

the gospel Jesus' **good news** for all

noun | Greek εὐαγγέλιον (euangelion)

Mark 1¹ The beginning of the **good news** about Jesus the Messiah,^{1a} the Son of God ...

So ... what is the good news??

Mark 1:14-20 - When we repent from living as if the Kingdom of God is far away, He comes near!

Mark 1:21-30 - Jesus heals

Mark 1:32-39 - Like Jesus, we can have an intimate relationship with God. But we have to make space for it.

Mark 1:40-45 - Jesus loved outcasts and pursued justice on their behalf even at great personal cost.

Mark 2:1-12 - Jesus forgives sin and restores our relationship & standing with the Father. He restores completely.

13 Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. 14 As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.

15 While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. 16 When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

17 On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Mark 2:13-17

Tax Collectors

- Disqualified as judge or witness in court; Expelled from synagogue; Disgrace to family.
- The touch of a tax collector rendered a house unclean.
- Jews couldn't even receive money alms from a tax collector.
- Exception to rule in Jewish law about lying: you could lie to a tax collector.
- Tangible reminders of Roman domination.
- Worse than a leper.

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Pharisees

- Criticized Jesus because he failed to observe distinction between "righteous" and sinner."
- As a teacher of the law, it was inappropriate for Jesus to dine with such men.
- Pharisees maintained an exclusive fellowship in order to avoid ritual impurity from contact with others.
- They considered it disgraceful for a teacher of the Law to dine with someone unversed in the Law.
- Jesus' disregard of this time-honored tradition offended them.

Dining

- In Scripture, the essence of fellowship.
- In our culture today, eating is very different.
- In biblical times, dining was an intimate act.
- It's a sign of acceptance and belonging.
- Sharing a meal was the chief symbol of fellowship.

The Problem with the Pharisees...

- Their religious zeal didn't help anyone enter relationship with God.
- Pharisees defined who could have access to God.
- Jesus became the bridge that allowed people, despite their condition, to encounter God.
- Pharisees' hearts were closed - very limited understanding of who/what was acceptable to God.

The Good News...

- Means that Jesus is after people like the tax collectors and sinners.
- Means that Jesus saw it as his responsibility to fellowship with outcasts.
- Means that people like Levi can have access to God because of their open hearts.
- Means that sinners stand closer to God than those who think themselves righteous.

tax collector /
sinner

Pharisee

respond to His call to follow

say "yes" in faith

trust Him to make you whole

repent and be open

reach out to outcasts

*commit to being in relationship
with those that are different*

Is My Heart Open or Closed to God?