

Mark Chapter 3 Continued

Verses 20-35: Mark writes of three incidents of opposition to Jesus: among friends, scribes and family.

In (verses 20-21), Jesus' popular appeal continues unabated. But acquaintances seek to detain Him, having decided that He is mentally unsound. They are apparently unsuccessful, and quite mistaken.

Mark 3:20 "And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread."

“Cometh together again”: This refers to Jesus' return to Capernaum (2:1).

We see here, that the magnitude of the ministry was such and the needs of the people were so great that Jesus would not stop to eat or to rest His body.

Mark 3:21 "And when his friends heard [of it], they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself."

“When his friends heard”: In Greek, this expression was used in various ways to describe someone's friends or close associates. In the strictest sense, it meant family, which is probably the best understanding here.

“Lay hold on him”: Mark used this same term elsewhere to mean the arrest of a person (6:17; 12:12; 14:1, 44, 46, 51). Jesus' relatives evidently heard the report of verse 20 and came to Capernaum to restrain Him from His many activities and bring Him under their care and control, all supposedly for His own good.

“He is beside himself”: Jesus' family could only explain His unconventional lifestyle, with its willingness for others always to impose on Him, by saying He was irrational or had lost His mind.

These were well-meaning family and friends. They believed because Jesus was working so very hard and not taking time for eating, that He had driven Himself too far and was not thinking right. They tried to force Him to rest.

Preachers know this feeling as well. Well-meaning family and friends will get concerned about you and try to stop you from doing something that you know you must do. God will fill you with all the strength you need to fulfill the job He has chosen for you to do.

The enemies of the work are many times close friends and family. Just as Jesus went on without their approval, that is what we must do too.

Verses 22-30: Scribes (see 2:6-7), make a long journey to assess Jesus' work. Their verdict is negative.

Mark 3:22 "And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils."

“Scribes”: Jewish scholars, also called lawyers, (mostly Pharisees), who were experts on the law and its application (see note on Matt. 2:4).

“Beelzebub” is a synonym for Satan.

These scribes (ministers), of that day realized that Jesus was able to cast out demons, and they were not able to cast them out. They were grasping for some kind of answer why He was able to cast out demons. They did not understand it, so they criticized. They even accused Jesus of being of the devil.

Mark 3:23 "And he called them [unto him], and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?"

“Parables”: Jesus answered the scribes by making an analogy between well known facts and the truths He expounded (see note on 13:3).

Notice above, even though they were criticizing Jesus, they still came when He told them to. This speaking in parables was so only His followers would understand what He was saying. Not only how can Satan cast out Satan, but why would Satan cast out Satan?

This was probably, the most ridiculous statement they had made up until now. Notice that Jesus did not deny that Satan existed. He just said that Satan and Jesus were on opposite sides.

Mark 3:24-25 "And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand." "And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand."

This was all saying the very same thing. Divide and conquer is just a simple way of saying this. The kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan are opposites. If Satan started throwing his own evil spirits out of his victims, they would no longer be victims. We can easily see that even Satan would not be so dumb.

This house divided is along the same line, but we see it so much in our society today. If mother and dad are not in agreement, they are headed for divorce and the tearing up of the home. Mother and dad should stand as one united, and then they two could withstand the onslaught of the devil. One can put a thousand to flight and two together can put ten thousand to flight.

Deuteronomy 32:30 "How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had shut them up?"

You see, together we stand; divided, we fall.

Mark 3:26 "And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end."

“He cannot stand”: An expression used only in Mark which refers to Satan’s ultimate doom as head of the demonic world system (see notes on Rev. 20:1-10).

This was kind of like committing suicide. If He was against Himself, who was for Him?

Mark 3:27 "No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house."

“Enter into a strong man’s house and spoil his goods”: One must be stronger than Satan in order to enter his domain (“strong man’s house”), bind him (restrain his action), and free (“plunder”), people (“his property”), from his control. Only Jesus had such power over the devil (Rom. 16:20; Heb. 2:14-15).

The two things that Satan is the most afraid of are the name of Jesus and the blood of Jesus. This is what defeated him at the cross. It is with the Spirit of God, in the name of Jesus, and through the power of His shed blood that we cast out demons.

Verses 28-30: “Verily” translates the Greek amen. This manner of speaking has the effect of solemnifying Jesus’ words by implicitly invoking God’s sanction of them. Jesus thereby claims to be God’s very spokesman.

“Said” (or, “they kept saying,”; verse 30), denotes repetition, showing the minds of men who should have known better being tragically closed to God’s presence in Jesus. The sin Jesus warns against consists in a deliberate and psychologically irrevocable spurning of God’s redeeming and cleansing power, going as far as to see in Jesus, the incarnation of a demon.

Profaning even God’s name is a deadly business (Exodus 20:7). But unforgivable, says Jesus, is the callousness of heart that leads to such debased spiritual sensitivity that God’s Word and deed through Jesus, can be trodden so ruthlessly underfoot. Such a perverse heart cuts itself off from saving grace. There can be no reconciliation. God gives the guilty party over to that ruler whom the man has willfully chosen to elevate above the Son of God.

Mark 3:28 "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:"

“Verily I say unto you”: Mark’s first use of this expression, which occurs throughout the gospels, was employed as a formula that always introduced truthful and authoritative words from Jesus (6:11; 8:12; 9:1, 41; 10:15, 29; 11:23; 12:43; 13:30; 14:9, 18, 25, 30).

(Verses 28-29), are probably the most controversial two verses in the entire Bible. Many people believe that they have already sinned this unforgivable sin against the Holy Ghost. I know people

who believe that because they have cursed and had the Lord's name attached to the curse words, that they have committed the unforgivable sin.

Some believe because of the place this is located in the Scriptures that these scribes and Pharisees committed this sin when they said that the miracles Jesus was doing was from Satan. There are others who believe to deny that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is for our day is an unforgivable sin. I personally believe none of the above.

I believe (verse 28), is true when it says ALL sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men. That is a separate statement from verse 29. My own personal belief is that the sin can only be committed at death. This Holy Ghost is the Spirit Jesus sends as a comforter to us to teach and help us. When we reject Jesus Christ as our Savior and die in that state, we have totally rejected the Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost).

Mark 3:29 "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:"

“He that shall blaspheme ... hath never forgiveness”: Whenever someone deliberately and disrespectfully slanders the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit in pointing to the Lordship and redemption of Jesus Christ, he completely negates and forfeits any possibility of present or future forgiveness of sins (see note on Matt. 12:31), because he has wholly rejected the only basis of God’s salvation.

I believe this total rejection of Jesus and the Holy Ghost is what this blasphemy is. I believe as long as there is breath in your body, and you use that breath to ask Jesus to forgive you and send the Holy Ghost, He will. We are all in danger of eternal damnation until we repent and receive Jesus in our hearts.

Mark 3:30 "Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit."

These men had totally rejected Jesus and unless they repented, this will be their fate. Even Paul said these terrible things for a time, until he met Jesus on the road to Damascus.

Verses 31-32: Like His friends (verses 20-21), His family wants to temper Jesus’ by now quite controversial operations with some demands or advice.

Mark 3:31-32 "There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him." "And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee."

“His brethren and his mother”: Jesus’ earthy family (see notes on verse 21; Matt. 12:46).

Verses 33-35: Mutual obedience to God comprises a tie that binds more closely than mere bloodlines.

Mark 3:33-35 "And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren?" "And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!" "For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother."

Jesus made a decisive and comprehensive statement on true Christian discipleship. Such discipleship involves a spiritual relationship that transcends the physical family and is open to all who are empowered by the Spirit of God to come to Christ in repentance and faith and enabled to live a life of obedience to God's Word.

We see this whole scene was set up so that Jesus might teach us about the family of God. All believers in Jesus Christ are sisters and brothers in the family of God. Jesus is the only begotten Son of the Father, but we also are children of the Father through adoption. We have been grafted in to the tree. Jesus is our elder brother.

We are members of the family because of our faith in Jesus Christ. We have been purchased with a price and have been presented to the Father by Jesus Christ our Savior.

Romans: 8:14-17: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:" "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with [him], that we may be also glorified together."

Our family, through blood line here on this earth, is what Mary and Jesus' half-brothers were to Him. Jesus was explaining that the eternal family (your sisters and brothers in Christ), are the true family, the family of God.

Mark Chapter 3 Continued Questions

1. There was such a multitude they could not _____.
2. Why did Jesus' friends and family try to lay hold on Him?
3. What were they trying to force Him to do?
4. What lesson can we modern preachers learn from this?
5. Who did the scribes that came from Jerusalem say He had?
6. How did they say He cast out devils?
7. What question did Jesus ask them when He called them to Him?

8. Why did He speak in parables?
9. What was the most ridiculous statement these scribes had made?
10. What happens if a kingdom is divided against itself?
11. What can we relate this "house divided" to in our society today?
12. In Deuteronomy 32:30, we find that one can put _____ to flight and two can put _____ to flight.
13. What would happen to Satan if he were divided?
14. How is the only way a man can enter into a strong man's house?
15. What are the two things we, Christians, must use to come against Satan and his demons?
16. In verse 28, which sins will be forgiven?
17. In verse 29, what is the exception?
18. What is the most controversial issue in the Bible?
19. Name two beliefs (other than what the author believes) that are thought to be the sin against the Holy Ghost.
20. What did Jesus send the Holy Ghost to believers as?
21. What does the author believe is the sin against the Holy Ghost?
22. Who was a famous penman of the Bible who rejected Jesus and the Holy Ghost until he met Jesus on the road to Damascus?
23. Who came to see Jesus and called for Him to come outside to see them?
24. What question did Jesus ask the people concerning this?
25. Who is the family of God made up of?
26. What was the purpose in Jesus' mother and brethren coming to see Him?
27. In Romans 8:14, we read that who are the sons of God?
28. What do we call the Father when we have been adopted?
29. Verse 17 of Romans, chapter 8 tells us that we are joint _____ with Jesus.