

SERIES – THE ORIGINAL STORY OF JESUS

Hope For Sinners

Mark 2:13-17

I. Jesus Faces Opposition From Religious Leaders (chapters 2-3)

- He forgives a paralyzed man's sins and heals him
 - They said, "Only God can forgive sins."
- He recruits Matthew (Levi), a tax collector as a disciple
 - They said, "He eats with sinners."
- His disciples did not fast.
 - They said, "Why aren't they fasting?"
- He healed a man with a deformed hand on the Sabbath
 - They said, "You cannot do that on the Sabbath."
- They accused Jesus of being possessed by the Devil
- Mark said they had stubborn, hard hearts.

II. It's a Matter of the Heart

- Heart in the Bible refers to one's inner self; it involves our perception, thinking, feelings, and will
- The Spirit of Christ dwells in our heart (Galatians 4:6)
- Turn your heart (bend) toward the Lord (Joshua 24:23)
- Meditate (reflect) on the Lord in your heart (Psalm 19:14)
- Trust in (rely on) the Lord with all your heart (Proverbs 3:5)

III. Hope for Sinners (Mark 2:13-17)

- Jesus deliberately chose a tax collector
- Jesus associated with sinners
- The religious leaders couldn't understand why he spent time with "such scum"
- Jesus replied that he came to call sinners because they were the ones who needed him most.

Jesus came to bring hope for people just like us who are prone to developing closed and hardened hearts. All you have to do is open your heart and let his Spirit fill it to overflowing. Bend toward him, lean into him and lean upon him.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

Mark 2:13-17

¹³ Then Jesus went out to the lakeshore again and taught the crowds that were coming to him. ¹⁴ As he walked along, he saw Levi (or Matthew) son of Alphaeus sitting at his tax collector's booth. "Follow me and be my disciple," Jesus said to him. So Levi got up and followed him. ¹⁵ Later, Levi invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. (There were many people of this kind among Jesus' followers.) ¹⁶ But when the teachers of religious law who were Pharisees saw him eating with tax collectors and other sinners, they asked his disciples, "Why does he eat with such scum?" ¹⁷ When Jesus heard this, he told them, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do. I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners."

We are called to spread hope, peace, joy, and love wherever we go.

Let the Prayer of St. Francis remind you of this:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:

where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.