

How big of a deal is your sin to you?

In what ways does your perspective of your sin reflect God's view of it?

Reflect on those you tend to minimize, ignore, or justify.

If you were able to choose, would you rather be healed physically of a life-altering ailment or illness, or forgiven your sins? Why?

By also healing the paralytic's legs and inviting him to get up and walk, Jesus confirmed his ability to heal his spiritual brokenness. As we follow Jesus's ministry, notice how often he connects the outward appearance with the inward reality.

As he pronounced healing for the paralyzed man, Jesus referred to himself in a new way: "but that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins . . ." (2:10). This title would have been known by the religious leaders as a reference to Daniel's visions, an apocalyptic image denoting *divine power*. He was not hiding his identity from the educated leadership. They knew what he was saying, and it enraged them.

What did Jesus's declaration mean for the Pharisees?

We often forget that Jesus the gentle rabbi is also the Son of Man riding on the clouds in judgment. **How do you reconcile these two characteristics of our savior?**

How does understanding Jesus as the coming king inform your perception of him and your relationship with him?

[Note: For further background on the Son of Man, see Go Deeper Section 2 at the end of the session.]

Read Mark 2:13–17.

Here, Mark fast-forwards the next scene to the moment where Jesus called Levi, the disciple we know as Matthew—the author of the first gospel.

What does Levi do when Jesus tells him, “Follow me”?

Reflect on your own history with Jesus. When you first believed, how quickly did you turn from your sin to follow Jesus’s ways?

Jesus then goes to Levi’s house and has a meal with many “tax collectors and sinners.” Now, the Pharisees were really upset. These religious leaders threw a fit at the thought that this healer/teacher would dine with sinners. But they’d forgotten the lesson already—Jesus came to deal with that sin. Like the

importance of the Sabbath celebration (9:14). During the intertestamental period, several hundred years before Jesus, religious leaders attempted to legislate how one must observe the Sabbath

The Sabbath regulations, as interpreted by the Pharisees, lost the intent of the Sabbath prescribed in the Old Testament. Therefore, the rules they observed were human made, not God made, and able to be broken.

The Sabbath proclaimed at creation was intended to serve mankind as a holy day, giving blessing, and observing God's rest and restoration. Nothing of Jesus's or his disciples' actions in Mark 2 and 3 were contrary to the purpose and intent of the Sabbath observance. As such, Jesus was not rewriting the law, but fulfilling and clarifying the original law.

Do you observe a Sabbath—an intentional time of rest? What does it look like?

How do Sabbath rests influence your spiritual life? Your physical and emotional health?

Write down a list of steps you can take to implement a regular Sabbath.
