



**A BETTER
WORD**

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

A Study Through the Life of King Jesus | with Pastor Nick Gatzke

The Opposition Begins

Mark 2:1–12

THE BIG IDEA

The Son of Man's authority is great — great enough to forgive you of your sins.

SERMON SUMMARY

Everyone bristles against authority in some way. That instinct — the desire to cast off God's rule and go our own way, believing that freedom means answering to no one — is the tension point between humanity and its Creator, and in Mark 2 it finally surfaces. Jesus is back in Capernaum, the house is packed shoulder to shoulder, and he is preaching. Four friends who cannot get their paralyzed friend through the door carry him onto the roof and dig through it. It was bold, costly, and expensive — an act of great faith and great love.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said the one thing nobody expected: “Son, your sins are forgiven.” The scribes said nothing aloud, but Jesus perceived their hearts. Their logic was sound — who can forgive sins but God alone? Exactly. Calling himself the Son of Man, the figure of Daniel 7 given everlasting dominion, Jesus performed the lesser miracle of healing in order to prove the greater miracle of forgiveness. The paralytic walked out, the scribes sat paralyzed, and the opposition to the King began.

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Four friends tore through a roof to get one man in front of Jesus, and verse 5 says, “Jesus saw their faith.” What did their action reveal about what they believed Jesus could do? Would you describe your own faith as that confident?
2. Consider what these men did — carrying their friend across town, pushing through the crowd, and being willing to damage a roof they would likely have to repair or repay. What is your love willing to do for a friend who needs to be brought to Jesus?
3. Jesus addressed the man's sin before his paralysis. Why would he do that? What does that order say about what our deepest need actually is?
4. The scribes never spoke, but Jesus “perceived in his spirit” what they were thinking (v. 8). Their reasoning was correct: who can forgive sins but God alone? But what conclusion should they have drawn instead? What does their reaction reveal about the roots of opposition to Jesus?
5. Here Jesus calls himself the Son of Man for the first time in Mark. Read Daniel 7:13–14. What is he claiming about his identity, his kingdom, and how far his authority reaches?

LIVING IT OUT

Some of us assume our sins are too many to be forgiven. Some of us grant Jesus influence over some parts of our lives, but not over others. And some of us are convinced we can manage a favorite sin indefinitely without it ever turning on us. All three are mistakes, and all three are answered by the King who forgives.

Heart Check: Is there a sin you have been quietly managing rather than confessing, believing you have it under control? Or a burden you keep carrying because you have decided you are beyond redemption?

This Week: Think of one friend who needs Jesus. Then make a plan to do the equivalent of carrying them across town. Perhaps you could pick up the phone to invite them to a service, ask them a real question about faith, or simply tell them what Christ has done for you.

REFLECTION & PRAYER

“But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins — I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home.”

— Mark 2:10–11

Bring the sin you have been managing into the light and ask for forgiveness — then thank God that his Son’s authority and grace reach far enough to forgive you again and again.

Your Prayer:

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