine, He just commands him. Verse 12 reads, "And he got up and immediately picked up the pallet and went out in the sight of everyone..."

Jesus healed with the command to "rise" and all of a sudden that which was humanly impossible becomes a reality to be realized simply through the embrace of obedience.

I see the general principle here that **with Jesus' command comes Jesus' power to obey.**

Sidebar on Jesus Command & The Power to Obey: The paralytic did not hear the command of Jesus to arise and then dig down deep and muster the strength from within and call on his friends to help him get up. No! He simply arose using the strength which Jesus gave him along with His command. Here is the principle, write this one down: **What Jesus commands us to do He also empowers us to do.**

He empowers, but He does not force. We saw last week that the leper Jesus cleansed chose to disobey and further we saw the sad fact that this choice to disobey actually hindered the ministry of Jesus. We noted man's free will as both a blessing and a curse. We have it in us to turn a deaf ear to the One who has given us everything we have and actually work against Him and His mission.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, what has God commanded you to do? With His command comes His power. Exercise your free will by responding to Him in obedience! Husbands and wives "let no man separate" you! Disciples of Jesus, follow Him! Sinners, repent! Angry, do not sin in your anger! Shepherds, feed and tend the sheep! You who have been given much, give much in return!

Let's take it back to Jesus as the healer.

What We Do with the Fact that Jesus Can Heal

We come to Him when we are sick

Lord, you healed Simon's mother-in-law from her fever; you healed the paralytic; please heal me.

We go to great lengths to bring others to him believing that He can heal.

- Bring them to church that we may pray for them.
- Bring them to the Lord yourself through intercessory prayer.

What We Do when Jesus Does Not Heal?

It is true the Healer is not a genie in a bottle; He does not always heal everyone in every circumstance. What do we do if He does not heal?

We Persist in Prayer

In Luke 11, Jesus teaches on prayer, telling of a man who goes knocking on his neighbor's door late at night for some food to feed an unexpected friend and because he persists in knocking the neighbor comes and gives him what he wants. In verse 8 of Luke 11 Jesus says, **"I tell you, even though he will not get**

up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.”

Another example of Jesus desire for us to have persistence in prayer is found in Luke 18:1ff – Jesus was telling His disciples a parable to teach them that “at all times they ought to pray and not to loose heart.”...

We Let His Grace be Sufficient.

2 Cor 12:7ff -- Paul’s “thorn in the flesh” would not be removed even though Paul asked the Lord 3 times to do so. The word God gave Paul about His choosing not to heal him: “My grace is sufficient for you for power is perfected in weakness...” Paul was able to say in verse 10, “Therefore I am well content with weakness, with insults, with distress, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.”

Who is Jesus? He is THE Healer. You will never find a better healer. He has proven authority and effectiveness in the arena of divine healings. That is the lettuce and the tomato. But now let’s get to the beef. Jesus sees that this man is not only paralyzed by sickness or injury, but he is also and more importantly crippled by sin. Instead of treating just the physical presenting paralysis, He treats the deeper issue of the man’s sin.

Jesus Is The Forgiver

Mark 2:5-11 – The Beef

The Heart of the Passage – Jesus as Forgiver

Just as paralysis is a more significant physical problem than fever, sin is an even greater problem than paralysis. And just as Jesus has demonstrated His authority and ability to miraculously heal the physical body; now He comes up against the greatest problem man faces, the problem of our own sin. What is the big problem about sin? It separates us from God. Look again at Is 59:2. Sin is a personal betrayal of God. As adultery is in a marriage relationship, so sin is in our relationship with God.

Thankfully, Jesus is not stymied by our sin. In fact, in this passage we encounter Him as the forgiver of our sin. In verse 5 Jesus said, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” And here in verse 10 is the heart of the heart...

The Heart of the Heart

Verse 10: “But so that you may know...” This whole encounter with Jesus and the paralytic and the scribes is so that we may know something. What is it that Jesus wants us to know? It is “... that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...”

My sins, your sins. He can deal with them. He who can command healing with His words can likewise speak and bring about your forgiveness. On the cross

He paid the price sufficient to satisfy the debt of mankind's sins. In October of 1980 He in effect said to me, "Johnny, your sins are forgiven." He has said the same to most of you, for that is what He says when we come to Him in repentance and faith.

This pronouncement is not empty words. But with it comes the power to make it happen. Forgiveness is the sending away of the guilt of our sins. Just like Jesus has the authority to cast out demons, He has the authority to send away all guilt associated with your sins. By the authority of God Himself Jesus can forgive our sins.

What We Can Do with Jesus as The Forgiver

Receive His Forgiveness

The un-forgiven who need forgiveness

Those of who have never come to Jesus and in effect heard, "My child, your sins are forgiven" – Know this: Jesus stands waiting for you to come, repent, and believe in Him, trusting that He is the Son of God and the forgiver who can and who wants to forgive you of your sin. Will you come to Him as forgiver even today, even now?

The forgiven who need forgiveness again.

I wish it weren't so, but the forgiven still sin. God's word speaks to the forgiven in need of forgiveness again: 1 John 1:9 – "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." NASB

Are you this person. Today, even right now come to Him again as forgiver.

Bring Others to Receive His Forgiveness.

- Share this passage with them yourself
- Bring them to church where we can demonstrate Christ to them as we worship Him.

What NOT To Do with Jesus as the Forgiver

We must not continue in sin presuming He will forgive.

In Romans 5, Paul has just argued that "where sin increased grace abounded all the more." (5:20b NASB). Knowing that some would see the occasion of God's grace abounding as a result of sin as somehow a permission to sin – it will just produce God's grace any way..." – Paul quickly goes on to say in Romans 6, "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may

increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?" (Romans 6:1-2 NASB)

Paul concludes that section with: "...consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus." (Romans 6:11 NASB)

God is no dummy. He is not a powerful thug we can do a con job on. Even in this passage we see that our God knows our thoughts. He is not fooled by insincerity of repentance.

Galatians 6:7-8 – Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life."

Who is Jesus? He is THE Forgiver of our sins.

Who is Jesus: He is THE Teacher, THE Healer, THE Forgiver. He was not that only to those guys back then, but He is all that to us -- today, tomorrow and forever. Let's come to Him in each of these roles. Let's make Him our teacher, our healer, our forgiver. If we embrace Him as such that would make each of us a forgiven, healed, student of Jesus. That sounds like a good identity to me.

Let's pray!