

## **A Controversy over forgiveness. Mark 2:1-12.**

- ❖ When Jesus returned to Peter's house in Capernaum, many people came to listen to him (Mark 2:1-2). Jesus' speech was interrupted by a paralyzed man being lowered from the ceiling, and everyone remained silent, waiting to see what Jesus would do (Mark 2:3-4).
- ❖ Jesus healed the root of their illness (Mark 2:5). Forgiveness gave peace to his soul.
- ❖ To the scribes, this was blasphemy (true, if Jesus were not God). To demonstrate that he had the power to forgive, Jesus healed the paralytic (Mark 2:8-11).
- ❖ The people praised God for giving Jesus the power to forgive sins (Mark 2:12; Mt. 9:8). The paralytic walked; but the scribes were left blind, unable to see that Jesus could read their minds, forgive the sinner, and grant him healing.

## **B Food controversy. Mark 2:13-22.**

- ❖ Jesus ate in the house of the publican Levi, and surrounded himself with many like him (Mark 2:13-15). The critics did not waste the opportunity (Mark 2:16).
- ❖ Jesus refuted them logically: where better than here will I find sinners to save? (Mark 2:17). Additionally, he challenged them to examine their own feelings. They had to learn to love (Mt. 9:12-13).
- ❖ Far from learning to love, the Pharisees incited John's disciples to join in their criticism (Mark 2:18).
- ❖ Jesus' response came in the form of parables:
  - The parable of the wedding (Mark 2:19-20). How can someone fast while at a wedding? The bridegroom is Jesus; the guests the disciples. When Jesus died and was resurrected, then his disciples would need to fast.
  - The parable of the new and the old (Mark 2:21-22). The living teachings of Jesus had no place in the dead teachings of tradition; and vice versa.

## **C Controversy over the Sabbath. Mark 2:23-3:6.**

- ❖ By taking the grain and removing its husk to eat it, the disciples performed three forbidden works on the Sabbath: harvesting; thresh; and winnow. (Mk. 2:23-24; Mt. 12:1-2).
  - Jesus' Response: Don't you remember that David, when he was hungry, ate the shewbread, which only the priests could eat? (Mark 2:25-26).
- ❖ Later, Jesus performed a "work" not included among the 39, but which was also considered a transgression of the Sabbath: healing (Mark 3:1-3).
  - Jesus' response: "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good, or to do evil; save a life, or kill?" (Mark 3:4).
- ❖ Ultimately, Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, and he gave it to us for our good (Mark 2:27-28).
- ❖ Curiously, the zealous Sabbath keepers plotted a murder (Mark 3:6).

## **D Controversial questions about Jesus:**

### ❖ **With what power does he work miracles? Mark 3:22-30.**

- Mark begins a story about Jesus' family, but interrupts it to narrate a controversy with the Pharisees. Later, he will return to the first story. This pattern is used by Marcos on several occasions to join two similar stories, highlighting the central one as the most important.
  - (1) Mark 3:20-21. Jesus' family is looking for him.
  - (2) Mark 3:22-30. Accusation of the Pharisees.
  - (3) Mark 3:31-35. Jesus' family is looking for him.
- In this case, the important story is the scribes' accusation as to what power it was that allowed Jesus to cast out demons (Mark 3:22).
- Again, Jesus uses a parable to demonstrate the absurdity of the accusations against him (Mark 3:23-27). Jesus enters the house of the strong man (Satan), binds him, and thus can plunder his property (free the demon possessed).
- It also takes the opportunity to warn of the danger of attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to the devil (Mark 3:28-30).

### ❖ **Is Jesus crazy? Mark 3:20-21, 31-35.**

- What made Jesus' family think that he had gone crazy (Mark 3:20-21)?
- After a brief parenthesis, Mark resumes the story, introducing the relatives who were looking for Jesus: his mother and his brothers (Mark 3:31).
- What a lack of consideration for his family on the part of Jesus! (Mark 3:32-33). But appearances are deceiving. His mother and brothers were wrong. Leaving his work to attend to them at that moment was detrimental to his mission and to themselves.
- More important than carnal ties are the ties that unite Jesus with his spiritual family (Mark 3:35).