

THE KINGDOM OF GOD THROUGH FORGIVENESS

Mark 2:1–17

Key Verse: 2:10

* From the outset of his ministry Jesus planted the kingdom of God in people's hearts (1:15). His ministry demonstrated the reality of the kingdom of God. In chapter 2 Jesus shows us one of the main characteristics of God's kingdom.

- Jesus proclaims forgiveness (1–12)
 1. When he returned to Capernaum, what did Jesus do first? (2:1–2) What obstacles did four men encounter in bringing a paralyzed man to Jesus, and how did they overcome them? What can we learn from them about working together? About faith?
 2. Read verse 5. What did Jesus recognize? (5a) In light of this, what does Jesus want from us? How did he bless their faith? (5b) According to Jesus, what was the man's real problem? How does sin affect us all? (Ro3:23; 5:6a) What does Jesus eagerly want to do for us?
 3. How were the teachers of the law offended? (6–7) In what sense were they right, and in what sense, wrong? How did Jesus demonstrate his authority to forgive sins? (8–12) Why does Jesus alone have authority on earth to forgive our sins? (Jn1:29; 1Jn1:9) How should we respond to this? (2:12; Jn5:24)
- Jesus calls and heals "sinners" (13–17)
 4. When Jesus taught a large crowd, where was Levi? (13–14) What initiative did Jesus take with him? In what sense did his words "Follow me" plant hope in Levi and help him repent? How does this illustrate Jesus' forgiveness? How could Levi walk away from everything so readily?
 5. How does the feast at Levi's house illustrate the nature of God's kingdom? (15) Why did the Pharisees react like this? (16) Read verse 17. How was Jesus' way of dealing with sinners different? In what sense is Jesus' forgiveness different from condoning sin? How does Jesus heal and transform those sick with sin?