

# Church in Campbell Weekly News

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## The Ways the Slave-Savior Carried Out His Gospel Service (2)

The Gospel of Mark is not a book of doctrine. As a biography, this Gospel was written according to the facts of history. The record of this Gospel, therefore, is according to historical sequence.

### FIVE KEY WORDS

#### Forgiveness

We have seen that the five incidents recorded in 2:1—3:6 form a group. These five incidents are the forgiving of the sins of the sick (2:1-12), feasting with sinners (vv. 13-17), causing His followers to be merry without fasting (vv. 18-22), caring for His followers' hunger rather than for religion's regulation (vv. 23-28), and caring for the relief of the suffering one rather than for the ritual of religion (3:1-6). Each of these incidents can be summarized by a particular word. The word to summarize the first incident is forgiveness. In 2:1-12 we have a case of the forgiveness of sins by the Son of Man, who was the forgiving God incarnated in the form of a Slave. In 2:5 the Lord Jesus said to the paralytic, "Child, your sins are forgiven." When the scribes heard this, they reasoned in their hearts, "He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins except One, God?" (v. 7). Eventually, verses 10 and 11 say, "That you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth—He said to the paralytic, To you I say, Rise, take up your mat and go to your house." The Son of Man, even though He was in the form of a slave, had the authority to forgive sins. Here we have a strong indication that the forgiving God was present in the form of this man, a man who was a Slave. Therefore, the first incident in this series of five incidents concerns forgiveness.

#### Enjoyment

The word to describe the second incident is enjoyment. In this incident, recorded in 2:13-17, the Slave-Savior as a Physician was feasting with sinners. Therefore, here we have the enjoyment of feasting with the Savior. Those who feasted with Him enjoyed the goodness of the Slave-Savior, who is the embodiment of God. Therefore, what they actually experienced was the enjoyment of God Himself. For this reason the word enjoyment is a summary of this incident.

#### Joy

We may use a very simple word to describe the third incident—joy. Therefore, in the first three incidents we have forgiveness, enjoyment, and joy.

According to 2:18-22, certain basic factors must exist in order for us to be joyful. Without these factors we cannot have joy. The first basic factor is the Bridegroom: "Jesus said to them, The sons of the bridechamber cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? For as long a time as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast" (v. 19). A bridegroom is the most pleasant person. Hence, in chapter 2 of Mark, the basic factor of our joy is the Savior as the Bridegroom.

Two other factors of joy are the new cloth (v. 21) and the new wine (v. 22). The new cloth is for making a garment to cover us and beautify us. Unfulled cloth is cloth that has not yet been treated or worked upon. This new cloth is for making a new garment. This new garment, which is actually Christ Himself, covers us and beautifies us. The new wine satisfies us and makes us joyful. Outwardly, we have the new cloth; inwardly, we have the new wine. Furthermore, we are with the Bridegroom. Now we have these basic factors for us to be joyful.

No philosopher could utter a word like what is spoken by the Lord Jesus in 2:18-22. In His wisdom the Lord used ordinary things like cloth and wine to illustrate wonderful points. The Lord spoke of a bridegroom, new cloth, and new wine to show us how we may be joyful. We can be joyful because we are with the Bridegroom, because we have a new covering to beautify us, and because we have new wine to fill us, satisfy us, and cause us to be beside ourselves with joy. Therefore, in the third incident we have joy.

#### Satisfaction

The fourth incident, recorded in 2:23-28, is that of the Lord's caring for His followers' hunger rather than for religion's regulation. Mark 2:23 and 24 say, "He passed through the grainfields on the Sabbath, and His disciples began to go along, picking the ears of grain. And the Pharisees said to Him, Look! Why are they doing on the Sabbath what is not lawful?" Here we see that the Slave-Savior cared for the hunger of His followers rather than for the regulation of religion. As those who follow the Savior, we are not hungering. Instead, we are filled and satisfied. Because we are satisfied, we can testify, "We don't care to keep the regulations of religion and remain hungry. Religious regulations always leave us hungry. But as those who follow the Slave-Savior, we are not hungry any longer. Every day of the week, including the Sabbath, He gives us something to eat. Now we are satisfied. We don't care if others condemn us according to their religious regulations. Others may care for religious regulations, but we care to be satisfied in the Lord." This case, therefore, may be summarized by the word satisfaction.

#### Freedom

The word that best summarizes the fifth incident, that of the Slave-Savior's caring for the relief of the suffering one rather than for the ritual of religion (3:1-6), is the word freedom. In this incident we see that on the Sabbath the Savior restored a man's withered hand. Here we see that He did not care for the ritual of religion; He cared for the relief of the suffering one. He wanted to release that one, to liberate him. Thus, in this incident we have the matter of freedom.

#### THE ACTUAL HISTORICAL SEQUENCE

Let us review the five words used to describe these five incidents: forgiveness, enjoyment, joy, satisfaction, and freedom. What a marvelous sequence we have here! Imagine how different it would be if forgiveness came last instead of first. According to the historical sequence recorded in Mark, first, we have forgiveness and then enjoyment, joy, satisfaction, and freedom. The forgiveness of our sins by the Lord always issues in enjoyment, joy,

satisfaction, and freedom. We can testify of this from our experience.

## RELIGIOUS FASTING

Let us now go on to consider 2:18-22 in more detail. After the Lord told the scribes that He had come as a Physician to care for the sick, two groups of disciples—the disciples of John and of the Pharisees—came to Him: “The disciples of John and the Pharisees were fasting. And they came and said to Him, Why do the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?” (v. 18). Both groups of disciples practiced fasting. This indicates that if we are in religion, we need to fast. Those in religion are empty and hungry; they do not have anything to satisfy them. To be a disciple in any kind of religion is to have trouble, hunger, thirst, weariness, and anxiety. In pointing this out, I am not criticizing anything; rather, I am simply speaking the truth. Those in religion certainly have reason to fast. Religion requires and demands. It tells us that we cannot do this and that we cannot do that. However, religion does not enable us to fulfill its requirements. Because those in a religion cannot fulfill the requirements of their religion, they need to fast. Therefore, both the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees were fasting.

## THE SONS OF THE BRIDECHAMBER

In contrast to the disciples of John and the Pharisees, who were fasting, the Lord’s disciples were full of joy. How could they fast when the Bridegroom, the most important factor of their joy, was with them? In 2:19 the Lord said to the disciples of John and the Pharisees, “The sons of the bridechamber cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? For as long a time as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast.” Here the Lord referred to His disciples as sons of the bridechamber. For them to fast when the Bridegroom was with them would be a shame to Him.

Suppose you are the best man at a wedding. While the wedding is taking place, you, the bridegroom’s best man, are fasting. That would be an insult to the bridegroom. No bridegroom wants to see his best man fasting during his wedding. Instead, he wants to see him joyful, properly dressed in good clothing, and enjoying the food provided. This is an illustration of the Lord’s word in 2:19. Here the Lord seemed to be saying to the disciples of John and the Pharisees, “Why do you ask Me why My disciples are not fasting? I am the Bridegroom, and they are all the sons of the bridechamber, a corporate best man. Matthew the tax collector is one of the sons of the bridechamber. They cannot fast when I am with them.”

Are you a disciple of John or of the Pharisees, or are you one of the sons of the bridechamber, part of the corporate “best man” of the Lord Jesus? We all should testify strongly that we are part of the Lord’s corporate best man. All of those who have had their sins forgiven by the Lord Jesus have become sons of the bridechamber. In the second chapter of the Gospel of Mark, we see that even those who were tax collectors and sinners became sons of the bridechamber.

## THE FORGIVING GOD AND THE PHYSICIAN

In 2:1-12 we see the forgiving God as a real man in the form of a slave. Deity was in humanity, and humanity contained deity. This One, the forgiving God as a real man, is a wonderful person. In Him we see the beauty of human virtue and the glory of the divine attributes, for in Him we see both humanity and divinity in one

complete person. The incident recorded in 2:1-12 portrays this person, the One who is the true God and a real man. What a lovely portrait of the Lord in His human virtue and with His divine attribute!

In the second incident (vv. 13-17) we see the same One as a Physician taking care of those who are ill. His “patients” are portrayed here as feasting with Him. Verse 15 says, “As He reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining together with Jesus and His disciples, for there were many, and they were following Him.” As they were reclining at table with the Lord, they had a marvelous enjoyment with Him. When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that the Lord ate with sinners and tax collectors, they said to His disciples, “Why does He eat with tax collectors and sinners?” (v. 16). When the Lord heard this, He said to the scribes, “Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill; I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners” (v. 17). Here the Lord seemed to be saying to the scribes, “I am the great Physician taking care of My patients. They have been healed, and now they are happy enjoying a feast with Me.” (Excerpts from Life- Studies of Mark Message #9)

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## Burdens for Church Prayer

- 2026 Targets, # of baptized:22; # of prayer meeting attendance:35; average Lord’s Day and small group attendance:10% increase
- Spread the kingdom of God by preaching the gospel on the WVC campus and in the community.
- Multiply the number of small groups for the increase and building up of the Body of Christ
- Perfect young working saints with shepherding families as containers for the next generation.
- Practice PSRP, BNPB, and vital small groups.
- Blending in the Body, by participating in conferences and trainings
- Establish and strengthen the church services, including children, YP, ushering, etc.
- Establish a prayer life individually and corporately
- Pursuing the truth and growth in life to live in the reality of the kingdom.

## Announcements

- Life-study of Mark MSG 9, 10
- HWMR: 2025 Fall ITERO Week 7
- 2/17 (Tue) 7:45pm, Prayer meeting at meeting hall.
- 2/22 1 pm Truth set US free webinar  
<https://www.tsuf.us/participate>
- 2/20-3/13 7<sup>th</sup> term FSCC Corporate Pursuit class, 9:30am - 12pm. \$25/person, registration  
<https://forms.gle/IBHRz4NZUyZfohMg>
- 2/21, 3/14, 10am. Lessons on small groups with br Minoru on Zoom.
- 2/28-3/1 NorCal Spring College student conference held at FSCC
- 4/3-5 NorCal Spring YP conference held at FSCC
- 7/29-8/2 FSCC. North America Chinese speaking perfecting training, west coast session.
- 9/4-6 NorCal Labor Day Conference held at Burlingame Hyatt
- Financial Giving:
  - PayPal/Zelle: churchincampbell@gmail.com
  - Venmo @Churchin-Campbell
  - Church in Campbell bookroom account (PayPal/Zelle
  - churchincampbellbooks@gmail.com