

Series: Beyond Awkward

Scripture and Background Information for July 19-25.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

This week we'll be looking at **Mark 2:1-12**. Mark, the co-worker of Paul, wrote the Gospel, carefully designed to present Christ as the Messiah (1:1). To show that Christ is the Messiah, Mark recalls the stories of Jesus doing things only God can do. Jesus heals the sick, stills a storm, and forgives sins. In the Gospel, Mark answers the question: Who is Jesus?

Background for Mark 2:1-12.

Mark's focus is on the importance of Jesus's preaching ministry as Jesus himself mentioned (1:14-15, 28-29). Since Jesus also healed sick people, many people followed him so that he withdrew from them, to be able to follow his main ministry. While preaching one day, Jesus gets unusually interrupted. Some friends bring their sick friend to Jesus to get him healed. With faith and hope for their friend, but Jesus reacts differently than expected.

Some helpful questions/tools to engage with the text:

1. When talking through the text, contrast the different characters Mark describes. Who was present? What were their (the characters) expectations? What did the various characters do? What is their reasoning?
2. Why is Jesus acting so unexpectedly? What is his main goal? Does the context help you see his intentions? What are the things Mark mentions to answer the question, who is Jesus?
3. What does Jesus' question in Verse 9 tell us about His action? Try to answer Jesus' question. Why is Jesus healing the person with paralysis?

Note: As mentioned above, Jesus did not come as a healer. There was tremendous need during the time of His earthly ministry. For everyone one person that He healed, there were dozens who were sick whom He did not. Some may read that and feel that is harsh or lack compassion on Jesus' part. Jesus came to point to an eternal need that all have. On the way, his miracles served as signposts to His claims to be able to save, satisfy, and forgive for eternity.

Scriptures for upcoming weeks:

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| July 26 | John 13:1-17 |
| August 2 | John 13:18-38 |