



FOCUS. (1) Where are we at in our spiritual journey?
(2) What is the next step Jesus is calling us into?

FIRST: WHERE ARE WE AT?

Mark gives us 4 groups of people that help us find our place in the moment. Each group represents a spiritual posture toward Jesus.

- ❖ Teachers of the Law (Pharisees).
- ❖ The Crowds
- ❖ The paralyzed man, Tax Collectors/ Sinners.
- ❖ The 4 friends and Levi.

PHARISEES = SKEPTICAL / OFFENDED.

v6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves,
v7 “He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” ... authority
v16 “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ... inclusivity

Blasphemy = to act or speak offensively against something sacred.
They are offended by Jesus’ claim to authority to forgive sin.
Not taking their questions to Jesus in curiosity/ openness... To themselves/ disciples.

For us: offended by Jesus claiming to know what is sin in our life.

- Intellectual offense— Believe in what I can’t see? Blind faith!?
- Moral offense and in general. Ie. sexual ethics. Justice. Money.
- Personal offense/ specifically in our lives.

See Jesus as a potential THREAT.

THE CROWDS = CURIOUS.

v2 They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door and he preached the word to them. (vs. 2, 4, 13) *Circle and connect.*

The momentum is building... word is getting out... rumors are spreading.

Watching, listening... Still passive. Show up... but not ready to respond.

Where faith can begin. We must be willing to move to curiosity...

- Bringing our questions into spiritual conversation- get past assumptions.
- Willing to change our perspective when faced with evidence/ answers
- Willing to allow the faith of others to inspire our faith.

See Jesus as a GOOD TEACHER. (He's so MUCH MORE!)

THE PARALYZED MAN + TAX COLLECTORS+ SINNERS = SEEKER.

v3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them.

v15 While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him.

Being a seeker represents a willingness to move beyond the crowd— toward a personal relationship with Jesus.

We can take steps toward a personal relationship with God by:

- Looking into the Bible and Jesus life with others.
- Willing to Pray - open our needs to Jesus (Physical + Spiritual/ Emotional).
- Reflect— ask ourselves questions:

1. What do I find compelling about Jesus?
2. What is keeping me from accepting Jesus as my Savior/ Lord?

v5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

The threshold we must cross to have a personal relationship with God is accepting Jesus as more than a good teacher but as our SAVIOR.

1. Agreeing with Jesus about our sin and our need- FORGIVENESS.
2. Believing He came to show us God's LOVE- CALL US v5 "Son"

THE FOUR FRIENDS AND LEVI = FOLLOWER of Jesus.

v4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it...

They "made an opening" represents making an introduction to Jesus by:

1. Opening our friendships to Jesus. (Levi)
2. Opening our lives to their needs (paralysis) — caring for the whole person:
3. Opening our doubts— Can Jesus use me?... Can Jesus reach them?!

Following Jesus begins by entering into a personal relationship with God.

Following Jesus matures and grows by joining him in his great PASSION.

1:17 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people."

FOLLOWING = FISHING = FAITH.

Where is Jesus calling you to take a next step toward him?

Jesus is calling us into a personal relationship with Him

1. To "repent" - open to changing our mind.
2. To Accept that the barrier between us and God is on our side.
SIN. "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Accepting that we all have a sin problem... a sickness of soul.

3. To Believe that Forgiveness will heal us. v10 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."

The only way to be healed is to accept our need God's forgiveness.
And to believe Jesus came to heal and free us by dying on the CROSS.

4. To surrender the control of our lives to Jesus passion and purpose.
Join him in his passion to reach others through you.