

## The Unexpected King: The Gospel of Mark

*A study for Community Groups to use the week of March 8<sup>th</sup>*

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Series Guide** to complete foundational questions in the book for week 5 using the scripture below.

### Week 6: Mark 2:13-17

#### Overview

Mark doesn't just tell us what Jesus did; he shows us who Jesus is in a way that forces us to rethink the world we're living in and the stories we're being sold every day.

*"Eating a meal together meant something in Jesus' world that it does not mean today in the West. Hospitality was a sacred duty in the ancient Near East. When someone invited someone else to eat with him, he was extending a pledge of loyalty and protection to that person. To accept an invitation to dinner implied a willingness to become a close friend of the host. Jesus' acceptance of table fellowship with sinners (i.e., outcasts) conveyed by action the forgiveness that He gave verbally in 2:5" – Constable's Notes*

#### Questions

\*In the Series Guide you will find basic questions we want all to use as they begin to look at the passage. Questions such as; *Who have you had the opportunity to BLESS this week? What does this passage reveal about God? About people? About the life He has planned for us?* These additional questions relate to the passage specifically for your benefit.

- In Mark 2:14, Jesus says to Levi, "Follow me," and Levi "got up and followed him." What stands out to you about how simple, and immediate, that invitation is? Levi leaves his tax booth, the very place that gave him security and identity. What might your "booth" be, the thing you look to for control, worth, or stability? What would it look like to transfer your trust from that to Jesus?
- In Mark 2:15–16, Jesus eats with "tax collectors and sinners," and the Pharisees question why He would do that. What contrast do you see between Jesus at the table and the religious leaders standing at a distance? What does this scene teach us about belonging before behavior? In your life, are you more likely to withdraw from messy people, try to fix them, or sit at the table with them? Why?
- In Mark 2:17, Jesus says, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." Why is it so hard to admit we are spiritually "sick"? How is that different from the world's cycle of resolve, relapse, and regret? What would it look like this week to respond to Jesus not by trying harder, but by staying closer?