

Is Jesus the Only Savior?

John D. Wilsey

Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

Assignment One

Read the comments related to Isaiah 35:5–6 and 42:6–7 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: How does Jesus fulfill Old Testament prophecy?

Assignment Two

Read the comments related to Isaiah 11:1–4 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: How does this passage shed light on Jesus' reaction to the scribes in Mark 2:7?

Assignment Three

Read the comments related to Mark 2:12 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: What is the appropriate response to God's work in the world?

Scripture to Memorize

"But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" – He said to the paralytic – "I say to you, rise, pick up your bed, and go home." Mark 2:10–11

Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will understand why there is no other name under heaven but that of Jesus Christ by which we can be saved.

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It's in the Book

30 minutes

Real-Life Scenario

You are having a conversation with a good friend over lunch when the topic of spirituality comes up. Your friend says: "There are many ways to God. The important thing is for everyone to be moral and sincere in whatever religion they believe in." You respond to this statement by saying that Jesus is the only way to the Father. He asks you why you think Christianity is so exclusive. How can you respond?

Read Mark 2:1–12 out loud.

Studying the Passage

Verse 3. bringing to Him a paralytic. Notice that Christ came to heal people such as the paralytic, but His physical healings were tangible demonstrations of how He heals us spiritually. For example, the paralytic was physically unable to move or walk. When we are in our sins, we are similarly inhibited in a spiritual sense. We are spiritually helpless in our sins, but Christ heals us when we come to Him in belief and repentance. In His physical and spiritual healing, Christ fulfills the prophecies of Isaiah 35:5–6; 42:6–7; Psalm 146:8–10.

Verse 5. Jesus saw their faith. The men came to Jesus on His terms, and they placed their faith in Him. When we come to Christ on His terms, we find that we are always accepted. Notice, also, that Jesus called the paralytic "son." This is an intimate expression, and it is a reflection of the blessed state of forgiveness David described in Psalm 32.

Verse 7. Who can forgive sins but God alone? This is a reasonable question, although it was asked in a spirit of hostile skepticism. However, Jesus answered their question with a demonstration of His divine power. His demonstration of divine power proved that He is God. Since there is only one God, and Jesus shows Himself to be God, there is then only one Savior. God is the only One who can save.

Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now share an answer to the following question: How does Jesus fulfill Old Testament prophecy?

Discussion Question

Is Jesus the only Savior? What exactly does Jesus save us from? What, or who, else claims to save us from that which Christ claims to save us?

On Your Own

Looking at what the paralytic and his friends did as seen in verse 4, write a working definition of *faith* in the space below.

Studying the Passage

Verse 8. Immediately Jesus, perceiving in His spirit. Jesus read the minds of the scribes in this passage. This is another evidence of Jesus' deity, but it is subtle. Some like to say that Jesus never claimed to be God. Here are two responses:

1. Of course He did, many times (see John 10:30 for a brief example).
2. Usually His claims to deity were in the form of actions that only God can perform, such as forgiving sins, working miracles and fulfilling His own promise of laying down His life and taking it up again. But the ability to read minds is yet another proof of His deity, as well as a fulfillment of prophecy (see Isaiah 11:1–4).

Verse 9. Which is easier. Both are impossible for a mere mortal—the forgiving of another's sins and miraculous healing of total paralysis—but Jesus proved to those present that His power was not relegated to words alone. He wasn't just saying, "Your sins are forgiven." He really was forgiving the man's sins, just as He undeniably healed him of his paralysis.

Verses 10–11. But that you may know that the Son of Man. Jesus was demonstrating that He is God by His actions. He also demonstrated His deity by claiming the title given to the divine Messiah in the prophetic dream of the prophet Daniel in Daniel 7:13. "Son of Man" is not a title that merely denotes the Messiah as "the son of a man." It is a title laden with divine, messianic and prophetic significance.

Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now share an answer to the following question: How does this passage shed light on Jesus' reaction to the scribes in Mark 2:7?

Studying the Passage

Verse 12. And he . . . picked up his bed and went out. The physical healing took place instantly. So did his spiritual healing. His healing was in sight of everyone around, not in secret. Everyone could see the effect of Jesus' saving power on this person, and everyone's reaction was the same—amazement. This was the appropriate response.

Assignment Three Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now share an answer to the following question: What is the appropriate response to God's work in the world?

Discussion Question

What is the difference between claiming to be the Savior and doing what the Savior does? This is the essence of what Christ is doing in Mark 2:9–10. He backs up His claim with physical demonstration.

On Your Own

The willingness and ability to follow through on one's claims is key to making good on those claims. In the space below, list several claims Jesus made about His divinity that He backed up with demonstrations.

Heart and Hands

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** at the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

Since Last Week

5 minutes

Give the group this update: "In our last session I made a commitment to . . . I want to let you know how that turned out. On that same issue I think the Holy Spirit now is leading me to . . ."

Grace-Filled Accountability

5 minutes

Disciples can agree on a way to hold one another accountable. Confessing faults with other disciples allows them to offer grace, insights, and encouragement. Even more important is confession to Christ, the source of true forgiveness and cleansing.

Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service

5 minutes

Groups of disciples always are making preparations for evangelism, missions, and service. Use these minutes to work on the next plan.

Prayer

7 minutes

Every disciple will pray aloud, offering praise to Jesus, thanking Him specifically for His gracious acts, making heartfelt confession, committing to actions flowing from the Bible study, praying toward evangelism locally and globally, and interceding for others as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

At Home: Nail It Down

We can know that Jesus is the only way to God because He is the only One who does what is necessary to reconcile sinful human beings to a holy God. If God were imperfect, if He were unholy, if He were a creation of man's imagination, then yes, there would indeed be many ways to know and understand such a divine being. God is, however, independent of human beings. Since He is independent of human beings, He is not subject to the standards by which human beings would like to define Him.

Jesus Christ is the only Savior because He is the only One willing and able to save us from our sinful condition and make us right with God. He is the only One in whom life resides, and He is the only One who can give life. He gives life by defeating the claims made on human beings of sin and death. He subjected Himself to the power of sin and death and then overturned that power. No other person can do such a thing.

In Mark 2:1–12, we see an example of Jesus demonstrating His power over sin and death. He forgave the man's sin and healed him of a disease that was wrought by the curse of the sin committed by Adam in the garden of Eden.

Jesus doesn't merely say He is the Savior, He demonstrates it in the presence of a multitude. This passage helps us see the flaw in the expression, "There are many paths to God." There is one God. There is one way to be saved and there is only one Savior, Jesus Christ.

Follow up Question

How will you explain the exclusivity of Christ to those who believe there are many ways to God?

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.