November 1, 2009
Mark 2:13 - 3:12

The Good News: A Sermon Series through the Gospel of Mark

The Good News of a Bigger & Better Kingdom

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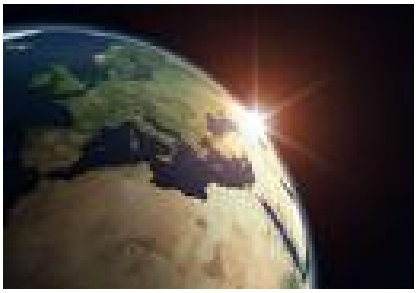
There's Good News for the world . . .



Jesus expands the kingdom beyond who we would suspect would enter into it and he expands the definition of it beyond a place of restriction to a place of joy.

Make a list of what Jesus and his followers are <u>for</u> (rather than against).

Tell a rule your family had when you were a child that is no longer commonly held by families. Why do you think the practice of this rule has changed?

READ each portion of scripture below and answer the following questions for each section:

1. Who are the people involved?
2. Who does Jesus welcome into the kingdom that is an expansion beyond the expected?
3. What is the rule or practice that comes into question here? How do the Pharisees use it as a restriction?
4. What does Jesus do or say that changes the understanding of the action to open up the kingdom?

Mark 2:12-17 – The Calling of Levi
Mark 2:18-22 – Jesus Questioned About Fasting
Mark 2:23-3:6 – Lord of the Sabbath

Discuss other practices and rules we have as Christians that can be restrictive to the Kingdom of God? Consider what circumstances and attitudes cause these actions to be restrictive. Consider when these actions are appropriate. (For example, Jesus doesn't say fasting or the keeping of the Sabbath are inappropriate. He points out that circumstances and priorities come into play.) What does it look like to discern these things on a daily basis?

Honestly reflect on how you are restricting the kingdom of God. What can you do to open yourself up to God's transforming power here?

Mark 2:17 tells us Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." How do these words affect you personally? In what ways do these words affect you attitude and actions toward others?

READ Mark 3:7-12 – Crowds Follow Jesus
Imagine a large crowd of people <u>today</u> clamoring to get access to Jesus. Who would these people be? What "sicknesses" would they be seeking to have healed? If you were in this crowd what might you say to people to encourage them that Jesus does want to heal them? Is there a group in the crowd you would be trying to avoid? What is something you could do to change your attitude toward this group?

In left column, make a list of what Jesus and his followers are <u>for</u> (rather than against). On the back, write down one action you will take this week to extend one of the things listed into the life of a person who is "outside" the church. Share this with your group.

PRAY TOGETHER!
Confess the ways we restrict God's Kingdom.
Ask God to fill you with the things Jesus is for (see list to left).