

## Lesson 09: The Beginning of Opposition

Objective: To know that true disciples of Jesus are "*non-conformists*."

Background: As the popularity of Jesus increased, the opposition to His ministry began to set in. To Jewish leaders, Jesus was a dangerous person because His words and deeds were "revolutionary" (in a good sense); they clashed with the "established" religion, custom, and value of the day.

Instruction: Read carefully Mark 2:1-22; John 5:1-18; Mark 2:23-3:6 as if you were examining the cause of opposition to Jesus' ministry.

Let's Think: Examine carefully the following "sample" incidents.

Incident 1- Read again Mk. 2:1-12

- What *qualities for success* did the paralytic's friends demonstrate? List them.
- Did Jesus imply that the man's suffering was the result of sin when He said, "Your sins are forgiven"? (Compare Jn. 5:9-14) Is that the case in each and every sickness? Read also Jn.9:1-3.
- Who was offended by Jesus' claim and why? Was their reasoning sound?
- How did Jesus prove that He indeed has authority to forgive sins? (8-12)

Incident 2- Read again Mk. 2: 13-17, also Lk. 5:27-32

The tax-collectors were socially ostracized because they collected taxes for the hateful Gentile overlord, the Roman officers, and often defrauded their fellow Jews. Luke 3:12-13; 19:2-10.

- Did Jesus know who Levi was when He recruited him? How did Levi celebrate the occasion, the change of his career? (Levi is Matthew who wrote the Gospel that bears his name.)
- What criticism was brought against Jesus and by whom? Was the criticism valid? How did Jesus reply to His critics and defend His behavior?

Incident 3- Mk. 3:1-6 after Jesus returned from a feast in Jerusalem, John 5:1-18.

- Was Jesus aware of the "trap" awaiting Him at the Synagogue? Explain.
- Was He intimidated? And was He trapped? Substantiate your answer.
- How serious was Jesus' behavior in the light of Mk 3:6? In what way did Jesus' view of the Sabbath differ from that of the religious leaders? Explain. Read also Mk2:27-28.; In. 5:17.

Summary -Based on your examination, how would you answer those who ask:

- Was Jesus a "conformist," one who conforms to the prevailing value and practice of His day?  
Substantiate your answer.
- How do you describe Jesus' way of life? Why did His presence make the Jewish religious leaders, the Scribes and the Pharisees, uncomfortable?

Lesson -Reflect on the life of Jesus:

- In what sense are the true disciples of Jesus "*non-conformists*"? Give examples. (cf. Rm. 12:1, 2)  
Does the truth receive due emphasis in the teaching of the church today? If not, why?
- Is there a difference between the religion of "*heart*" and the religion of "*rules*"? Explain.

Let's Remember: Jesus said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I came not to call the righteous but sinners." (Mark 2:17).