

**March 25**

**Scriptures:** Read Mark 2

**Key Verse:** “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.” (Mark 2:17)

## **Overview**

In this chapter, Jesus really does and says some radical things. First of all, He heals a paralytic, which in itself is outstanding, but precedes the healing by saying to this fellow who has dropped in from the roof, “Son, your sins are forgiven”. It’s no wonder the teachers of the Law were upset. Nobody has the right to forgive sins but God alone, and I think we would all agree with their comment. But the fact is that Jesus was someone unlike anyone else in history. He then goes on from this outstanding event to say that the ones who qualify for this kind of salvation He is freely giving out are not the religious, nor the healthy, nor the righteous people, but those who are sick—the sinners.

This, of course, goes against the grain of current religious thought. The idea, then as now, in the rabbinic tradition, was that a man obtained righteousness through good works. But Jesus contradicts tradition and says the ones who are really diseased are those qualifying for salvation. Then He takes some shots at two aspects of piety that spring out of the current view of righteousness. He first of all says that fasting is not necessarily a factor in pleasing God. He, in effect, was saying, “Look, I represent a whole new age, a new kingdom, a new message. And in that context new wineskins are necessary for new wine. There’s a whole new horizon to be explored. The same applies to Sabbath observance, a very important and holy aspect of Jewish life. But Jesus, seeing the Sabbath becoming bondage, says the Sabbath was made for man not man for the Sabbath. In other words, if the Sabbath does not benefit us, there’s no way we are going to benefit it. So He focuses in again on God’s commitment to the healthiness, or holiness, of man and his need for rest and recreation. Jesus is a Healer who saves, a Savior who heals, and a Free Spirit of the highest order.

## **Prayer**

Thank You, Lord, that You have the right to forgive sins which You exercised with the paralytic in this reading, even before You healed him. May we be like the four men and bring our loved ones to you, Lord Jesus.