RESILIENT FAITH IN A TURBULENT WORLD



Together

Mark 2:1-5

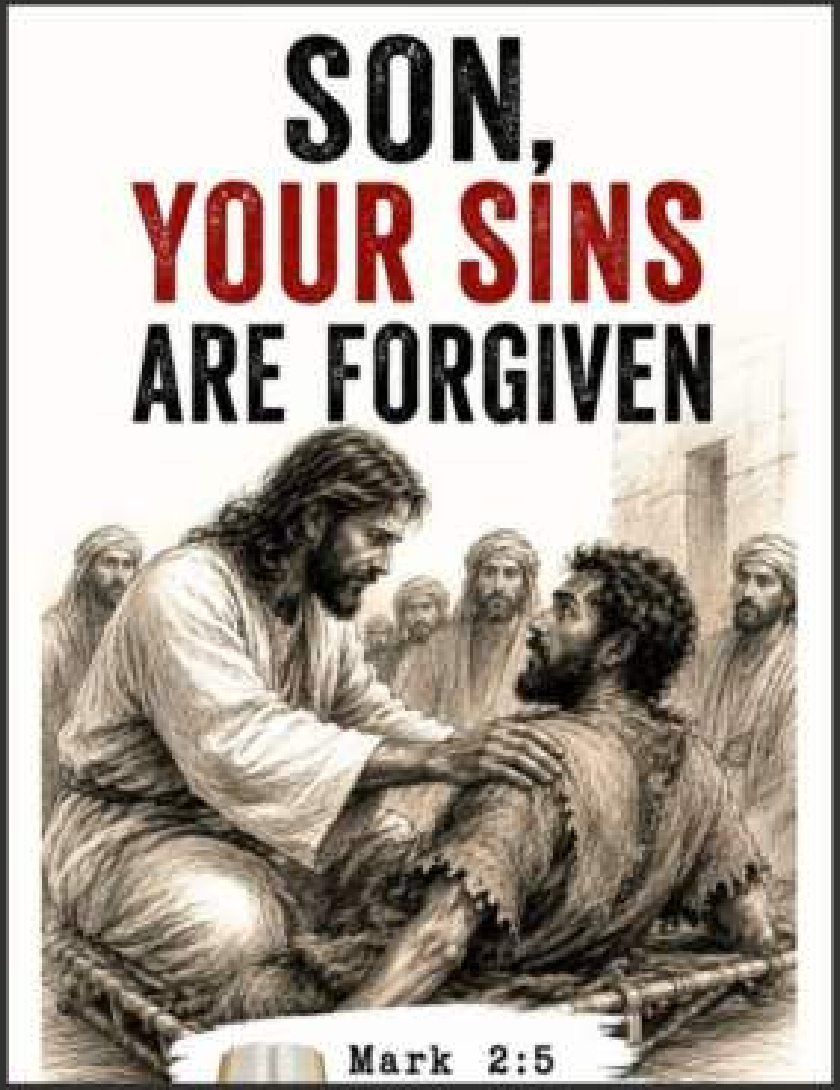
When Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people
heard that he had come home. [2] They gathered in such
large numbers that there was no room left, not even
outside the door, and he preached the word to them.
[3] Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man,
carried by four of them.

Mark 2:1-5

4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the
crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus
by digging through it and then lowered the mat the
man was lying on. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said
to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."





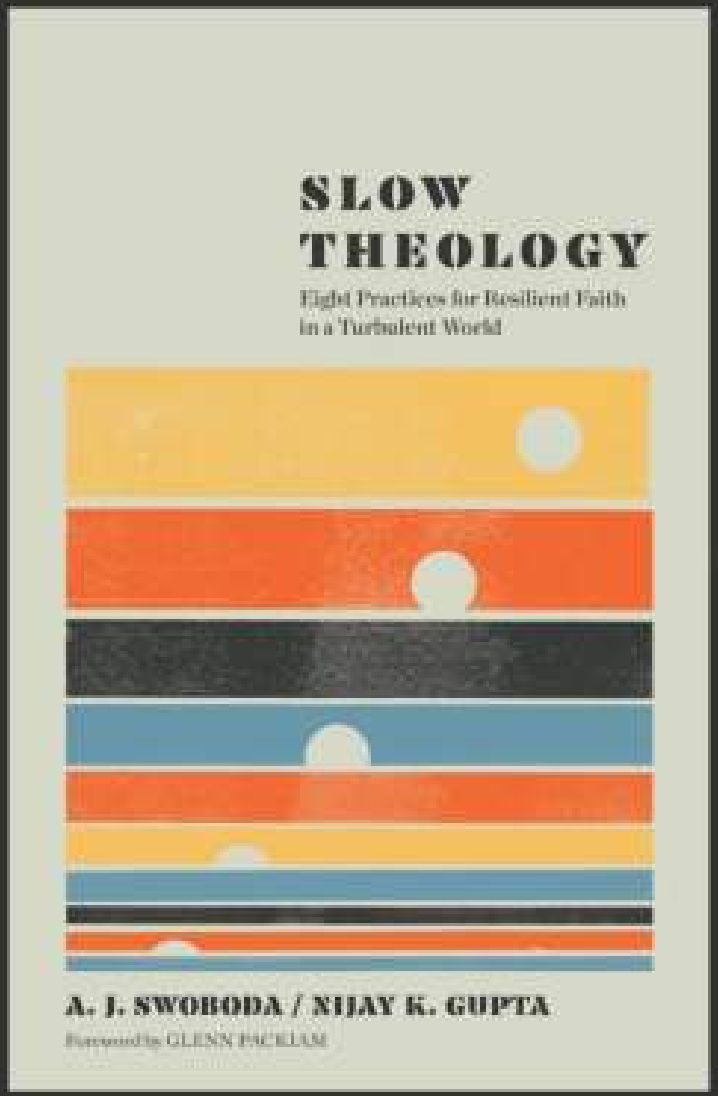

SON,
YOUR SINS
ARE FORGIVEN
Mark 2:5


WHEN JESUS SAW
THEIR FAITH, HE SAID
TO THE PARALYZED
MAN, 'SON, YOUR SINS
ARE FORGIVEN.'
Mark 2:5 NIV

"From birth, we are overtly instructed to 'think for ourselves' and 'question everything' and 'to thine own self be true.' Pithy little statements like these are not-so-subtle indictments from an individualist culture that does not value the vitality and need for communal, shared belief. Cultures that follow this tradition tend to make the individual the center of the universe."

(from *Slow Theology*)

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"We were not made to live out our life of faith in Jesus Christ by ourselves... We're saved by faith alone, but we're not meant to live out our faith alone!"

(from *Slow Theology*)

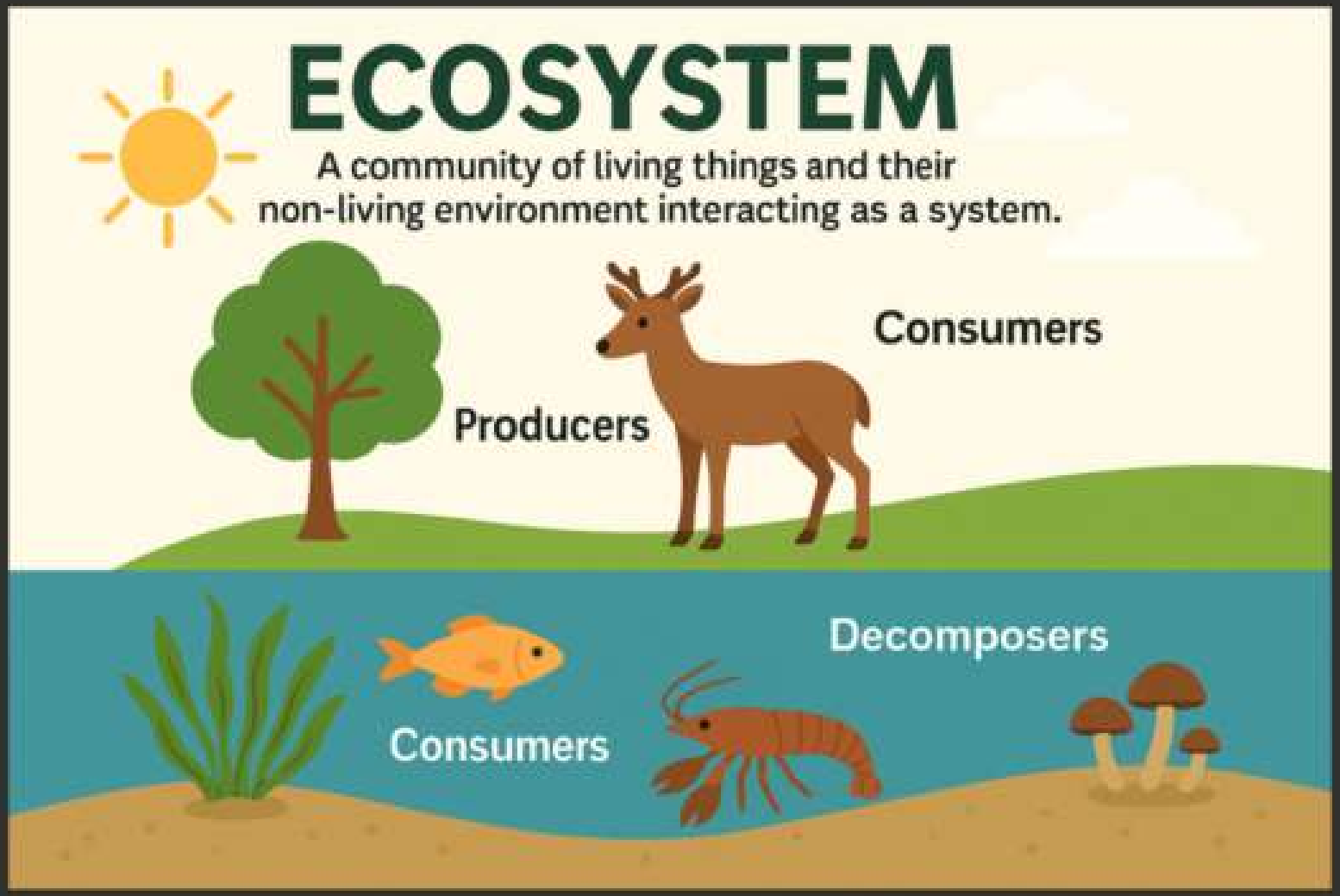
"Doing the work of theology together is harder, slower, and more difficult. But the end result is bound to be clearer and truer."

(from *Slow Theology*)

1 Corinthians 12:13-14, 26

We were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. [14] Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many... [26] If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

Just as the differences in giftings are good (by design) for the overall body, the same can be true for the thoughts we have about God when we bring them into the wider community of the church.


ECOSYSTEM
A community of living things and their non-living environment interacting as a system.
Producers
Consumers
Consumers
Decomposers

The church is a “reconciled diversity” populated by people with different gifts and thoughts, held together in unity by the Holy Spirit.

Acts 15:1-2, 6

Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved." [2] This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem... [6] The apostles and elders met to consider this question.

"The decision about how to handle the Gentiles was not put on one person's shoulders. The early church did not operate—at least in the context of the book of Acts—according to Moses's style of leadership, where one person came off the mountain to tell everyone what was going to happen."

(from *Slow Theology*)

Acts 15:28-29

28 It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to
burden you with anything beyond the following
requirements: 29 You are to abstain from food
sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of
strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will
do well to avoid these things.

Acts 18:24-26

24 Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of
Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man,
with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. 25 He had
been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke
with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately,
though he knew only the baptism of John. 26 He began
to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and
Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and
explained to him the way of God more adequately.

The thoughts about God that Apollos had were intelligent, accurate... and incomplete!

The thoughts about God that Apollos had were intelligent, accurate... and incomplete!

The theology and ministry of Apollos became deeper, richer, clearer and more powerful because he was willing to learn from others' thoughts on God.

Closing Reflections

Think back to a time when you needed to lean on the strength of someone else's faith or understanding, and thank God for that person.

Closing Reflections

Invite the Spirit to convict you of the ways/areas in which you've been captivated by radical individualism.

Closing Reflections

How often do you do your thinking about God alone?
How often do you think/talk about God in the company of other Christians?

Closing Reflections

Ask God to help you further discern what "part" you have in the body of Christ, and how the Spirit might use you to strengthen the faith or understanding of a fellow disciple of Jesus.

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