Welcome to Hope Sabbath School—an in-depth interactive study of the Word of God. We are continuing a series of studies on The Gospel of Mark. Today’s topic: CONTROVERSIES.

1. **Controversy at the healing of the paralytic**
   a) Mark 2:1-12 What impresses you the most as you hear this story?
   b) What does this story tell us about Jesus?
   c) What are your thoughts about the reactions of those present? (See v.7 and v.12)

2. **Controversial selection of a disciple**
   a) Mark 2:13-14 What was unusual about the call of Jesus to Matthew Levi?
   b) Mark 2:15-17 What are your thoughts about the celebration at Matthew Levi’s house and the reactions of those present?
   c) What other stories in the ministry of Jesus remind us that He loves sinners and came to save them?

3. **Controversy over fasting**
   a) Mark 2:18 What is the purpose of fasting in connection with our relationship with God?
   b) Why were the disciples of Jesus not fasting? Mark 2:19
   c) What did Jesus teach about fasting for His followers? Mark 2:20, Matthew 6:16-18
   d) What lessons have you learned in times of fasting?

4. **Controversy over conduct on the Sabbath**
   a) Mark 2:23-28 What important truth did Jesus share about Sabbath in His interaction with the Pharisees?
   b) Mark 3:1-5 How did Jesus react to the trap the religious leaders had set for Him regarding Sabbath observance?
   c) Mark 3:6 What are your thoughts about the reaction of the Pharisees having witnesses this healing miracle by Jesus?
   d) When did you come to realize that the Sabbath was a time for blessing and healing? (Matthew 12:10-12)

5. **Controversy over the ministry of Jesus**
   a) Mark 3:20-21 According to this passage, who tried to restrict the ministry of Jesus? (See also Mark 3:31-35)
   b) Share a time when your family members were not supportive of your ministry in the name of Jesus.
   c) What critical explanation did the scribes and Pharisees give for the miraculous works Jesus performed? Mark 3:22 (See also Matthew 9:32-34)
   d) What are your thoughts about the reaction of Jesus to their accusation? Mark 3:23-27
   e) Why is it an unforgivable sin to call a manifestation of God’s power and love a work of Satan? Mark 3:28-29 (See also John 16:13, Psalm 51:10-11)
   f) What lessons can we learn from Jesus about dealing with controversy?