

MARK: OUR PREACHING MANUAL

SECOND DIVISION

II. 1:14-4:34 *WHAT IS THE MESSIAH'S "WORKING" PLAN?*

SECOND SECTION: *THE KINGDOM AS A PRIESTHOOD*

Mark 1:32-2:12

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II. 1:14-4:34 WHAT IS THE MESSIAH'S "WORKING PLAN"?

KINGDOM Colossians 1:12-13; Ephesians 2:1-10	PRIESTHOOD 1 Peter 2:4-10; Hebrews 7:22-10:39	BODY Ephesians 5:22-33	HOUSEHOLD Ephesians 2:19-22	FIELD 1 Corinthians 3:6-9
1:14,15 To Galilee : A political entity He preached the kingdom Repent Believe	1:32-34 At the door Received people Ministered to them A priest at the door	2:13-17 Called Levi Doctor for the sick Condemnation of law upon sinners The Savior of sinners	3:7-12 A great crowd came to Jesus from many regions The demons cried " Son of God "	4:1-9 The Sower Jesus at work preaching (planting)
1:16-20 4 Fishermen at the Sea of Galilee : A commercial scene Leave Follow	1:35-39 Early prayer Represented people to God Preached in towns Represented God to the people	2:18-22 Disciples fast & feast The order of law - moral & spiritual orientation Help with God & help for living	3:13-19 12 Apostles called, appointed, designated to be with him He will send them and they will have authority	4:10-25 The mystery to those who seek The Sower is " interpreted " (watering) for the 12 & others How to respond to parables?
1:21-28 The demon cast out in the synagogue : A religious scene Hear Obey	1:40-45 A leper cleansed Sacrifice and priest Jesus' testimony to the priests A sacrifice	2:23-28 They plucked grain because of their hunger Spirit of law - our real needs met - Lord of Sabbath is concerned	3:20-30 Holy Spirit " House ", " Eat ", " Family ", " Kingdom " Unity, strength, holiness	4:26-32 Seed parables Growth through invisible agent (God) Miraculous growth
1:29-31 Peter's Mother-in-law healed at home : A domestic scene Rise Serve	2:1-12 A paralytic and a break-in Sins forgiven By God's authority The way to God	3:1-6 A hand healed Save life or kill? Do good or evil? Purpose of the Law is that we do good. Each member is important	3:31-35 The family called. Mother, brothers, and sisters? Whoever does God's will	4:33,34 Jesus spoke only in parables Jesus explained everything to his own disciples (The field)

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Corresponding PowerPoint® presentation: 051_Mark_PREACHERS_2nd_division_2nd_section_presentation

Jesus is our high priest

Already we have noted that both the evangelist, as well as Jesus, used the visible things of the kingdoms of this world to explain the invisible things of the kingdom of that other world, the Kingdom of God (Mark 1:14-15, the *preaching* of the kingdom; and 4:26 and 30, the *description* of the kingdom through parables).



The priesthood of Christ			
At the door			
Pray and preach			
A blood sacrifice			
God's forgiveness			

The Outline:



The priesthood of Christ	
Mark 1:32-2:12	
• 1:32-34	At the door
• 1:35-39	Pray and preach
• 1:40-45	Blood sacrifice
• 2:1-12	God's forgiveness

- I. Jesus received the people at the door, 1:32-34
 - Receiving people in Bangladesh
 - The Walmart experience
 - Meeting at the door
 - The Mephibosheth case
 - Receiving children at the nursery

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The Lord receives us
Ulcers!
An audience with the king, the prophet or the priest?
The perfect priest

II. Jesus prayed and preached, the mediator between god and man 1:35-39

A month long pass and the priest's itinerary
Pray and preach!
What takes all night to pray about?
Praying pew by pew
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Praying for the land of "el Cid"
A blood sacrifice

III. Jesus commands the leper to go to the priest with an offering, 1:40-45

Lepers!
Naval commander turned garbage picker!
Right with god and with men
The blessing, or the one who blesses?
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Who's testimony?
I am your sacrifice

IV. Jesus forgave the sins of the paralytic, 2:1-12

96% probability
"A break in"
Another "break in"
A leak
Blasphemy?
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The answer

Questions to help in the study of Mark 1:32-2:12

In this section please notice **what** Jesus does and says, and **where** he does it.

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I. Jesus received the people at the door 1:32-34



“Go to reception”. It is not unusual to see this sign when visiting a business. We all wonder how we will be received.

Receiving people in south Asia

If you walked down the main street of some of the towns of a country in south Asia, you would pass in front of many small shops, with their doors open to the street. The owner would be seated in the doorway with his merchandise spread around him. However, one of those shops might be quite different to the others. There would be nothing on sale, but a few carpets would be spread on the floor, with a small pulpit at the front, an open book on the pulpit, and seated behind the pulpit, a man with a beard dressed in the clothes of a religious teacher.

If you get a little closer, you realize that the man seated there, is not a national of the country. He is wearing clothes of that culture. He wears a beard like someone of that land, but his appearance is different. Some of the people who pass by the shop stop to talk with the man seated there. Some people stay to converse longer. Occasionally the bearded man opens the book that is on the small pulpit, and he reads from it. Some of the visitors ask questions and the man seated there tries to answer them.

Who is this bearded man and what is he doing there? He is a missionary and he is seated in that shop in order to receive the people who come. He sits there waiting for those who might be curious to know what the Bible says. Many pass by the shop and a number of people stop to greet him and sit down to talk. What the missionary is doing fits well into the culture. People are curious about what the religious book on the pulpit, the Holy Bible, might teach.

Several hours pass and another man comes dressed in the same way, and he takes the place of the first one. Why do they do it? They do it because they know that to approach the people one must *receive* the people. These men must give the people the opportunity to come visit them in order to speak to them of the things of God.

The big box store experience

There are a businesses that knows how important is to receive people at their door, and make people feel welcome. It is one of the super-stores. When you enter you meet a person who welcomes you and gives you a shopping cart. They do this so that people have a positive experience and return to buy again. Even in some smaller stores you are general greeted when you enter.

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Meeting at the door

Jesus received the people at the door that evening. They crowded to him. Those streets were narrow and that evening they were packed. The whole city gathered, and with enthusiasm! This was no religious ritual. Some were literally dying for help!

At the same time at the door of the temple in Jerusalem a ritual was taking place. To some it was simply a ritual, the evening sacrifice. The priest would be ministering to the people. At the same moment Jesus stood at a door in Galilee ministering to people.

In fact by coming in the evening, after sundown, the people were trying to observe a religious rule. They wanted to avoid breaking the Sabbath. Was it reverence for God's law or fear of what the Pharisees might say? This issue was to arise again, very soon!

In any case the point of the story is that Jesus received the people in their crying needs. He received and ministered to all. The crowd may have been a mix of beggar, burgher, and banker! We all have moments of deep need. We go through stormy times. Life is precarious; it's dangerous out there!

The Mephibosheth case

The Lord receives us just as David received Mephibosheth. He was a son of Jonathan but lame in both feet. Not a pretty sight.

Mephibosheth was a grandson of David's enemy Saul. Saul was chosen to be king of Israel but he did not want to obey the word of God. The Lord rejected him and put David on the throne in his place. At that time it was customary for kings to liquidate every possible opposition to their power and authority. The children of the previous king might raise an army against the second contender for the throne. But David did not destroy the descendants of Saul. Instead, he sought to bless them and to help them in their need. Mephibosheth had suffered an accident as a boy that left him without the use of his legs. That accident left him "half a man" (2 Samuel 4:4). But King David seated Mephibosheth at his royal table.

Let's remember that we are all enemies of God, according to Romans 5:10 and 11, *10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. 11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement (AV/KJV1769).*

Mephibosheth was reconciled with David. This saved him from being an enemy of the king and from horrendous poverty. David restored Mephibosheth's lands and his servant, who had served in the house of Saul (2 Samuel 6:9-13). The Lord did the same thing for us. We were people twisted by sin and in material, moral, and spiritual ruin. Our world is not even the half of what it could have been if sin had not entered.

You might pray like this, "Lord, is there someone I can receive today, on your behalf? Can I receive the elderly, the children, the sick, and the lonely?"

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Receiving children at the nursery

Cathy worked in the nursery, or crèche, in our church in England from Sunday to Sunday. Occasionally a child arrived who was upset. It happens to all families on Sunday mornings. It has happened to us too, but screaming children are not always easy to receive! She learned to receive each one just as Jesus did. After all sometimes the crying need is the greatest.

Helping missionaries receive others

We as missionaries are grateful to all who have sent us out to receive people in places where most of us cannot go. How we receive people is absolutely crucial! Recently while traveling in the Latino world a person told me how much they appreciated a certain person because they greeted everyone in so friendly a manner. A big thanks is due to those who have been able to join us and do the work together. We are grateful for both long term and short term co-workers.

The Lord receives us

Here are some verses referring to how the Lord receives us (text is from the AV/KJV1769 version):

Psalm 49:14 But God will redeem my soul from the grave: for He shall receive me.

Psalm 73:24 Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory

John 14:6 And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself.

Hosea 14:1 O Israel, Return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words and turn to the Lord: say unto Him, take away all iniquity and receive us graciously.

Psalm 6:8 The Lord has heard my supplication, the Lord will receive my prayer.

II Corinthians 6:17 and II Corinthians 11:16 Paul pleads that they receive him in Corinth.

Philemon 1:12, 15, 17 Philemon urged to receive his runaway slave.

Romans 15:7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

Ulcers!

At his dispensary, it was not easy for my dad, who was a missionary, to receive some patients who had rotting ulcers full of gangrene. He had to cover his nose with a handkerchief as he worked. He could hardly endure the terrible smell of rotting flesh. I can imagine that for a God, three times holy, to deal with our sins would not be any less repugnant. But God came; he came close in Jesus; and he received us!

An audience with the king, the prophet or the priest?

Now, if back in Jesus' time you went to seek an audience of the king, where would you go? You would go to the palace. I suppose you might go with a representative, or with an invitation in your hand. You would enter by some enormous doors, between rows of armed guards with their

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spears in hand, down long corridors, until you arrived at the throne room. You would comply with proper etiquette, and then he would extend his scepter, indicating that you could present your case.

But if you were looking for a prophet, where would you go? You might go almost anywhere. You would find him in some plaza or street preaching, or maybe on the steps of the temple teaching the people. Jesus, in the great tradition of the prophets, preached everywhere.

We have talked about the king and the prophet, but what about the priest? If you went to find the priest in his official capacity, where would you go? You would have to go to the door of the temple. The priest represented God and he exercised his ministry in the house of God, the temple. Most people were not permitted to enter the temple. The priests went to the door of the temple to receive the people. The people brought their offerings, confessions, praise, questions, illnesses, and anxieties to the priest as God's representative. The priest shared with the people about the greatness of God, his pardon, his love, his mercy, his holiness, his justice, his wisdom, his greatness, his glory, his salvation, and many other wonderful things about God.

Here we have Jesus at the door where the people had gathered. There he helped them by healing, casting out demons, and teaching. He received the people as the priests received the people. However Jesus was not of the lineage of Aaron, the priestly family. He was not of the family of Levi. We must remember something. The family of Aaron did not receive the priesthood because they were special in themselves, in other words, better than other men. When each generation of priests was ordained they offered animals in sacrifice and the blood was put on the ears, the thumbs, and large toes of the priests. Their ministry was based on the sheer mercy of God, not on anything else. God had chosen them not because they were good, but that they might do good as his representatives.

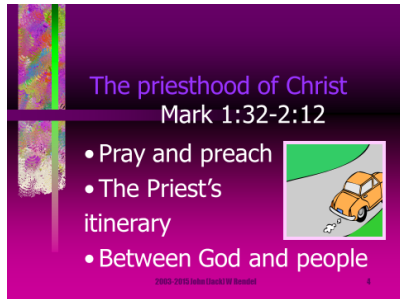
The perfect priest

The moment arrived, as the letter to the Hebrews says, when God put aside the priesthood for a better one, that of Christ. His priesthood was based on a perfectly holy life, and on an indestructible life having resurrected from the dead, and gained the victory over death. The Aaronic priesthood was not perfect. Those priests had to offer sacrifices for their own sins. None of those priests had an indestructible life (Hebrew 7:14-28). They would die and they would remain in their graves only to be raised someday by the power of Jesus Christ. But let's move on to the next scenes where we see more about the priesthood of Jesus.

(In a parallel passage, 3:11, we find the demon crying out that Jesus was the Son of God. Hebrews 4:14 tells us that Jesus the Son of God is our great High Priest. *Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession (ESV).* Let us also note that the writer to the Hebrews exhorts his readers to “hold fast our confession” [or faith in Jesus, or the belief in him to which we have confessed].)

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II. Jesus prays and preaches; He goes between God and man 1:35-39



In London, England, there is a book called the "A to Z". It is a book of street maps of the city. London is not laid out in a square grid pattern. Some may even go as far as to say there is not a single straight street in the English capital! The "A to Z" is invaluable for getting around.

In the law of Moses, God gave Israel the priestly "A to Z". The priests were to go back and forth between God and the people. It was an itinerary.

A month long pass and the priest's itinerary

In 1984 I bought a one-month pass that allowed me to go anywhere on Republic Airlines, anywhere as long as I did not revisit the same city twice. I "hop scotched" all over the place getting to California, Arizona, Missouri, Michigan, New Jersey, Chicago, and Texas. It was complicated and included huge distances. The priestly itinerary, however, was very short and simple physically compared to my itinerary by airplane on Republic airlines. Spiritually and morally it was more complicated and there were rules to follow. But here the contact between God and man is established by going a very short distance between the door of the congregation and the holy place, and once a year, into that inner room, the holy of holies.

Pray and preach!

We see in this story that Jesus exercised these two great ministries of the priest: prayer and preaching. In the morning Jesus went out early to pray in a solitary place. The priest did the same, going alone into the temple to meet with God. When the disciples found him they said, *"Everyone is looking for you."* He then replied, *"Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out (ESV)."* Jesus, like every priest, went between God and the people. The priests prayed to God on behalf of the people and preached to the people on behalf of God. In fact the priests were a pattern, or shadow, of what Jesus was going to do faithfully, completely and absolutely.

What takes all night to pray about?

Before going on evangelistic campaigns in Mexico, Spain, and Iran (32 years ago), the times of prayer that I was invited to really got my attention. I was invited to an all night of prayer each month! One friend responded to this invitation by saying, "What takes all night to pray about?" It was one of the significant ways of preparing for any evangelistic outreach (Cf. Prayer in Acts 1:14 city-wide; Acts 13:1-5 empire-wide).

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Praying pew by pew

I was listening to the testimony of a preacher on the radio by the name of David Mains. He attended a church in Chicago. During his message he was explaining the great blessing of praying with the pastor of the church he attended. The two of them would meet in the church sanctuary every Saturday evening. There they met to pray for the church, the members, the new people attending, the ministries of the church, the missionaries, and other departments of the church. At times they walked up and down the rows of pews praying for the different families according to where they were accustomed to sitting. They would spend several hours praying. It brought great blessing to the church. The congregation grew during that time and wonderful things took place, as God answered prayer.

The Mediator

The job of the priest makes him a mediator. 1 Timothy 2:5 declares, *For there is only one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus ... (KJV)*. In Christ the reality of the mediator had appeared in its fullness. All previous mediators instituted by the law of Moses were only shadows of the reality of Christ.

As we said before, those Levitical priests had to offer sacrifices for their own sins. In the worst cases the priests sinned to such a degree that the Lord had to remove them from the ministry. So it went in the case of the sons of Eli, who stole from the sacrifices and offerings to God, and who went to bed with the women who came to clean the tabernacle. The Lord had to remove them from their ministry.

Praying for the land of “el Cid”

When I arrived in Madrid in 1968 I began to witness house to house. Our OM team was working with local churches. At the same time the Lord put on my heart the urge to pray for the city of Burgos, in north central Spain. It was some 140 miles or 200 kilometers due north of Madrid. At that time I had heard that there was no evangelical Christian church in the city. I suppose I chose that city because there was no evangelical church there and because of its historical and romantic image. Not far from Burgos was born Ruy Díaz de Rodrigo, el Cid, a hero of the period of the *Reconquista* of the Iberian Peninsula.

In my first trip to Spain in 1965, which took us several days to reach from our base in Belgium, we stopped in Burgos one afternoon to fill our Volkswagen van, with gasoline. I remember looking out over the fields of Castile, around the city. They had been harvested. Above the roofs of the city I could see the towers of the cathedral. It was a city of 25,000 inhabitants.

To help me pray for Burgos, I put a map of Spain on the wall of our room in the OM base in Madrid. I put a red circle on the map around the city of Burgos. I wasn't always very faithful in my prayers for Burgos. But yes, the Lord did help me pray. I began in the fall of 1969 and I stopped sometime in 1970.

About 17 years later I had a surprising encounter in a missionary conference at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. After one of the sessions I was talking with one of the students who told me that he was born in Spain. His parents arrived in Spain in 1970. They began ministering in Burgos and he said that the church had grown to a membership of 100 when I met him at Moody.

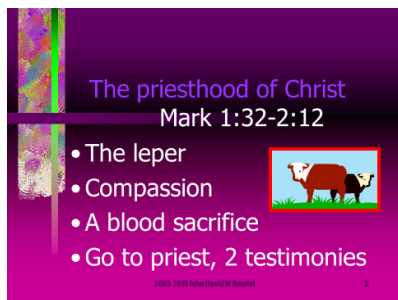
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About two or three years later I called him by telephone and he told me that the church had grown even larger. They had divided into three groups to reach three areas, called *barrios* of Burgos. The church had sent two couples to Santander, to open up a new ministry in that city on the north coast. Another couple had moved to Aranda de Duero, a city half way between Burgos and Madrid. They hoped to begin a home Bible study and eventually a church. I am sure that I was not the only one who prayed for Burgos but I was able to participate by prayer for a time and I saw how the Lord answered prayer.

A blood sacrifice

But we must understand something else about the priesthood. Every priest had to approach God with an offering of blood in order to gain entrance to God in the temple. The following scene talks about offerings.

III. Jesus commands the leper to offer a sacrifice 1:40-45



In this scene it is very clear that the evangelist is thinking about the priesthood. He not only tells us that Jesus healed the leper but he explains what occurred later. Here we find mention of Moses, the priest, cleansing, offering, and testimony, all concepts to do with priesthood.

Lepers!

Lepers had to keep their distance from others. They lived outside the cities. They had to announce their presence. People feared being infected by leprosy. It is incredible that Jesus showed interest in a leper, and even went so far as to touch him! But instead of being infected by the leper he healed him. Power came out of Jesus that left the leper cleansed of his scourge. From now on people would no longer dread that man. He could now return to normal society. He could mix with the people!

The leper was indeed a needy person! Just think of all the diseases that afflict our societies. Add to any list of diseases greed, anger, hate, lust and envy which all go back to the beginning of human history.

Naval commander turned garbage picker!

There was a man picking through the garbage on the quayside next to the gospel ship *Doulos*. One of the engineers took him in and gave him a shower. He was so dirty he had to peel the man's clothes off his body. He smelled unbelievably foul. The *Doulos* engineer, who was a quiet hard-working man, found the tramp some clothes and gave him a meal. Then he talked with him.

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The garbage picker had been a naval commander. His wife divorced him at some point. He began drinking and later found himself out picking through garbage. The engineer on *Doulos* shared with the man about the good news of salvation in Jesus and he put his trust in the Lord. What a change came over the naval commander turned garbage picker! He started life over again. So did the leper who met Jesus.

Right with God and with men

But it's not enough to be on good terms with people. It is very important to be on good terms with God. Generations before this the Lord had taught the Israelites their duty if someone was healed of leprosy. These rules are found in the book of Leviticus, chapters 13 and 14. If someone was healed of his leprosy he had to go to the priest and offer a sacrifice. Then the priest declared him clean of leprosy. He would be able to return to live among the people and join in the temple worship of God.

The blessing, or the one who blesses?

But the leper did not take seriously the words of Jesus to not say anything to anybody. He went out and began to spread the news of what Jesus had done so that Jesus had to stay out in deserted areas. I suppose the leper's reaction is normal. When blessed we easily forget the words of the One who blessed us and get super excited about the blessing!

The reality of the ritual

Jesus had told the leper that he must go to the priest with his offering as a testimony to them. But didn't he need the leper to help him get more publicity? Wouldn't he be a good witness in this way for the Lord? Yes, but he did not do what the Lord told him to do. What did the Lord want him to do? Until Jesus became the complete and final sacrifice on the cross for the sins and rebellion of this world, Jesus wanted to submit to all God had said through the law and the prophets. He submitted to the law, to the offerings, to the temple, to the priests, in short, to God, and to the spiritual life of his people. He wanted the priests and all the people to know that he was not a rebellious prophet, who travelled around Galilee, keeping a distance from Jerusalem, doing whatever he felt like doing.

The leper was so happy that he was cleansed of leprosy that he did not take seriously the sacrifice he was to take to the priest. God has said certain things in his word and he wants us to take them seriously. What we do not see in those ancient offerings is the reality. We see the shadow of the reality in the temple, the priesthood and the sacrifices, and it seems like *a great deal* of ritual. But these rituals represent very great realities. The leper did not know that later, Jesus would go a great deal further than sending him to offer an animal sacrifice. He would offer himself as a sacrifice on a cross just outside Jerusalem. Jesus not only taught others to comply with the law of God through Moses, but he went still further offering himself as a sacrifice in order to comply with all the commands of that same law.

Who's testimony?

I always knew that I had a testimony after receiving the Lord Jesus as my Savior. I admitted that I was a sinner. I had done wrong. I was under the just judgment of God. But Jesus loved me and died for me on the cross, forgiving me of my sins, and giving me eternal salvation. However, I did not realize that Jesus also had a testimony! What was the testimony of Jesus? In reality Jesus'

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testimony would be the other side of the coin. Jesus would say that he came into the world and lived a perfectly holy life, without sin. He loved the world and died on the cross for our sins. He was buried, and on the third day rose from the dead. As many as put their faith in him would be saved. This means that Jesus also has a testimony!

I am your sacrifice

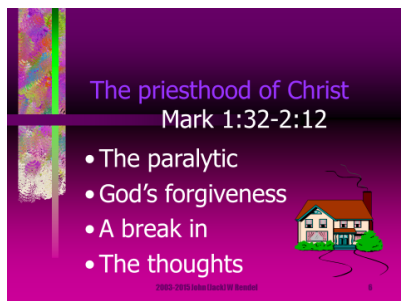
I spent an eventful year in Iran in 1966-67. I was learning the language, called Farsi, or Persian. Among others phrases that they used in their greetings is the phrase, *Qorbone shoma* (Pronounced *kor-bó-nei sho-máw*). The translation is, "I am your sacrifice". The word *qorbon* means "sacrifice". It is the same word *corban* used in Mark 7:9-13, translated as "a gift to God". In Iran they greet one another every day using this phrase but no one dies for another. The only one who truly died for us was Jesus. Our true sacrifice is the Lord Jesus Christ. All of us need the sacrifice of Christ, not just the leper. When Adam and Eve sinned they were thrown out of the Garden of Eden, just as the lepers were cast out of society. Do you remember the words of Jesus on the cross when he raised his voice and cried, "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me (ESV)?*" He was rejected by God, becoming sin for us, so that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Jesus' testimony to the priests through this leper is that he taught people to keep the law. He was not some renegade preacher wandering about Galilee stirring up trouble. He believed in submitting to the law and taught others to submit to God's law. In fact, he believed so strongly in submitting to God's law that he would some day offer, not an animal for sin, but his very own body on the cross. He would keep the law in its practice, in its teaching, and finally in its fulfillment, even to the laying down of his own life. He knew that we as sinners could not keep the law so he kept it for us.

The letter to the Hebrews makes it absolutely clear that sacrifice is essential. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. Hebrews 9:22 and Hebrews 10:10-12.

ITimothy 2:6 says, "... *Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time (AV/KJV1769).*

IV. Jesus forgave the sin of the paralytic 2:1-12



96% probability

While we lived in London, England, it was announced in our church that one of the ladies had suffered a robbery, or break-in, at her home. Others had the same terrible experience, and it was

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said that in one country of Europe there existed a 96% probability that you would suffer a robbery at your house.

“A break in”

One morning at the home of my boss, George Verwer, George and his wife, Drena, woke up and went down to the kitchen to brew a cup of tea. George descended the stairs and as he passed the door of the sitting room threw a glance in and thought, “Why is the house in such a mess?” Drena came down after him and saw that there were papers all over the place, and was sure that George had burnt the midnight oil dictating letters, leaving his papers all over the table, chairs and floor. But it didn’t take them long to both realize that someone had forced his way in, pulled out all the drawers, and strewn all the paper around looking for money. They happened to be babysitting a dog, part German Shepherd, but the dog had slept through the robbery, upstairs on the landing!

Another “break in”

It's one thing to break into a neighbor's house. It's quite another to break into the temple of God, and even a greater feat to break into heaven itself. God, in the person of his Son, “broke into his own home” to secure our entrance into his presence, forgiving us of all our sin. (In fact it broke his own Son to secure our forgiveness.) When Jesus died on the cross the Scriptures say that the veil of the temple itself was ripped in two, from top to bottom (Mark 15:38). But the letter to the Hebrews makes it clear that although this meant we have free access to God, Jesus did not enter a temple here on the earth, but passed through the heavens into the very presence of God (Hebrews 9:11-15, 23, 24).

A leak

How would you like four men to climb up on your roof and tear it up? When the central heating was installed in our house, almost immediately it began to leak, leaving some spots on the ceiling. It frightened me. To repair a new ceiling costs a great deal. We were fortunate because the friend who installed it had only just gone out our door when the leak showed up. We quickly called him back in and he caught the problem in time. The friends of the paralytic opened the roof in spite of the dangers, because they were determined to present their friend to Jesus.

Let’s return to our stories in Mark. In the third story we see the importance of a sacrifice, but once there is a sacrifice, there is also forgiveness. Forgiveness is at the heart of the fourth story and an important part of the priest’s ministry.

Blasphemy?

But what did others think that were present that day when Jesus forgave the sins of the paralytic? They accused him of blasphemy for only God could forgive sins! Maybe they should have realized what Jacob did that night when he had an encounter with God while returning to meet his brother, Esau. Genesis 28:16-17, *16 ¶ And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. 17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven (KJV).* For us Jesus has become the house of God and the gate of heaven!

MARK: OUR PREACHING MANUAL

Enormous dimensions!

But let's think about the dimensions of what Jesus did. He knew what those men thought in their hearts. We have here the depth of Jesus ministry on our behalf. The priests, who were sons of Aaron, did not know for sure if the people lied or not when they confessed their sins. They could not read men's hearts. Then too, we need to keep in mind the fact that Jesus forgave his sins, a global pardon. Jesus did not forgive him of one sin but of his sins, plural. That was the reason those around him complained in their hearts that only God could forgive a person his sins. In this we see the breadth of his ministry for us. Already we have noted the height of his ministry on our behalf because he takes us into the very presence of God in heaven. What he has done for us is deep, high, and wide!

What has changed from the first scene to this fourth one? We are no longer in the doorway but inside the house, and in the very presence of God. Our priest has brought us into the house where God is!

The answer

How should we respond to the grace and love of God poured out on us in Christ?

The letter to the Hebrews 10:19-25 encourages us saying...

v. 22 Let us draw near

v. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith

v. 24 let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works

v. 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together

but exhorting one another

and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching (AV/KJV1769) (when we will see him face to face, just as on that day when the paralytic reached Jesus, and spoke to him face to face).

Questions to help in the study of Mark 1:32-2:12

1. Why do you think people waited till the sun went down before coming to the door of the house where Jesus was? Why did the whole city come? (1:32-34)
2. Where was Jesus while he ministered to the people? Where did the priests in the temple minister to the people? What parallels exist between Jesus' ministry and that of the priests? (1:32-34)
3. The two ministries mentioned in the second scene are praying and preaching which are ministries of the Levitical priests. They are also our ministries as priests of the New Covenant. Please find texts in the Old and New Testaments that support this statement. (1:35-39)
4. Why did Jesus instruct the leper to take an offering to the priest? Why did the leper not obey Jesus? Jesus spoke of a testimony. What testimony? (1:40-45)
5. In the 4th and last story (2:1-12) Jesus forgave and healed a paralytic. Describe the dimensions of Jesus ministry from the last story.