

Introduction: God's ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8). People tend to think small about what they can do to make their lives better. Usually their thinking is done within the framework for life they already have. It is both hard and challenging to invest time in trying to improve their framework. But, as for God, even though He is done with His physical creating, and there is nothing new under the sun (Ecclesiastes 1:9); He is daily making some hundred thousand people around the globe into 'new creations' IN His Son (2 Corinthians 5:17)! *** I have lived long enough to observe incredible new creations by computer engineers. In 1973 I sat in a dorm room and heard a computer engineering student explain how the speed of light would limit both the complexity of processing and the amount of data stored in computers. Due to the size of mainframe components with hard wiring, computers would have to be larger than football fields to do the work needed by businesses. At that size, even at the speed of light, the distance could make computers crash. We all nodded our heads in agreement and said 'too bad'. But research into integrated circuits was happening at that time. But the late 1980s affordable PCs could do more work and store more data than the huge IBM mainframes from the 1970s. Today, after fifty years, most people in the world have smartphones with integrated circuits made of thin silicon strips with millions of times the data capacity and thousands of times the speed of the early 1970s. The worldwide web can be searched in a fraction of a second! *** In His Kingdom Inaugural Address, The King of kings, Jesus, challenged people to go beyond their current understanding of how they lived by God's Word. Six times He says, 'You all have heard it said ...; but, I am telling you all' (Matthew, chapter 5, beg. with: verses 21, 27, 31, 33, 38 ,43). *** Let's see how Jesus shows people the new and unexpected things God is always doing (John 5:17; 14:10).

I. God's greatest healing for people is to forgive their sins through His Son Jesus, who came to call sinners, with whom He spent time. (*Mark 2:1-17*)

A. Jesus heals a paralytic by first forgiving his sins; but, only God can forgive sins. (*Verses 1-12*)

1. After Jesus returns to Capernaum, it was heard He was in a house; and, so many gathered there that people were outside the door, and He spoke The Word to them. (*Verses 1-2*)

Speaking Word: He was explaining The Word He had co-authored for hours.

Crowd spilling out: So many passersby who heard Him through the window and door stayed to hear Him that there was an overflow crowd into the street.

2. Coming to Him, a paralytic, being borne by four; and, not being able to bring to Him because of the crowd, they un-roofed the roof; and, having broken, they are letting him down. (*Verses 3-4*)

Four men and paralytic: The incident is being reported in the present tense to make the actions of these four men with the paralytic more personal and intense. We can re-live it with them.

un-roof roof: Mark's figure of speech to describe what they did to put their friend before Jesus.

3. Jesus, having seen their faith, is saying to the paralytic, 'Son, they are being forgiven, the sins of thee'. (*Verse 5*)

Are being forgiven: At that moment Jesus says the paralytic's sins are being forgiven by 'someone'.

4. There were being certain scribes sitting and reasoning in their hearts: Why this one thus is speaking blasphemies?

Who is being able to forgive sins, if not only God? (*Verses 6-7*)

Scribes: blasphemy: They understand Jesus meant that He is forgiving the sins. They also correctly believe only God can forgive sins. The assume Jesus cannot be God, so He is blaspheming.

5. At once, Jesus having perceived in His spirit that so they are reasoning in themselves, He is saying, 'Why this you all are reasoning in your hearts whether it is easier to say, "Are being forgiven thy sins, or thou must be rising, thou must be taking up thy bed, and thou must be walking" '. (*Verses 8-9*)

Jesus' spirit: This may be Jesus' human spirit, The Holy Spirit, or both in agreement.

Good question: This is a good question: How did Jesus know what was happening in their hearts? The scribes did not expect this. Jesus implies any man can declare sins are forgiven, even if this is not true. The scribes were not used to having people challenge them in this way.

Jesus is always doing something new and unexpected

6. That you all may have known, power is having The Son of Man to forgive sins – He is saying, 'Thou must be rising, thou must be taking up thy bed, and thou must be going to thy house. (*Verses 10-11*)

Sets stage: Jesus gives three impossible commands to this paralytic. Jesus' power will be demonstrated if the paralytic complies! Does he have the faith of Jesus as his friends do?

7. Having been risen, at once having taken up the bed, he went forth before all; so to be amazed all, and to be glorified God, saying, 'This never we saw!' (*Verse 12*)

Bottom line: With this miracle, Jesus shows Himself to be God, The One who can forgive sins! This happened six months after the wedding in Cana, and 'soon' after the Sermon on the Mount. Neither the people, nor the scribes had seen a paralytic healed.

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B. Jesus calls a tax collector to follow Him and attends a dinner with many tax collectors and sinners, which causes Pharisees to question His disciples. (*Verses 13-17*)

1. He went forth again by the sea and all the crowd was coming to Him, and He was teaching them. (*Verse 13*)

Teaching multitude: The first event began with Jesus speaking The Word to many, the second with Him teaching a crowd.

2. Passing by, He saw Levi (joined), son of Alphaios (changing) sitting in the tax office; and He is saying to him, 'Thou must be following Me'; and, having risen, he followed Him. (*Verse 14*)

Sees tax collector: As Jesus is passing by a tax office He sees a specific tax collector.

Calls Matthew: Mark uses his given name, but he is also called Matthew (gift of Yah). Jesus calls Matthew to follow Him.

Obeyed: Matthew follows instantly, as did the two pairs of fishermen brothers earlier.

3. It is coming to pass, Him to sit at table in the house of him and many tax collectors and sinners were sitting together with Jesus and His disciples; for they were being many and they were following Him. (*Verse 15*)

Matthew hosts co-workers: Soon, Levi-Matthew called together many fellow tax collectors to have a meal at his house with Jesus.

Many disciples: Notice that Levi-Matthew also invited Jesus' many disciples (followers).

4. The scribes of the Pharisees having seen He is eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they were saying to His disciples, 'With tax collectors and sinners, He is eating?' (*Verse 16*)
Some Jews: The Pharisees who were 'experts' in Scripture are now questioning Jesus' disciples as to why, if He is God, Jesus would bless scandalous people with His Presence?
5. Having heard, Jesus is saying, 'Not need are having those being well of a physician, but those sickness having'. (*Verse 17a*)
Jesus responds: Jesus begins with an almost proverbial truth that in this context is new to the scribes!

Application: We must have our souls shaken with amazement because God is always forgiving the sins of people, and calling the least likely people to follow Him!

6. Not I came to call righteous, but sinners. (*Verse 17b*)

His mission: The heart of Jesus' mission is to call sinners to Himself to be forgiven. Many Jewish leaders thought God was against sinners. But, Jesus in these two events has done something new and unexpected before them.

Jesus is always doing something new and unexpected

II. Jesus taught human efforts to please God are not possible unless they become 'new people' IN Him, The One God sent to remove from people the penalty of their sins. (*Mark 2:18-22; Psalm 103:6-14*)

- A. When Jesus is questioned about His disciples not fasting, He tells a parable illustrating people must be made new before receiving 'new wine'. (*Mark 2:18-22*)
 1. Those being disciples of John and the Pharisees, fasting; they are coming and saying to Him, 'Why the disciples of John and the Pharisees are fasting; but, Thy disciples, not they are fasting?' (*Verse 18*)
Fasting: Disciples of John and the Pharisees ask Jesus why only His disciples do not fast.
 2. Jesus said, 'Not they are being able, the sons of the wedding hall, in which the bridegroom is with them to fast'. (*Verse 19*)
Not when IN Presence: Again, Jesus gives a strong and unexpected answer. He IS The Bridegroom, and says that while wedding attendees are IN His Presence they do not fast!

Jesus is always doing something new and unexpected

3. 'They will come, the days when He should be taken away from them, The Bridegroom; then they will fast in that day'. (*Verse 20*)
In those days: Jesus is saying that after He physically leaves His disciples, they will practice all the spiritual disciplines God's people had practiced since the days of Moses. This will start with fasting, but also include prayer and His people gathering to worship together.

Application: We must realize only people who are 'new creations' in Jesus, with sins forgiven, are able to practice spiritual disciplines. The February newsletter will address the disciplines of solitude and silence.

4. No man patch of new cloth is sewing garment old, but if not it is taking up the fullness from it, the new of the old, and worse the tear (schism) is being; no man is putting new wine into wineskins old, but if not it will burst the wine the wineskins, and the wine is being ruined and the wineskins, but new wine into wineskins new. (*Verses 21-22*)
Parable of 'new creations': Jesus first says new cloth is not used to mend an old garment because it makes the tear worse. Then He says new wine put into old wineskins results in double disaster. Bottom Line: new wine is put into new wineskins.
Upper Room: In the Upper Room Passover before His crucifixion, Jesus said He would send His Holy Spirit to be in His disciples to guide them into all truth (*John 16:13-15*).
Churches: Paul told Christians in Corinth: anyone IN Christ is a 'new creation' (*2 Corinthians 5:17*).

Application: We must seek to live as 'new creations' every day so Jesus will do something new in us!

Jesus is always doing something new and unexpected

- B. In His generous LOVE, The Covenant God has removed the transgressions of His people very far from them. (*Psalm 103:6-14*)
 1. Yahweh does righteousness / and judgment to all oppressed // He makes known His ways to Moses / to the children of Israel His doings. (*Verses 6-7*)
God of action: The Covenant God does righteous acts and right judgment for the oppressed. Further, He makes known His ways and doings to His people from the time of Moses, forward.
 2. Yahweh compassionate and gracious / slow to anger and much strong Love. (*Verse 8*)
God's character: Unlike certain scribes thought in Jesus' day, Yahweh is slow to anger. And, He has three strong character qualities: compassion, grace and LOVE.
 3. Not perpetually He will strive / and not forever will He keep (anger) // not according to our sins has He done to us / and not according to our iniquities does He repay us. (*Verses 9-10*)
Not as deserved: His people deserve that He be angry to them and contend with them. Instead He does not repay them according to either their sins or wrong desires.
 4. Because height of heavens above the earth / has been great His strong Love on those fearing Him // As far as the east from the west / He removed far away our transgressions from us. (*Verses 11-12*)
Strong Love: Because The Triune God has great strong Love for His people, He removes their transgressions (strongest sins) far away from them!

The Three-IN-One God removes sin in His Love

5. As has compassion father on his children / compassion Yahweh on those fearing Him // because He knows our frame / remembering that dust we are. (*Verses 13-14*)

Compassion: Yahweh is doubly compassionate of His people who tremble at His awesome goodness.

Knows our weakness: He knows they are made from the 'dust' of the ground, and so lack strength.

Application: Let us thank God that although He knows our weaknesses He is still compassionate to us.

Conclusion: Jesus taught that God's priority is to forgive sinners who know they are incapable of obeying God's will in their own strength. But, He will not call people who think they are fine just as they are. God forgives and changes people out of His compassion and Love.

The Three-IN-One God removes sin in His Love