

Text: Mark 2:1-12

Title: "How God Sees It"

Introduction: The past few weeks we have been following Jesus around Judea and Galilee and listening in as He has shared with the people some truths ... some of these were new that they'd never heard of before ... others were things they had heard before, but maybe had forgotten. We've seen Jesus' audience then have an opportunity to either, ignore that truth, and go on their merry way; or listen to that truth and remain, abide, stay in that truth, be changed by it, and start living in light instead of darkness.

*For every "mistruth" that we believe in, there is a corresponding consequence.*

So, as we watch Jesus work with the people of 1<sup>st</sup> Century Palestine, we understand that, because God loves us very much, the same thing happens to us. Through some other person or a realization or a circumstance, we have new TRUTHS or TRUTHS that we've forgotten come front and center in our lives. The problem with these new truths is that, if we decide to listen to them as Truth, we will need to change the way we talk, act, live and have to change some of our priorities if we are going to live by that Truth. This is THREATENING!

BUT, Jesus said that He is the "Light of the world" and if we want to know Who God is and who God wants us to be, we need to live out what Jesus teaches. It's like walking out into the sunlight after your eyes are fully adjusted to the darkness inside. We struggle to see and our eyes hurt and we have SQUINT and it would be a lot easier to just go back inside where we can already see clearly and we know where everything is. Jesus challenges us to "Squint" if we need to, but stay in the LIGHT!

I've actually preached this Scripture fairly recently in preacher terms (that means anytime in the last 5 years), but today we are going to try to find NEW LIGHT as Jesus continues his ministry in the area around the Sea of Galilee.

Here it is ... are you ready? Here is a blinding, squint-worthy Truth for us today ... I'm giving it to you up front ... here it is: Most of the time, our FELT need is not our DEEPEST need, often the thing that we WANT the most is not the thing that we NEED the most.

Often we come to God with what is urgent and pressing in our lives and we get frustrated because God does not answer our prayers. We get frustrated with God and wonder where God is and what's wrong with God and can't God hear me? The answer to those questions is in our Scripture for today.

***Let's Pray!***

If you have your Bible with you, our Scripture for today is from the Book of Mark (Matt, Mark, Luke, John) ... Mark is the shortest version of the life and teachings of Jesus, for those of you who are interested. We are going to Mark 2, right near the beginning of the story.

If you haven't already, please take the insert out of your program. It has our Scripture on one side and an outline of today's message on the other. I hope you will take time to fill in the blanks, and that you will take this piece of paper home with you so that you can re-read today's Scripture and look back through your notes and keep dwelling, remaining and staying in the Light of God's Word throughout this week. For those of you

who are listening to this message off of our website or IPODing, you can download the Scripture and outline off of our website so that you can fill in the blanks also. We are glad you are with us today.

BACKGROUND: According to Mark, Jesus has just started his ministry. So far, he has established Capernaum (MAP) as his HQ for ministry. He has invited some fishermen to quit fishing for fish and start fishing for God's Kingdom. One of the fishermen, Peter had a sick mother-in-law ... Jesus came into their house in Capernaum and healed her and the whole town heard about it. He then left and taught and healed in other towns around Galilee and now he was headed back home to Capernaum.

### I. What a Crowd!

With Jesus healings, he has drawn a following of many. We find in Mark 2 that when the Capernaumites find out that Jesus is back in town, they fill the house where he is staying (probably/possibly Peter's house ... mother-in-law, etc.) because they want to hear him and see him do miracles, they have invited all of their friends and relatives, because Jesus is the biggest thing that Capernaum has seen since ... well, ever!

- A. (Vs. 1-4) So, there are hundreds of people in this house listening to Jesus. There is not room for them all, so the people have gathered outside of the house and are listening through doors and windows...
- B. Now, the people are listening to Jesus ... why? Because they have heard that Jesus is a miracle worker...
  1. Before he starts speaking, you can hear the people whispering about what they've heard about Jesus – "I heard that he healed Peter's mother-in-law." "I heard that he healed a man with leprosy in the neighboring town." "I heard that he brought a camel back to life... (That's how rumors start, you know!)"
  2. Now, they are here. And, although Jesus is an engaging speaker to be sure, most of them are probably there to see some action. We want to see somebody healed or some sort of magic, because we've heard stories about this guy!
- C. When Jesus starts to speak, you can hear them all ... "shhh ... be quiet so that we can all hear... shhh! The people outside = shhh!"
- D. Then, up to the house come 4 guys carrying a paralyzed man on a pallet and they cannot get in the house ...
  1. The crowd is too thick ... "coming through, coming through..." "SHHH!"
  2. They find the stairs up to the roof (common to use one's flat roof as an outside room/patio) and decide that's the way they are going to get their friend in front of Jesus ... dig through the roof!

### II. What a Faith!

- A. Can you picture it with me? These guys went and got their friend because they figured that if Jesus could heal other people, certainly He could heal their friend.

- B. They convince their friend that it will work. They carry him to Peter's house ... and it's too crowded. They cannot get in the door. BUT, they decide they are not carrying him back home ... quick! To the roof!
1. Picture Jesus preaching ... scratching on roof ... banging ... mud and sticks falling on the people and Jesus ... small hole and face peering down ... a much larger hole and the sun shining in ... then shade again as they lower the pallet...  
BTW = sermon over!
  2. Imagine being the paralyzed man ... "Yep. Jesus is in there ... down you go, buddy!" All he can see is his friend's faces as he is lowered ... then, he can see a bunch of townspeople mixed with strangers from out of town ... THEN, he sees Jesus (covered in mud chunks and sticks and powder) ... lowered all the way to the floor, looking up at Jesus and his friends on the roof.
  3. When I was a kid living on Grove Street in Neenah, WI, I had a friend who lived two doors down from me; Paul Buchowski. Paul was the only one in the neighborhood with a pool ... me and my friends used to show up at Paul's side door with our towels around our necks, our swim trunks on, snorkels, floaty toys, etc. and when Paul would come to the door, we used to ask, "So, Buch, what do you want to do?"
  4. We had expectations of what would happen when we went to Buch's house ... these friends of the paralytic had expectations of what would happen if they took him to Jesus. They fully expected that if they could get their friend in front of Jesus, he was WALKING out of the house! What a great faith ... and Jesus recognized it!

### III. **What Are You Doing?** / ("milk-a-what"?)

- A. (V. 5) "What did He say?" Coming to see Jesus was kind of like watching a NASCAR race ... the racing is pretty cool, but if there's an accident; you don't want to miss out on everybody talking about that accident the next day!!
- B. Can you imagine the look on the paralytic's face? Can you imagine the response of the 4 guys who carried him there, dug through the roof and lowered him down?
1. "Did He just say, 'your sins are forgiven'?" Yippee! Thank you Jesus! Glad we brought him over here... sorry about the mess ... can you hand up those ropes so we can lift him out of there ... because, WOW!, we were hoping you would forgive his sins...
  2. Can you picture it? Everyone in the room has heard that Jesus does miracles and when this guy is lowered down in front of Jesus, they have to all be saying, "Alright, here we go ... let the fireworks begin ... Game On! We weren't really here for a sermon either ... what did He say!??"

3. How incredibly insensitive of Jesus! Is Jesus the only one in the room who didn't get it?!?
  4. We are here to see miracles, not hear that our sins are forgiven ... we are not even sure what that means... everybody here knows that we brought him here to be healed, not forgiven! Woohoo! Thanks a lot, Teacher!
- C. BUT, that's not Jesus only problem now (By the way, for those of you who are about to give up on this story ... Jesus is not that clueless. He knows exactly what He's doing!). Jesus, and again, Jesus knows this, just said that he was forgiving this man's sins in front of some teachers of the Law.
- D. Teachers of the Law = the ones who were the experts on how to get your sins forgiven. These are the men who tell you how to do it...

#### IV. **What Are You Saying?**

- A. (V. 6) ... I hope that we've established that you should never think to yourself around Jesus... They were thinking to themselves, "Why does this guy talk like that?" You cannot announce that another man's sins are forgiven! Getting your sins forgiven is COMPLICATED:
1. Go to the Temple (Jerusalem) at least once a year (pack up) ... purchase a sheep that is flawless (expensive) ... pigeon if you cannot afford a sheep (cheap forgiveness) ... make sure you yourself are ceremonially clean ... wait in line for the very few who have the AUTHORITY to receive these sacrifices and grant forgiveness on God's behalf.
  2. If this man had done something wrong to Jesus and Jesus was offering forgiveness that is one thing, but forgiving a man in general was only done by ... GOD!
  3. These men who had arrived at Peter's house early to get a good seat knew more about forgiveness and how to attain it than anyone! Forgiveness only happened by God through very religious men ... WITH THE AUTHORITY TO DO SO.
  4. Again, forgiveness was temporary. You had to go through this process once a year if you wanted to be right with God!
- B. (V. 7) ... If anyone knew that this was blasphemy, it was the religious teachers of the Law. If anyone wanted forgiveness, they had a corner on that market and they had job security because everyone sins and they were the only way to forgiveness of sins.
- C. Now, Jesus has really done it ... the crowd is disappointed, the paralytic = "You guys are going to have to hoist me up ... but woohoo, my sins are forgiven (disappointment)" and the religious people are angry. Not a good day at the office for Jesus...
- D. (V. 8) ... BTW = Jesus knew what everyone in the room was thinking! Jesus was not going to wait until the religious leaders spoke up. He liked to do this (I know what you're thinking...). Jesus spoke directly to the religious leaders... "Why are you thinking these things?"

- E. (V. 9) ... Great question! Obviously it is easier to say, “Your sins are forgiven”. Why? How would anyone know if his sins were actually forgiven? “Your sins are forgiven ... Your sins are forgiven...”
1. Do not miss what Jesus does here ... this is why this has to be the Word of God! No one can make this stuff up!
  2. Jesus now has the attention of everyone in the room ... paralyzed man, friends, spectators, religious leaders...
  3. See, Jesus knows what everyone in the room wants to happen, BUT Jesus also knows this: This man lying on the mat in the middle of the room has a pressing need, but it's not his primary need.
  4. He knows what he WANTS to happen, but Jesus knows what NEEDS to happen!
  5. Jesus has addressed his deepest need and everyone in the room is disappointed. Why? Because the people in the room are BLIND to a very important TRUTH!
- F. I can relate to those people in the room. Can you? I fall into this especially as I get older. I have priorities:
1. #1 = Health. I want to live a long time and have everything work the WHOLE time! 80s – 90s = die in my sleep without pain and wake up in heaven! Perfect!
  2. #2 = Wealth. If I have health and wealth, I can do a lot with the rest of my life, right!??
  3. #3 = Companionship. I have to have someone to share it with ... I need to feel loved; we all do, right?
  4. #4 = Fame. I want people to remember me. I don't want to be forgotten. I want to be known and remembered!
  5. God, if you will grant my wishes on my list, I will talk about you and support your ministries, etc.
- G. Do you know what hardly ever makes our list? FORGIVENESS!
1. We don't wake up in the morning and say, “Wow! You know what I need today, God? Forgiveness!”
  2. Do you know why it doesn't show up on our list? Because we're not sure we've SINNED! Sin is a strong word!
  3. We just think we've made some MISTAKES. “I don't need forgiveness for the little mistakes I've made! Okay, there was that one thing back in 2002, but overall, I don't need FORGIVENESS!”
  4. We say things like, “Well, I'm not perfect (like we were confused about that), but who is?” We still think that God is grading our lives and lifestyle on a curve!
  5. FORGIVENESS is not a pressing or felt need. Most people seldom even think about it! It's not on our list!
- H. That's the point of this story for Jesus ... He said, “Your sins are forgiven” and everyone is DISAPPOINTED! That's not what they came for...

1. Honestly, this isn't high on any of our lists, is it?
2. Do you know why? Because we don't see as God sees! BUT, when we start to gain that TRUTH that Forgiveness is important and sin is real and we get a more ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE, forgiveness moves right up our list.
3. Jesus says, with everyone's attention in that room and on that roof and in that yard, that when we start to see things the way God sees them, our PRIMARY NEED IN THIS LIFE IS FORGIVENESS!

## V. What Do You Need?

- A. See, Jesus knows that our deepest need in this life is a connection with His Heavenly Father / God. Jesus understands more than any of us ever will that we need to be in relationship to God in this life and throughout eternity...
- B. Do you understand that you and I cannot be in relationship/partnership with God without FORGIVENESS?
  1. We love to talk about a LOVING God, don't we? "God is going to love me no matter what, because God is a LOVING God ... God loves UNCONDITIONALLY! It doesn't matter what I do or say or think, because God is going to love me anyway!"
  2. We even like to talk about how God will FORGIVE us 70 times 7 ... endlessly. Do you know why? Then we can do whatever we want and God will FORGIVE us every time.
  3. Here's what we forget ... God is a HOLY GOD that has very HIGH EXPECTATIONS of His Children. We like to forget that God is a God of ACCOUNTABILITY that knows the motives of our hearts ...
  4. We cannot ask God for FORGIVENESS with our WORDS and not our HEARTS. God knows your thoughts...
- C. Most of us don't worry too much about our sin, but maybe we would if we understood the consequences ... Remember how I said at the beginning of this series that there are corresponding CONSEQUENCES to every MISTRUTH we believe in?
  1. We are told in our Scripture that the consequence for SIN is DEATH.
  2. In other words, eternity apart from God... hard to imagine.
- D. (V. 10a) Do you know why Jesus healed people of their physical problems during his ministry? To show that he had the AUTHORITY to FORGIVE SIN!
  1. Why do we have physical problems? Original sin in the Garden of Eden... our choice.
  2. Jesus healed the symptoms of the real ailment ... SIN!
- E. Let's finish this: (Vs. 10-12) Amazing huh?!? The people are AMAZED when the man is Physically healed! This is why the people came! They came for physical healing, not spiritual healing...

1. Guess what? Jesus healed a lot of people from their physical hardships ... paralytics, “Lazarus come out”, “Go wash your eyes...”
  2. Jesus healed these people physically, to show that he had **AUTHORITY** over **SIN**. When Jesus healed the physical body, he was healing the physical consequences of **SIN** ... sickness, disease, death...
  3. The people were only amazed when he was physically healed, but guess what? He got physically old and died ... as did all the other people that Jesus healed... there are none of them walking around today!
  4. Every time Jesus healed physically, it was not so that people could be well, but so that they would know that Jesus **AUTHORITY** to meet humanity’s **ULTIMATE NEED!** **FORGIVENESS!**
  5. **BUT**, when Jesus forgave **SIN**; that affected them **ETERNALLY!**
- F. Jesus took nails through his wrists and ankles and hung on a cross to **EARN** the **AUTHORITY** so that you and I could be **FORGIVEN**. **FORGIVENESS** removes any barrier between us and God, not only in this life, but **FOREVER!**
1. Jesus has **AUTHORITY** over **SIN**. Jesus has **AUTHORITY** over the **CONSEQUENCES** of **SIN!**
  2. When sin came into the world, all of our concerns came into the world too! Disease, sickness, war, economic struggles, relationship problems, death ... all consequences of **SIN** coming into the world! We want to **BLAME GOD** for these things, but it’s because of **SIN** (our choices).
  3. Few of us blame Sin for our problems...
  4. So, the **SYMPTOMS** go up our **PRIORITY LIST**, not the **REAL PROBLEM!** The root problem is **SIN!**
- G. I wonder if we are like those people ... Amazed at temporary things and yawning at Eternal things... Who is God? What is **TRUTH?**
1. God is an **ETERNAL** God and cares about our **ETERNITY!**
  2. Please let this go up your priority list ... **FORGIVENESS** is our **ONLY WAY** ... Jesus hanging on a **CROSS** is our **ONLY WAY** to be **RIGHT** with **GOD!**
  3. This is **TRUTH**. And if we dwell in that **TRUTH** and we live with **FORGIVENESS** at the top of our priority list; eventually, our eyes will adjust and that **TRUTH** will **SET** us **FREE** ... for **ETERNITY!**
- H. Do you know why God leaves us with struggles in our health, finances, relationships and fame? I think God hopes that those struggles will eventually drive us back to the source ... **FORGIVENESS!** These are temporary ... this is **ETERNAL!**

Let’s Pray!

*Special thanks to Andy Stanley for ideas and new parameters for this worship series and my preaching as a whole.*