

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF ACCUSATIONS

Text: Mark 2:1-3:6

Key Word: Accusations

Key Thought: How to Break the Cycle of Accusations

Have you ever been shocked by someone who accuses you of doing something wrong when your intent has been to do well? If so, I 'm sure you can relate with this portion of Scripture that records a number of accusations leveled against Jesus. In all cases, His intent was to bring help and healing to those in need. He was viciously attacked by those who had a narrow mind and a bitter heart.

We will all have to face this problem in life. The important part of the test is how we respond through it. Jesus has offered us a wonderful insight into overcoming this problem. Mark records these five incidents (**amazing grace**) not in chronological order but rather compiles them together due to their common element of covert challenges.

I. AN INTENSE LOOKING (Mark 2:5,12b,16; 3:2,5a)

II. AN IMPARTIAL LOVING (Mark 2:7; 3:4)

III. AN IMMEDIATE LIVING (Mark 2:12a; 3:5b)

I. AN INTENSE LOOKING (Mark 2:5,12b,16; 3:2,5a)

A. Healing of the Paralytic (Mark 2:1-12)

The first story in this text is about a man who could not walk on his own. Four of his friends carried him to the house in Capernaum (a number of writers identify two of them as Peter/Andrew) where Jesus was staying. Jesus INTENSELY LOOKED at the situation and made the correct decision.

*“When Jesus **saw their faith**, he said to the paralytic, **‘Son, your sins are forgiven.’**”*

Mark 2:5

I believe that Jesus made this comment to expose the hearts of the Pharisees and the scribal interpreters of their traditional law. They pronounced that He was a blasphemer (Mark 2:6). Those who should have led in a celebration of praise and thanksgiving and been overjoyed instead allowed a root of bitterness to well up within them. Jesus made sure that they were forced to see the results of the gracious hand of God at work.

I. AN INTENSE LOOKING (Mark 2:5,12b,16; 3:2,5a) (Contd.)

A. Healing of the Paralytic (Mark 2:1-12) (Contd.)

“He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, ‘We have never seen anything like this!’”

Mark 2:12

B. Healing of the Man with a Shriveled Hand (Mark 3:1-6)

Skipping over three other conflicts, we come to this story of the Jesus healing the man’s hand. Like the previous incident (Mark 2:23-27), this healing took place on the Jewish Sabbath. The ancient writer Jerome offered a possible insight into the background of this man as recorded in the Gospel used by the Nazarenes and Ebionites.

"Lord, I am a bricklayer, and have got my living by my labour (manibus victum quaeritans); I beseech thee, O Jesus, restore me the use of my hand, that I may not be obliged to beg my bread."

Jerome

“Commentary on Matthew 12:13”

Instead of looking at the man with a need, these religious zealots looked with an eye of accusation.

*“Some of them were **looking** for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they **watched** him closely **to see** if he would heal him on the Sabbath.”*

Mark 3:2

If we ever expect to break the cycle of constant accusations, we must never stop having the heart of a caring God to those who are suffering around us. The Pharisees were so captivated by their legalistic boundaries that they found reason to even “**DESTROY**” Jesus.

What Jesus is still telling us is that He wants us to change our focus. He wants us to see people through His eyes.

*“Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand,
‘Stand up in front of everyone.’”*

Mark 3:3

Every eye in the place was upon the man who needed to be healed. **God help us to get refocused in our self-centered world to that upon the needs of others**

I. AN INTENSE LOOKING (Mark 2:5,12b,16; 3:2,5a) (Contd.)

C. Healing the Woman who was Bent over for 18 years (Luke 13:10-17)

When Jesus healed the woman on the Sabbath who had been bent over for 18 years they accused her and Jesus of breaking the Law.

“There are six days for work. So come and be healed on these days, not on the Sabbath.”

Luke 13:14

It is so easy to lose sight of the heart of God when we become bound to the traditions of men. We need the eyes and the heart of the Father in order to set people free. God help us if either oral or written traditions of our forefathers hinder us from seeing the pain in the lives of those who need to be set free.

*** There is a story of a black bear that entered a town in Manitoba and walked through the streets looking for something to eat. The weather that year had caused the normal berry crop to be less productive.

This particular bear made his way into a fancy restaurant through a swinging door. He walked passed the frightened patrons and entered the kitchen. The cooking staff stood by helpless, wondering what they should do. The bear went passed all the meals that were being prepared. He was not tempted by the scrumptious deserts. Instead he went directly to the garbage. He rooted through it until he found enough scraps to fill his growling stomach. Once filled with garbage, he made his way back through the restaurant, passed the patrons and onto the street where he reentered the forested area. ***

II. AN IMPARTIAL LOVING (Mark 2:7; 3:4)

“The whole history of civilization is strewn with creeds and institutions which were invaluable at first, and deadly afterwards.”

Walter Bagehot
“In 12,000 Religious Quotations”
p. 364

A. Healing of the Paralytic (Mark 2:1-12)

When Jesus chose to heal the paralytic man, He entered into a battleground. The Jews believed that this kind of sickness came about as a result of a man’s sinful action. In fact, most sicknesses were considered as a punishment for sin. Jesus was therefore seen as interfering with the judgement of God.

*“When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, ‘**Son**, your sins are forgiven.’”*

Mark 2:7

Once again we find the heart of Jesus reaching out. We move from an **INTENSE LOOKING** to an **IMPARTIAL (fair or just) LOVING**. God never chose whom He loved - He loved us all - all the world - without exceptions. In this case, Jesus used a very important word to describe this paralytic man - **SON**. There was no hint of judgement of his bitter past. If sin was involved, it was forgiven. The proof of the forgiveness was in the fact of the healing.

It is not because of the anyone’s place in society or the size of their bank account that God chooses to heal us. It is just like we continue to witness in our time of history that cancer knows no boundary. It attacks the rich and the poor; male or female; black or white, young or old.

“Look to your health; and if you have it, praise God, and value it next to a good conscience; for health is the second blessing that we mortals are capable of; a blessing that money cannot buy.”

Izaak Wheeler Wilcox
“Speech”
Rand McNally & Co.
In 12,000 Religious Quotations p. 212

Lets once again compare what the stories of the paralytic man with the one with a shriveled hand but this time from this Impartial Love perspective.

II. AN IMPARTIAL LOVING (Mark 2:7; 3:4) (Contd.)

B. Healing of the Man with a Shriveled Hand (Mark 3:4) (Contd.)

“Then Jesus asked them, ‘Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?’ But they remained silent.”

Mark 3:4

The Jews also believed that a person was not to be healed on the Sabbath unless their life depended upon it - which was not the case here. The Jews seemed to believe that Jesus **COULD** heal - the question was, **WOULD** He heal on the Sabbath?

Our Lord still reaches out to the Mary Magdalenes, lepers, blind, deaf, poor and the helpless. The Herods’ of our day find no greater position in the Great Physician’s healing ward.

III. AN IMMEDIATE LIVING (Mark 2:12a; 3:5b)

In spite of the cycle of accusations, Jesus performed these miracles.

*“Do not repay anyone evil for evil . . .
21. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil
with good.”*

Romans 12:17, 21

One of the beautiful effects of the healing touch of Jesus is that of IMMEDIATE LIVING. Their lives were then able to be lived in its fullest. They were able to live a life of more abundance. Both the paralytic and the man with the withered hand were able to do what they couldn’t do just moments before.

1. Paralytic - *“got up, took his mat and walked . . .”*

2. Withered Hand - *“He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored.”*

What a way to overcome the problems of life. Instead of retaliating when someone tries to instigate a quarrel, we need to reach out and bring healing to those who need it the most. When we focus on helping others, we won’t give ourselves time to become involved with petty arguments that only foster division and strife.

May God grant us His grace so we may reach out and touch a hurting world with His tender care. We can quench many fiery darts of the enemy by becoming ambassadors of God’s abundant mercy and outstretching love in spite of being accused by religious fanatics.

III. AN IMMEDIATE LIVING (Mark 2:12a; 3:5b)

“Being enabled to overcome evil to which he was enslaved, and to delight in duties of which he was incapable, he will manifest to others that he is pardoned and justified in Christ Jesus. Whatever proud Pharisees and scribes may say, with their lips and with their hearts, against such instances of the Redeemer’s power and grace, the happy change often is so evident that it cannot be gainsaid (denied, contradicted).”

Matthew Henry
“Commentary on the Holy Bible”
Vol. 3, p. 158

Why should we think that God’s hand cannot bring immediate healing in spite of those who cannot understand its purpose and the way God works in the midst of us? None of these three individuals were being judged by God for some past sin. Jesus stood against the accusations of the Teachers of the Law and the Pharisees. These same leaders

There are times when God will ask us to stretch forth in our faith of God in order to bring about an immediate healing in the life of another. The proof will be so clear that no sceptic or scholar will be able to deny it. God continues to prove that He is the LORD of the every day including the Sabbath. His changes are often immediate and long-lasting.

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Date: Aug 11/24

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: HEALER (I believe You’re my Healer) - G

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Mark 2:5; Mark 2:6; Mark 2:12

B. Healing of the Man with a Shriveled Hand (Mark 3:1-6)

Mark 2:23-27; Mark 3:2; Mark 3:3

C. Healing the Woman who was Bent over for 18 years (Luke 13:10-17)

Luke 13:14

II. AN IMPARTIAL LOVING (Mark 2:7; 3:4)

A. Healing of the Paralytic (Mark 2:1-12)

Mark 2:7

B. Healing of the Man with a Shriveled Hand (Mark 3:4)

Mark 3:4

III. AN IMMEDIATE LIVING (Mark 2:12a; 3:5b)

Romans 12:17, 21

1. **Paralytic** - “got up, took his mat and walked . . .”

2. **Withered Hand** - “He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored.”