

THE GREAT PHYSICIAN

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Mark 2:13-17

1. Jesus is the Great Physician.

- a. He came seeking those who are sin sick—Jesus still makes house calls.
- b. He fully understands the problem, and His diagnosis is accurate.
- c. His bedside manner is excellent—He is able to communicate to us the facts related to our illness.

(1) Our illness is terminal. “The wages of sin is death.” Romans 6:23

(2) The consequences are eternal. “It is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.” Hebrews 9:27

(3) There is a cure that is always successful. “For whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13

(4) His services are provided free to all who repent and believe. “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

2. The Great Physician cannot help those who refuse to accept the fact that they are sin sick and in need of His services.

3. We will examine this passage under three headings; Matthew, the Pharisees, and Jesus.

I. Matthew.

A. Both Mark and Luke refer to him as Levi, so it is possible that Jesus changed his name to Matthew which means, “Gift of Jehovah.”

B. He was a Jew who sold out to the Romans, and was therefore viewed negatively by other Jews.

1. They saw him as a traitor.

2. He was viewed as a sinner and excluded from the synagogue.

3. He was also considered a profiteer and extortionist who put profit before principle.

4. Because he was assumed to be dishonest he could not be a witness in a Jewish court.

5. He was shunned by respectable Jews.

C. Evidently he had seen Jesus, heard His preaching, and been a witness to His ministry of healing.

D. When Jesus extended His invitation Matthew responded immediately and decisively.

After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me." 28 And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him. Luke 5:27-28

E. Matthew arranged for his friends, family, and acquaintances to meet Jesus.

And Levi gave a big reception for Him in his house; and there was a great crowd of tax collectors and other people who were reclining at the table with them. Luke 5:29

II. The Pharisees.

A. The Pharisees were a sect of conservative, self-righteous Jewish religious leaders.

B. When they witnessed Jesus eating and drinking with people they would never have associated with they asked His disciples, "Why is He eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners (irreligious Jews)?"

1. Their question was not really a question; rather it was an accusation.

2. Their purpose was to discredit Jesus.

NOTE: Somewhere I read, "When you start encountering flack you are getting near the target."

3. They asked similar accusatory questions in Mark 2:18 and 24.

C. When it comes to God, Jesus, and the Bible many people ask what I call "avoidance questions."

1. The truth is that there are many questions that you and I may not be able to answer.

2. However God has provided all the information people need to know Him and obey Him.

Deuteronomy 29:29

"The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law."

3. God will provide answers to those who are sincerely seeking the truth.

a. Jeremiah 29:11-13

"For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. 12 Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. 13 **You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.**"

b. John 7:16-18

So Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.

17 **"If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself."**

4. Those who avoid and deny the truth will one day be judged by it. John 12:46-48

"I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness. 47 "If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day."

III. Jesus.

A. Jesus overheard the Pharisees.

NOTE: God hears every word you and I speak. Matthew 12:36-37

Jesus declared on one occasion, "But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. 37 "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

B. An expanded version of His response would be, "It is not those who (view themselves as) healthy who need a physician, but those who (know they) are sick; I did not come to call (those who see themselves as) righteous, but (those who see themselves as) sinners."

C. The Pharisee's problem was that they viewed righteousness from a human perspective, and consequently justified themselves while condemning others.

1. Jesus pointed out that the righteousness God requires is not of this world. Matthew 5:20

"For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven."

2. Paul wrote about the inadequacy of self-righteousness in Romans 10:1-4.

Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them (the Jews) is for their salvation. 2 For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. 3 For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

3. Paul also pointed out how we become righteous in God's sight. 2 Corinthians 5:21

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

D. In Matthew's account we are told that Jesus also said, "But go and learn what this means: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners." Matthew 9:13 (Quote from Hosea 6:6)

1. The Pharisees were able to diagnose other people's problems, but they had no desire or ability to provide a cure.

2. They were into religious activity, but showed no compassion toward sinners.

3. When we really come to see ourselves as God sees us we can no longer look down on others.

4. Saul, the self-righteous Pharisee, became Paul, the Apostle, when He saw himself in the light of God's righteousness. 1 Timothy 1:15

It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.

5. When we genuinely become recipients of God's mercy and grace we are going to want others to have the same experience.

APPLICATION

1. God knows our hearts.

2. He is ready to respond to each person based on what He sees.

a. To the humble, seeking heart God will reveal the truth.

b. From the proud, deceived heart God will hide the truth.

c. To the repentant, believing heart God will grant salvation.

d. The unrepentant, unbelieving, self-righteous heart God has already judged. John 3:17-18 "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. 18 "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."