

The Jesus We Never Knew  
**“The Great Reversal: How Jesus Treats People”**  
Mark 2:1-17

**Jesus Heals a Paralytic**

<sup>1</sup>A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. <sup>2</sup>So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. <sup>3</sup>Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. <sup>4</sup>Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. <sup>5</sup>When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

<sup>6</sup>Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, <sup>7</sup>"Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

<sup>8</sup>Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? <sup>9</sup>Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? <sup>10</sup>But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." He said to the paralytic, <sup>11</sup>"I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." <sup>12</sup>He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

**The Calling of Levi**

<sup>13</sup>Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. <sup>14</sup>As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.

<sup>15</sup>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. <sup>16</sup>When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the "sinners" and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: "Why does he eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"

<sup>17</sup>On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Jesus was the friend of sinners. They genuinely liked hanging around Jesus, choosing to be in His company. Meanwhile, the religious establishment, legalists, Pharisees, found him revolting. What was Jesus' secret that we, the church, have lost?

1. Jesus values trusting ones and the child (5)
2. Jesus challenges the unbelieving heart (7-8)
3. To the sick and marginalized, Jesus treats with compassion and healing.
4. To the "healthy", Jesus teaches the better way.

**Questions for personal or small group study and reflection:**

1. Why does Jesus tell the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven"? Even when the man has not asked for it? What's up about the seemingly absence of repentance here?
2. How is forgiving a person's sin equivalent to blasphemy in Jesus' day? In what ways can you and I tend to become like the religious establishment of Jesus' day?
3. In Mark 2:2, Jesus has been only communicating, "preaching the word" to people and not performing healings. What now compels Jesus to heal the paralyzed man? (2:10)
4. What makes Jesus so able to connect with "sinners" and people of ill repute? Why are people like this so attracted to Him? Levi's friends flocked to Jesus. How can we Christ followers draw non-followers to us and to Jesus while remaining faithful to Christ? Who are the marginalized to you?
5. From the Pharisees' point of view, why would it not be a great idea for a rabbi to eat with people of ill repute? From Jesus' point of view, why was it necessary that He did so? What can we take away from this Jesus encounter? What is this encounter's relevance to me? How does this shape my own perceptions on how I interact with people?