

The Gospel of Mark, Teacher's Guide

Week 3: When Jesus Changes Everything

Mark 2:1–28

Teaching Aim (Teacher Orientation)

Mark 2 is one of the most theologically loaded chapters in the entire Gospel. In four rapid scenes (the paralytic, Levi's call, the fasting question, and the Sabbath grainfields), Mark shows that the arrival of Jesus changes everything. Forgiveness of sins is given by His own authority. The boundary that separated "insiders" from "sinners" is moved. The old religious system cannot contain the new covenant He is bringing. And the Sabbath, the most distinctive sign of the Old Covenant, finds its Lord standing in front of His people. The teacher's task this week is twofold. First, give students a confident, biblically grounded understanding of the major doctrinal issues this chapter raises: the deity of Christ, displayed in His authority to forgive sins; the mission of Jesus to call sinners, not the self-righteous; the relationship between the Old Covenant (with its sacrifices, fasts, and Sabbaths) and the New Covenant Jesus inaugurates; and the doctrine of the Lord's Day in contrast to Sabbath-keeping under the Law. These are not optional theological footnotes. They are the substance of why our worship looks the way it does and why we read the Old Testament the way we do. Second, keep pressing students past doctrinal information into actual transformation. Mark 2 shows that Jesus does not just teach about change; He changes things, sometimes the things people had built their whole lives around. Help students ask, with honesty, where Jesus is at work to change them right now, and whether they are cooperating with that work or quietly resisting it. The kind of student we are forming through this study is not just an informed church member, but a disciple who is being remade in the image of the Lord whose life and teaching we are studying.

Question 1

Student Question:

When the paralyzed man is lowered through the roof, Jesus' first words are not about the man's legs but about his sins (v. 5): "Son, your sins are forgiven." Why does Jesus address the deepest need first, and what does this teach us about how God views the human condition?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Everyone in the room expected Jesus to fix the man's legs. The four friends had gone to extraordinary lengths to put a paralyzed body in front of a healer. The crowd was waiting for a spectacle. The paralyzed man himself, no doubt, had played the moment in his mind a hundred times on the way to the house. Yet Jesus does not begin where everyone is looking. He begins with the deeper problem. "Son, your sins are forgiven."

This sentence reveals a foundational truth about the human condition. Beneath every visible problem we carry, there is a deeper problem we cannot see. Sin is what separates us from God (Isaiah 59:1–2), warps our desires (James 1:14–15), and earns the wages of death (Romans 6:23). A paralyzed body is a heavy burden. An unforgiven soul is a heavier one. Jesus, who sees the whole person, addresses the heavier burden first. The Bible consistently presents sin as humanity’s primary problem, and forgiveness as humanity’s primary need.

This does not mean Jesus is indifferent to physical suffering. He goes on to heal the man’s body, and throughout this chapter and the rest of the Gospel He continues to heal the sick, feed the hungry, and weep with the grieving. But Jesus refuses to let us settle for surface-level help when our soul is in danger. The order in this scene is intentional. The forgiveness of sins is the first work of the gospel, and every other work flows from it.

Help students see how this changes the way we pray, the way we evangelize, and the way we read our own lives. We are right to ask Jesus for healing, for relief, for breakthrough in the visible problems. But we must also learn to ask Him for the deeper things only He can give: a clean conscience, a forgiven past, a renewed mind, a soul at peace with God.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Sin as the deepest human problem (Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1–2)
- Forgiveness of sins as the central need addressed by Jesus’ ministry
- God’s view of the whole person, body and soul, with priority on the soul
- Physical blessing without spiritual reconciliation is incomplete

Discussion Prompts

- Why do we tend to ask God first for outward help and only later for inward healing?
- What does this scene teach about how we should pray for ourselves and others?
- How should the priority of forgiveness shape the way we share the gospel with people in crisis?

Question 2

Student Question:

The text says it was when Jesus “saw their faith” (the friends’ faith, v. 5) that He responded. Who in your life has carried you to Jesus through their faith, and who might God be asking you to carry now?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Mark draws our attention to a striking detail. It was not only the paralytic’s faith that mattered in this scene. Jesus “saw their faith,” the faith of the four friends who would not give up until they got their friend in front of Him. They carried him through the streets, climbed the outside

stairs to the roof, dug through clay and thatch (no small or quiet undertaking), and lowered him into the room. Their faith is the faith Jesus saw and responded to.

Every Christian sitting in this study has likely been carried to Jesus at some point. A grandmother who prayed for years. A friend who refused to give up after a string of bad decisions. A teacher who modeled a different way to live. A spouse whose quiet faithfulness slowly broke through. A church family that loved through a hard season. None of us came to Jesus alone, and very few of us continue with Him alone. Faith, in the Bible, is a remarkably communal thing.

Press students gently on the second half of the question. Most of us know who carried us. We are slower to ask whom we are carrying now. There are paralyzed friends, spiritually or otherwise, all around us. Some cannot pray for themselves. Some have stopped trying. Some are crushed by addiction, depression, doubt, or shame. The question is not whether they need to be carried; the question is whether we are willing to be the four friends.

This is not a passage about heroic religious effort. It is a passage about ordinary faith that simply refuses to give up. The friends did not have a strategy; they had a friend, a stretcher, and a stubborn confidence that Jesus would do something if they could just get him there. That is the kind of faith Jesus sees and responds to.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The reality and power of intercessory prayer and bringing others to Christ
- Faith expressed in concrete action (James 2:14–26)
- The communal nature of the Christian life and salvation
- God’s use of ordinary believers to bring others into the presence of Jesus

Discussion Prompts

- Name one or two specific people who carried you toward Jesus in some meaningful way.
- Who in your life cannot get to Jesus on their own right now? What is one practical way you can carry them this week?
- What “roof” might you have to dig through (awkwardness, fear, busyness, criticism) to get a friend in front of Jesus?

Question 3

Student Question:

The scribes accuse Jesus of blasphemy because, in their words, “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (v. 7). Their question is the right question. Why does this scene stand as one of the clearest declarations of Jesus’ deity in the Gospel of Mark, and how does Jesus’ response (vv. 8–12) confirm it?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

The scribes' theology is impeccable on one crucial point. They know that in the Old Testament, only God can forgive sins (Psalm 32:5; Isaiah 43:25; 44:22). A prophet could announce God's forgiveness. A priest could administer sacrifices that pointed toward forgiveness. But no human being could simply pronounce a person's sins forgiven. That is God's prerogative alone. So when Jesus says, "Son, your sins are forgiven," the scribes immediately reason in their hearts that this is blasphemy. Their question, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" is exactly the right question. What they fail to consider is the possibility that the One standing in front of them is, in fact, God.

Jesus does not back away from the implication of His words. He confronts it head on. First, He demonstrates that He knows their thoughts, something Scripture attributes to God (1 Kings 8:39; Psalm 139:1–4; Hebrews 4:13). Then He asks, "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'?" Both statements are equally impossible for a mere man. But to prove that He has authority on earth to forgive sins, He performs the visible miracle that anyone in the room can verify. The man stands up, picks up his mat, and walks out. The visible miracle is given as evidence for the invisible one.

This passage stands alongside John 1:1, John 8:58, John 10:30, Philippians 2:5–11, Colossians 1:15–20, and Hebrews 1:1–14 as one of the foundational texts demonstrating the deity of Jesus. He is not merely a great teacher, a moral example, or a Spirit-empowered prophet. He is God in the flesh, exercising divine prerogatives that the scribes correctly understood belonged only to God. Every Christian needs to grasp this confidently. The Jesus we worship is fully God, and His authority to forgive sins is grounded in His divine nature.

Pastorally, this also matters for how we receive forgiveness today. When sinners come to Christ in repentance and faith, are baptized into Him (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3–4), and walk in newness of life, the forgiveness Jesus offers is real and complete. It is given by the only One with authority to grant it. The paralyzed man did not need to wonder whether his sins were really forgiven. Jesus said it, and it was so. The same Lord makes the same promise today to all who come to Him on His terms.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The deity of Christ, displayed in His authority to forgive sins
- Christ's knowledge of human hearts, a divine prerogative (1 Kings 8:39; Hebrews 4:13)
- Connection between Jesus' deity and the assurance of forgiveness for believers
- Christ as fully God and fully man (the union of natures), foundational to the gospel

Discussion Prompts

- What other passages in Scripture would you point to in order to support the deity of Christ?
- Why is the deity of Jesus essential to the gospel? What is lost if Jesus is only a great human teacher?

- How does the certainty of Jesus' authority to forgive sins shape the way we live with our past?

Question 4

Student Question:

Jesus asks, "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your bed and walk'?" (v. 9). When you bring your own life to Jesus, do you tend to ask Him primarily for outward changes (the walking) or for the deeper changes only He can give (the forgiveness, the healed heart, the new identity)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Most of us are paralytic-shaped in our praying. We come to Jesus with a clear sense of what we want fixed on the outside. We want the job restored, the marriage repaired, the diagnosis reversed, the bank account refilled, the difficult person changed. These are legitimate prayers, and Jesus invites them. But Jesus also gently reorders our priorities. He knows that some of our most desperate outward requests come from a heart that has not yet asked for the deeper thing.

The transformational question this passage puts to us is this. If Jesus said, "Before I touch the visible problem, let Me first deal with what is in your heart," would we welcome that work or quietly stall it? Many believers are willing to pray for circumstances to change and unwilling to pray for the inner person to change. Yet the inner person is exactly what Jesus is most committed to changing.

Help students see that this is not a rebuke. It is an invitation. The same Jesus who healed the paralytic's legs also forgave his sins, and He still does both. The point is not to feel guilty for praying about outward needs. The point is to begin praying just as honestly about the inward ones. "Lord, change my circumstances if it pleases You. But more than that, change me."

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Prayer that addresses both visible needs and the deeper work of the soul
- God's primary commitment to inward transformation (Romans 12:1–2; 2 Corinthians 3:18)
- The right ordering of our requests, with priority on what is eternal

Discussion Prompts

- What "walking" kind of prayers tend to dominate your prayer life?
- What "forgiveness, healed heart, new identity" prayers might Jesus be inviting you into right now?
- What is one specific way you could begin asking Jesus for inward change this week?

Question 5

Student Question:

Jesus calls Levi the tax collector to follow Him and then sits down to eat at Levi's house with "many tax collectors and sinners" (vv. 13–15). When the scribes object, Jesus says, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners" (v. 17). What does this self-description of Jesus' mission teach us about who the gospel is for and how the church is to view those still outside of Christ?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Levi (also known as Matthew) was a tax collector, which in first-century Galilee meant he was considered a religious and social traitor. Tax collectors worked for the Roman occupation, often skimmed for personal profit, and were grouped in the popular imagination with prostitutes and other open sinners. They were not invited to good homes. They were not welcome in synagogues. Decent religious people would not be caught sharing a meal with them. And Jesus walks straight up to Levi, calls him to follow, and then sits down to eat in his house with a roomful of his old friends.

Jesus' explanation cuts through all the religious objections. "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick." He pictures Himself as a doctor, and sinners as patients. A doctor does not stay away from sick people. He goes to them. He moves into the sickroom. He gets close enough to do the work that needs to be done. The whole logic of medicine is the opposite of the logic of religious self-protection.

There is also a quiet rebuke in Jesus' words. He says, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." This does not mean some people are righteous and do not need Him. Romans 3:10–23 makes plain that "none is righteous, no, not one." It means Jesus did not come for people who imagine themselves already righteous and feel no need of Him. The scribes' problem is not that they are too holy for Jesus. It is that they are too self-satisfied to recognize their own sickness.

For the church, this verse is one of the great statements of evangelistic mission. The gospel is for sinners. The people who are most clearly far from God are not on the outside of the church's mission; they are the heart of it. A congregation that begins to feel uncomfortable around "sinners" has begun to lose touch with the Jesus it claims to follow. This does not mean we sanction sin or pretend it is not sin. Jesus called Levi to follow Him, which involved leaving the tax booth. But it does mean we move toward broken people with the same posture our Lord did, with mercy in our eyes and the gospel on our lips.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Jesus' mission to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10)
- The universal sinfulness of humanity (Romans 3:10–23) and the gospel for sinners
- Repentance as integral to following Christ (Levi leaves the tax booth)

- The danger of self-righteousness, which closes the heart to the gospel
- The church's call to imitate Christ's posture toward outsiders

Discussion Prompts

- Why is the gospel "for sinners" so easily forgotten in long-tenured congregations?
- How can a church be both welcoming to sinners and faithful to the truth that calls them to repentance?
- What is the difference between Jesus eating with sinners and Jesus condoning sin?

Question 6

Student Question:

Levi gets up from his tax booth and follows Jesus, abandoning a profitable career on the spot. He then opens his home and his table so his old friends can meet Jesus too. How does Levi's response challenge your own willingness to let Jesus disrupt your work, your finances, your friendships, and your home for the sake of the kingdom?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Levi's call is one of the most disruptive in the New Testament. A tax collector did not get his job back if he walked away from it on a whim. Roman bureaucracy did not work that way. Levi was, in effect, burning his career to the ground when he stood up from that table. He was also choosing a life of relative poverty after years of financial security. And he did it not after months of consideration, but in the moment of Jesus' call.

But Levi does something else that is often overlooked. He turns around and throws a dinner party. He invites his old crowd over to meet his new Lord. He uses his house, his table, and his network of relationships as the first ministry of his new life. He does not first move into a religious bubble. He goes back to the people he knew and brings them into proximity with Jesus.

This is one of the searching applications of this passage for modern disciples. Most of us will never be called to leave our job overnight. But all of us are called to put our work, our money, our home, and our friendships at Jesus' disposal. Where Jesus says, "Follow Me," we go. Where Jesus says, "Open your home," we open it. Where Jesus says, "Use what you have for the kingdom," we use it. The question is not whether your life will be disrupted by following Jesus. The question is whether you will let Him disrupt it well.

Pastorally, this is a quiet but powerful invitation. Many believers want a Jesus who fits neatly inside the life they have already built. Levi shows us a Jesus who calls people up out of their booths and into His mission. The good news is that Levi never seems to regret it. Tax booths are easy to leave when the one who is calling you is worth following.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The cost of discipleship (Luke 14:25–33)
- Stewardship of work, money, home, and relationships for the kingdom
- Hospitality as a primary tool of Christian mission (Romans 12:13; 1 Peter 4:9)
- Whole-life surrender as the proper response to Christ’s call

Discussion Prompts

- Where in your life are you most tempted to keep Jesus on the outside, separated from the practical realities of work, money, or home?
- What is one specific way you could put your home or your table at Jesus’ disposal this season?
- Who in your existing relationship network might be one Levi-style dinner party away from meeting Jesus?

Question 7

Student Question:

When asked about fasting, Jesus answers with two short parables: a new patch on an old garment, and new wine in old wineskins (vv. 18–22). What is Jesus actually claiming about Himself, and about the relationship between His new covenant and the old religious system, and why is this such an important doctrinal turning point?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

John’s disciples and the Pharisees both fasted regularly. Mark notes that some people asked Jesus why His disciples did not. Jesus answers with a wedding image. “Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.” He then gives the two parables of the patch and the wineskins. New cloth on an old garment will tear away when it shrinks. New wine in old wineskins will burst the skins. Something genuinely new is here, and the old containers cannot hold it.

These parables make an enormous theological claim. Jesus is not adjusting Judaism or reforming temple worship. He is bringing a new covenant that the old religious system was never designed to contain. The Mosaic Law, with its sacrifices, feasts, ritual purity rules, and Sabbaths, was, as Hebrews 10:1 says, “a shadow of the good things to come.” The shadow served its purpose. But shadows are not substance. The substance is Christ Himself (Colossians 2:17).

This is one of the great doctrinal turning points in the Gospel. Jesus is openly declaring that His arrival inaugurates a new era. The old wineskins (the practices, structures, and even the religious habits of Old Covenant Judaism) cannot simply be patched and adjusted to fit what He is bringing. A genuinely new arrangement is being introduced, the new covenant Jeremiah prophesied (Jeremiah 31:31–34) and Jesus would establish in His blood (Luke 22:20).

Several pastoral implications follow. First, we read the Old Testament as Christians, not as people still trying to live under the Old Law. We honor it as the inspired word of God and as the soil in which Christ is the harvest, but we do not bind on Christians what God has not bound (Hebrews 8:6–13; Galatians 3:23–25). Second, we recognize that genuine spiritual life cannot be sustained by warmed-over forms when the substance has changed. Faithful churches do not simply tinker with old religious habits; we ground every practice in the New Covenant Jesus established and the apostolic teaching He sent through the Spirit. Third, this protects us from two common errors: returning to the bondage of Old Covenant regulation, and treating Christianity as just another expression of generic religiosity. Jesus is bringing something new, and only the new wineskin can hold it.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- The New Covenant inaugurated by Christ (Jeremiah 31:31–34; Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8–10)
- Discontinuity between the Old Law and the New Covenant in form and practice
- Continuity in God’s redemptive plan, with Christ as fulfillment of the Old (Matthew 5:17)
- Danger of binding what God has not bound, and of mixing Old and New Covenant practices
- Christianity as a fundamentally new arrangement, not a reformed Judaism

Discussion Prompts

- What are some “old wineskins” that Christians today sometimes try to use to hold New Covenant life?
- How do we honor the Old Testament without binding ourselves to the Old Law?
- Why is it important for Christians to read the New Testament as the pattern for the church’s practice?

Question 8

Student Question:

The disciples of John and the Pharisees were both fasting, and people noticed that Jesus’ disciples were not. Where in your own walk are you tempted to measure your spiritual life by religious activities you can see and count, rather than by the deep, unhurried joy of being with Jesus (the “bridegroom” moment of v. 19)?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

There is a particular kind of spiritual exhaustion that comes from measuring our walk with God by visible activities. We track our church attendance, our quiet times, our giving records, our service hours, our scripture-reading streaks. None of these things is wrong; many of them are wonderful. But they can quietly take over as the gauges of our spiritual health, while the deeper reality (genuine communion with the living God) is neglected.

Jesus does not condemn fasting in this passage. He simply notes that, with the bridegroom present, this is not the moment for it. There is a season of joy, of feasting, of being unhurriedly with Him. That is what He has come to bring. The Pharisees had become so committed to measuring spirituality by religious counters that they could not recognize the bridegroom in front of them.

Press students to be honest here. Most longtime Christians can sustain religious activity on autopilot. The deeper question is whether we know the bridegroom's presence. Are we feasting at the table He spreads, or just maintaining a religious schedule? Is the joy of belonging to Christ still the engine of our walk, or has it been replaced by the weariness of trying to keep up?

Help students see that this is not a call to do less. It is a call to make sure the doing flows from a heart that is genuinely with Jesus. Religious activity disconnected from the bridegroom's presence will eventually become a burden, no matter how impressive it looks.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Relationship with Christ as the foundation of all genuine spiritual practice
- The danger of religious formalism without inner communion (Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 15:7–9)
- Joy as a mark of genuine faith (Galatians 5:22; Philippians 4:4)

Discussion Prompts

- Which religious “counters” are most tempting for you to use as the measure of your walk?
- When did you last feel the joy of simply being with Jesus (the “bridegroom” moment)?
- What habits help you stay in the bridegroom's presence rather than just maintaining religious activity?

Question 9

Student Question:

When Jesus' disciples pluck heads of grain on the Sabbath, He defends them by referring to King David eating the showbread (vv. 23–26), then declares, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath” (vv. 27–28). What does Jesus mean by these two statements, and what do they teach us about the relationship between the Old Law (including the Sabbath) and Christian worship today?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

This is the most important doctrinal passage in Mark 2 for the church today, and one where careful teaching is essential. The Pharisees had built up an elaborate system of regulations around the Sabbath, going far beyond what God had commanded in the Law. Plucking grain to eat as you walked through a field was classified as a kind of harvesting and therefore considered forbidden Sabbath work. Jesus defends His disciples by appealing to 1 Samuel 21, where David,

on the run from Saul, ate the consecrated showbread that was technically reserved for the priests. The point is not that human need can casually override God's law. The point is that the Pharisees had so distorted the Sabbath that it had become an instrument of human bondage rather than a gift of God's grace.

Jesus then makes two stunning declarations. First, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (v. 27). The Sabbath was given as a blessing to humanity, a gift of rest and worship, not a burden weighed down with human regulations. Second, and even more important, "The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath" (v. 28). The One who gave the Sabbath through Moses is the One standing in front of them. Jesus is claiming sovereign authority over the most sacred institution of the Old Covenant.

For Christians today, this passage raises a question that calls for careful biblical answers. How does the Sabbath relate to us under the New Covenant? Several biblical truths come together. (1) The Sabbath was given as a covenant sign specifically between God and Israel (Exodus 31:13–17). There is no biblical record of God commanding Sabbath observance before Sinai, and the New Testament nowhere imposes Sabbath observance on the church. (2) The Old Law, including the Sabbath command, was set aside in Christ. Paul writes, "Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ" (Colossians 2:16–17). Christ nailed the certificate of debt to the cross (Colossians 2:14). (3) The New Testament shows the church gathering on the first day of the week, not the Sabbath, in honor of the resurrection. Acts 20:7 describes the church at Troas gathering "on the first day of the week" to break bread. 1 Corinthians 16:2 directs collections "on the first day of every week." Revelation 1:10 calls the first day "the Lord's Day." (4) The principle behind the Sabbath, namely rest and worship as gifts from God, continues in the Christian life, but it is fulfilled in Christ, not enforced as a day-bound regulation. Hebrews 4:9–10 says that there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, and that whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works. That rest is found in Christ.

For practical teaching today, several conclusions follow. We do not observe the Sabbath as Old Testament Israel did. We are not bound by the dietary laws, the festivals, the new moons, or the Sabbath as religious obligation under the Law. At the same time, we are not lawless. We honor the Lord's Day (Sunday, the first day of the week) by gathering with the saints, breaking bread together at the Lord's table, hearing the Word preached, singing praises, and giving as God has prospered us. The Lord's Day is not a "Christian Sabbath" in the sense of being bound by Sabbath regulations transferred from one day to another. It is the day chosen and honored by the apostles, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as the day of Christian assembly in the New Covenant. To willfully forsake that assembly (Hebrews 10:24–25) is to dishonor the Lord whose resurrection we celebrate week by week.

This passage also reveals something profound about Jesus' relationship to the Law. He is not abolishing God's word; He is fulfilling it (Matthew 5:17). He is the substance of which the

Sabbath was a shadow. He is the rest God always intended His people to enjoy. To find rest in Jesus is to enter into what the Sabbath was always pointing toward.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Sabbath as a sign of the Old Covenant given specifically to Israel (Exodus 31:13–17)
- The Old Law, including Sabbath observance, fulfilled and set aside in Christ (Colossians 2:14–17; Hebrews 8:6–13)
- The first day of the week as the day of Christian assembly (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Revelation 1:10)
- The Lord’s Day is not a “Christian Sabbath” under Old Covenant rules; it is the New Covenant pattern
- The deity of Christ implied by His claim to be Lord of the Sabbath
- Christ Himself as the substance and rest the Sabbath foreshadowed (Hebrews 4:9–10; Matthew 11:28–30)
- The continuing call to assemble (Hebrews 10:24–25) on the Lord’s Day

Discussion Prompts

- How would you explain to a friend the difference between Sabbath observance under the Law and the Lord’s Day in the New Covenant?
- Why is it important to ground our worship pattern in the New Testament rather than in Old Testament Sabbath regulations?
- How does Christ as our “rest” shape the way we approach Sunday worship and the rhythm of the week?

Question 10

Student Question:

All four scenes in Mark 2 show Jesus changing things, sometimes things people had built their whole lives around. As we close this chapter, where do you sense Jesus most actively at work in your life right now to change something He wants different? Are you cooperating with that work, or quietly resisting it?

Commentary and Teaching Notes

Step back and look at the chapter as a whole. In one short series of scenes, Jesus changes how forgiveness works (it comes by His authority, not through the priestly system as previously practiced). He changes who is welcome at the table (the people religious society had given up on). He changes the religious calendar (the old patterns cannot contain what He is bringing). And He changes the Sabbath itself (its Lord is now in their midst). The cumulative weight of the chapter is that Jesus does not arrive to confirm what we already believed about ourselves and our religion. He arrives to change us.

The closing question is intentionally personal and direct. Each student needs to leave this lesson with a name on the change Jesus is working in them, not just a general willingness to be changed in some unspecified way. Maybe it is a specific sin Jesus is calling them to lay down. Maybe it is a relationship He is asking them to mend. Maybe it is a generosity He is calling out. Maybe it is a fear, a resentment, a habit, a way of thinking about themselves that He is patiently dismantling. The Spirit usually does not work in vague abstractions. He works in specifics.

And then the second half of the question matters even more. Are we cooperating, or quietly resisting? Resistance is rarely loud. It looks like delay, distraction, excuse-making, and the slow choice to keep the conversation theoretical rather than personal. Cooperation looks like honesty, prayer, confession, accountability, and concrete steps of obedience.

Close this lesson by inviting students to name one area of change to one trusted person (a spouse, a class member, a small group, a friend) this week. Do not let the chapter end as an interesting study of someone else's transformation. Let it land where Mark intended, as the start of yours.

Doctrinal / Christian Living Issues

- Sanctification as the ongoing transformation of believers into Christ's likeness (2 Corinthians 3:18; Romans 8:29)
- The personal, specific nature of the Spirit's work in each disciple
- Cooperation with the Spirit through obedience, confession, and accountability (Philippians 2:12–13)
- The danger of receiving God's word and not doing it (James 1:22)

Discussion Prompts

- What specific area of change has the Lord been pressing on you during this study?
- What does cooperation with that change look like in practical terms this week?
- Is there a trusted brother or sister you can name that area to and ask to walk with you in it?