

## SCRIPTURE STUDY SHEET FOR JULY 11, 2021 @ CAPC OAKLAND

Reflecting on the Second of the Six Great Ends of the Church  
The Church is for “The shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God”

### Mark 2:1-13

COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE

<sup>1</sup> After a few days, Jesus went back to Capernaum, and people heard that he was at home. <sup>2</sup> So many gathered that there was no longer space, not even near the door. Jesus was speaking the word to them. <sup>3</sup> Some people arrived, and **four of them** were bringing to him a man who was paralyzed. <sup>4</sup> They couldn't carry him through the crowd, so they tore off part of the roof above where Jesus was. When they had made an opening, they lowered the mat on which the paralyzed man was lying. <sup>5</sup> **When Jesus saw their faith**, he said to the paralytic, “Child, your sins are forgiven!”

<sup>6</sup> Some legal experts were sitting there, muttering among themselves, <sup>7</sup> “Why does he speak this way? He's insulting God. Only the one God can forgive sins.”

<sup>8</sup> Jesus immediately recognized what they were discussing, and he said to them, “Why do you fill your minds with these questions? <sup>9</sup> Which is easier—to say to a paralyzed person, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, take up your bed, and walk?’ <sup>10</sup> But so you will know that the Human One has authority on the earth to forgive sins”—he said to the man who was paralyzed, <sup>11</sup> “Get up, take your mat, and go home.”

<sup>12</sup> Jesus **RAISED HIM UP**, and right away he picked up his mat and walked out in front of everybody. They were all amazed and praised God, saying, “We've never seen anything like this!”

### LANGUAGE NOTES & TEXTUAL CONNECTIONS

Mark is most likely the first of the Gospel stories of the life, teaching and mission of Jesus to be written down. Short, sweet and sparse, our selection comes in the opening words as Jesus enters the scene and moves decidedly into action. Chapter 2 immediately follows a summary declaration of the goals of Jesus in 1:14-15 “14 After John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee announcing God's good news, 15 saying, “Now is the time! Here comes God's kingdom! Change your hearts and lives, and trust this good news!”

**four of them::** We're not told who these four people, among the people of the crowd come to hear Jesus, are. It's assumed their friends of the paralytic. But maybe they're family, or they found him along the road, or just knew him as an acquaintance. Something moves them to bring the man – overcoming all barriers – to Jesus.

**When Jesus saw their faith,** The implication is that it's the faith of the four people that brought the man that moves Jesus to action.

**the Human One::** The Greek expression is “The Son of Man” – it's rooted in a Hebrew expression from the book of Daniel, a name for a figure in an apocalyptic vision about God redeeming the world. Jesus uses this expression the most often in his own life to refer to the Messiah and talk about himself.

**RAISED HIM UP ::** The Greek word ἐγείρω pronounced “egeiró” means to (a)waken, to raise up, also meaning, to arouse from the sleep of death, to recall the dead to life. Here then you can read that Jesus both raises them man up from the palate to which he was sentenced from paralysis and also raises him up to new life (resurrection) that surpasses the barriers the man had previously known. Which is it for you? Or can it be both?

<sup>42</sup> The believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to ~~the~~ *community*, to their shared meals, and to their prayers. <sup>43</sup> A sense of awe came over everyone. God performed many wonders and signs through the apostles. <sup>44</sup> All the believers were united and shared everything. <sup>45</sup> They would sell pieces of property and possessions and distribute the proceeds to everyone who needed them. <sup>46</sup> Every day, they met together in the temple and ate in their homes. They shared food with gladness and simplicity. <sup>47</sup> They praised God and demonstrated God's goodness to everyone. The Lord added daily to the community those who were being saved.

LANGUAGE NOTES & TEXTUAL CONNECTIONS

The book of Acts is thought to be the second half of the gospel we call Luke, written to be one whole story often called Luke-Acts. It tells the story of the Church as people under the leadership of the apostles respond to the message of Jesus and organize to live as he lived.

The section we read today comes immediately after the story of the Pentecost – in chapter 2 of Acts – where Peter gets up and speaks to a large crowd and there is a massive revival-like crowd conversion. From that conversion grows the community of faith described first in today's selection.

~~the community~~ :: The Greek word κοινωμία pronounced "koinónia" means "what is shared in common as the basis of fellowship (partnership, community)." It has come to be often translated in English as *fellowship*, and can also mean contact, or intimacy. It implies mutual participation – giving and receiving in a relational dynamic.

**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:**

- What engaged you, enraged you, or surprised you in the text?
- The texts tell of how people responded to the good news (proclaimed and enacted) of Jesus. They responded in part by overcoming barriers to embrace healing and freedom. What barriers are overcome? How are they overcome? What does such healing cost?
- When, if ever, have you experienced such Christ-centered koinonia-community? Did you participate as a giver or receiver, or both? What *sense of awe* did you experience in it?
- The Second Great End of the Church as per the Presbyterian Book of Order is that the church is to be about: The shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God.
  - The goal is action and *fellowship*-community. But for whom? How do you, how do we define who is/are the Children of God?
  - How have you/we understood this end as a community during this time of pandemic and social reckoning? How has the past year + changed your understanding of *fellowship*-*community*?
- How is the Spirit of God inviting you – or us as a church – to act, speak, be or change through this word?