

LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

January 29, 2012

Series: Jesus 101

“Offended by Jesus” Mark 2:1-3:6

Ken Dryden

Sermon Summary:

In his encounters with religious leaders of the time, Jesus seemed to be continually offending them. In fact this section ends by saying they were so offended that they went off in a rage and began to plot with the Herodians how to kill Jesus (3:6). Jesus apparently hadn't read the old book "How to Win Friends and Influence People". What would be so offensive about what Jesus was saying that they would want to kill Him? Jesus is not what they were expecting and His Kingdom is not what they had built their lives on. Jesus was exposing their hard hearts, their false view of righteousness and their misunderstanding of who is welcomed in to the kingdom.

Group Discussion Questions:

- I. Where have you seen God at work in the past week? Have you seen answered prayers? What is God teaching you in your times in His Word and prayer? (This would be a good time to encourage people in the Jesus 101 Challenges)
- II. Read Mark 2:1 - 3:6 Have several people share the reading.
- III. What stands out to you in this passage? Was there something that stood out to you on Sunday? What questions does it raise?
- IV. 2:13-19 Popular speaker and author Tony Campolo likes to say "The Kingdom of God is like a party". Do you think this passage bears that out? Does that description surprise you? What does this passage teach you about Jesus? Why did the religious leaders become so offended by the people Jesus hung out with? Why were tax collectors and sinners so attracted to Jesus ("there were many who followed Him" 2:15)? What is the lesson for us in this?

Quote: *The tragedy is that ever since those days, there have been in the Christian church many Christian Pharisees and many Sadducees. The Christian Sadducees are so determined to live in the real world and not isolate themselves from it that they adopted its standards and surrendered the standards of Jesus Christ. The Christian Pharisees are so determined to live a holy life and not surrender the standards of Jesus that they withdraw from the world altogether. The Sadducees were conformists, and the Pharisees were separatists. Both got it wrong. Jesus was neither.*

~ John Stott

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V. What do you think Jesus is getting at when he talks about new wine in old wine skins (2:22)? Do you think we still struggle with this? How?

Quote: *“What Jesus is doing can’t be fitted into the existing ways of thinking and living. If people try to do that they’ll have the worst of both worlds. At the time this meant that Jesus’ powerful kingdom-ministry couldn’t be fitted into the ways of thinking that His fellow first century Galileans already had. They needed to think differently, to think bigger, to get new wineskins for the new wine he had to offer. Most people are threatened by that kind of challenge.” NT Wright Mark for Everyone.*

VI. “Jesus looked around at them in anger” Mk. 3:5 What angered Jesus about the ways that the Pharisees responded in this situation? How can people as serious about their religion and holiness as the Pharisees become so hard hearted? How can we prevent the hardening of our hearts?

VII. What is the Good News in this passage? Who in your life needs to hear it? What are you going to do about it?

Working it Out: Encourage your group to take part in the Jesus 101 Challenge. If you need extra cards with the challenges you can pick some up at the office or contact Pastor Ken to email you a copy. Take time each week to share as a group or in smaller groups of 2 or 3 what God is showing you. Make sure to reserve time to pray together. Pray for those in your lives who need to hear the Good News of the Kingdom.

May God richly bless your time together as a group!