

Mark 3:1-6 - And He entered again into a synagogue; and a man was there with a withered hand. 2 And they were watching Him to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, in order that they might accuse Him. 3 And He said to the man with the withered hand, "Rise and come forward!" 4 And He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to kill?" But they kept silent. 5 And after looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored. 6 And the Pharisees went out and immediately began taking counsel with the Herodians against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.

Having claimed to be **Lord of the Sabbath**, Jesus now demonstrates it to be **true**. **"And He entered again into a synagogue; and a man was there with a withered hand. 2 And they were watching Him to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, in order that they might accuse Him. 3 And He said to the man with the withered hand, 'Rise and come forward!'"** Now Jesus has gone into the synagogue on the Sabbath, and He realizes what is about to take place. And wanting to show the true substance of God's character concerning how He should be worshipped on His holy day, and He uses this **great example of mercy** to expose the empty and hard-hearted reality of their false worship. **"4 And He said to them, 'Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to kill?'"** But they kept silent. **5 And after looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored."** He poses a question with an obvious question concerning God's Law, **"4 Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save a life or to kill?"** What is amazing is that none of the Law keepers is willing to answer that it is of course **lawful to do good** and to **save life**, rather than do **harm** and **kill**. Mark writes, **"4 But they kept silent."** At this Jesus is **angry** and **grieved** the Scripture says, because their hearts are hard. Let us learn what these people apparently did not, that **God desires mercy** and **goodness**, to heal and to do good and serve others in our **worship**. That is a greater priority to Him than ritual, and tradition keeping, and strict adherence to religious guidelines to exclusion of obvious acts of mercy that people need.

Matthew 9:12-13 - 12 But when He heard this, He said, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. 13 "But go and learn what this means, **'I desire compassion, and not sacrifice ,'for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'**" NASB

What is even yet more grievous about these people that Jesus came to save is not only did they not learn from the teacher, but rather in their religious pride desired to kill Him. **"6 And the Pharisees went out and immediately began taking counsel with the Herodians against Him, as to how they might destroy Him."**

So here we are early on in the ministry of Jesus and near His hometown area around Galilee and the religious leaders are already plotting to kill Him. What was His great crime? He **healed a man** at their place of worship on the **Lord's Day!** One main point to see in this passage is that **Jesus is indeed Lord of the Sabbath,** with **authority** to do God's will in God's way and in God's place!

Mark 3:7-12 - 7 And Jesus withdrew to the sea with His disciples; and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and also from Judea, 8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan, and the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude heard of all that He was doing and came to Him. 9 And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the multitude, in order that they might not crowd Him; 10 for He had healed many, with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed about Him in order to touch Him. 11 And whenever the unclean spirits beheld Him, they would fall down before Him and cry out, saying, "You are the Son of God!" 12 And He earnestly warned them not to make Him known.

Not it seems that Jesus fame is spreading far and wide, and people are coming from many miles away. "7 And Jesus withdrew to the sea with His disciples; and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and also from Judea, 8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan, and the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude heard of all that He was doing and came to Him." Jesus remains undeterred from His ministry of **preaching the Gospel**, that the Kingdom of God had arrived and calling people to follow Him. In spite of much **popularity** and people taking several days journey to flock to Him, He was intent on healing and teaching and helping people to see that He was indeed the Christ sent by God to save them. He would do what He could to manage the very difficult problem of people pressing in on Him. "9 And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the multitude, in order that they might not crowd Him; 10 for He had healed many, with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed about Him in order to touch Him." It must have been an amazing scene. God has come to the earth, and He is going about doing good and healing people from their afflictions and teaching them wisdom! His amazing miraculous powers are validating His powerful message of repentance and faith toward God. His **mercy** was **great** as He demonstrated His **willingness** both to **heal** and to **forgive** peoples sin. His authority, wisdom and power were evident to all. And even the **demons cowered** before Him, and this underscored His **divine nature**, for if Satan's and His demons feared Him, He must indeed be the Son of God! "11 And whenever the unclean spirits beheld Him, they would fall down before Him and cry out, saying, "You are the Son of God!" 12 And He

earnestly warned them not to make Him known.” Jesus had become very popular, but popularity was not His goal. Here again the Messianic Secret, as Jesus seems to be somehow trying to manage His popularity, and warned the demons not to **“make Him known.”** Let us see in the verses we have covered here the main theme... **Who is this man** and what is He saying, and where does He get this power? These are the things that Mark the Evangelist wants us to wonder at with the people who are flocking to Jesus. And the answer lies in the very works that Jesus does, and the Words that Jesus speaks, truly He is the Son of God!

Upon **Mark 3:13** and following we have entered a **new section** of the book. **Mark 1:14-3:12** has chronicled Jesus’ **Early Galilean Ministry** and revealed His amazing works, words, and authority. **Mark 3:13-6:6** records His **Later Galilean Ministry** where He will appoint His disciples and teach them to do what He does. In this section He will teach parables, do miracles over nature, and even more profound healing miracles. Also, Jesus will be rejected in His own hometown. The **wonder** of this man only **increases** as we see **His story** unfold.

Mark 3:13-19 - 13 And He went up to the mountain and summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him. 14 And He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him, and that He might send them out to preach, 15 and to have authority to cast out the demons. 16 And He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom He gave the name Peter), 17 and James, the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them He gave the name Boanerges, which means, "Sons of Thunder"); 18 and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot; 19 and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

The language of Jesus choosing His disciples places the authority and personal choice squarely on Jesus. **“13 And He went up to the mountain and summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him.”** The words **“summoned those whom He himself wanted”** are used to make the point that when it comes to the appointment of **Jesus’ own Apostles** (those who are sent), He has very **specific men** in mind and it is not subject to human freewill. This is also clear from the book of John.

John 15:16 - 16 "You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He may give to you. NASB Jesus **“chose”** and **“appointed”** the men **“He Himself wanted”** who will become the men who follow Him in **martyrdom**, fulfill His command to **disciple the nations**, and will **write the New Testament Holy Scriptures**. This of course

excludes the one “**son of perdition**” (John 17:12) among them, Judas Iscariot who, in fulfilment of the Old Testament Scriptures, betrayed Him. **“14 And He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him, and that He might send them out to preach, 15 and to have authority to cast out the demons.”** First see that He appointed the twelve, **“that they might be with Him.”** See here what discipleship is first, is a **close personal relationship** that works through **mentoring** others in the regular fellowship of **daily life**. We would do well to emulate Jesus in **our discipling** efforts. Notice here, in Jesus discipling school, He will train these **“appointed”** men as **preachers** of the Gospel, as men with **His authority to heal** and to cast out **demons**. The **Apostles alone** possessed this unique authority during the Apostolic Age, and no one has possessed this authority since. They were **given** power by God to **validate** their ministry of **establishing** the **church** and **writing** the **Holy Scriptures** of the New Testament. These men were **chosen** very **specifically** by Jesus Himself to be the first preachers of the Gospel and that point is emphasized here. Also, **“16 And He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom He gave the name Peter), 17 and James, the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them He gave the name Boanerges, which means, "Sons of Thunder"); 18 and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot; 19 and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.”** It is notable that the core group of the **inner three** are mentioned first, **Peter, James, and John**. The choosing of **Judas Iscariot** is a very interesting scenario as he is the one who **betrayed** Jesus, but this was done in fulfilment of the Scriptures (Psalm 109:6-19). Jesus Himself referred to this in John 17:12.

John 17:12 - 12 "While I was with them, I was keeping them in Thy name which Thou hast given Me; and I guarded them, and not one of them **perished but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.**
NASB

Let us not miss the point that is made here, that the **Son of God** has **sovereignly appointed** the men He will have to **establish His church**, and that is exactly what they did.

Mark 3:20-30 - 20 And He came home, and the multitude gathered again, to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal. 21 And when His own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, "He has lost His senses." 22 And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons." 23 And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? 24 "And if a kingdom is divided against

itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 "And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. 26 "And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished! 27 "But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house. 28 "Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; 29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin " — 30 because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."

Now as Jesus has appointed the **Twelve**, opposition continues to mount against Him. Even Jesus own family will now call His ministry into question. **"20 And He came home, and the multitude gathered again, to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal. 21 And when His own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, "He has lost His senses.""** Notice the crowding continues this time so badly, it says, **"they could not even eat a meal."** Jesus **"own people"**, of course meaning His immediately family are obviously concerned as He has become the center of attention for the entire nation, and more people are flocking to Him with such vehement popularity that the normal functions of daily life like eating are hindered. At this, His **brothers** think He is **mad**. But they are not the only ones. Some of the religious **leaders** have come down from **Jerusalem** and here will make a railing **accusation** against Him. He has been **rejected** and demeaned not only by the religious leaders of the Galilean region, but now also by the big dogs from Jerusalem. **"22 And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons.""** Now here is a picture of unparalleled irony, as they have accused Jesus of being in league with **Satan** himself. God's own chosen people **Israel**, who have the **Bible** and the **Temple** and the very **Divine calling** for the last 1500 years, here tell their own **Messiah** that He is an **agent** of **Satan**. In His great mercy Jesus begins to reason with them, **"23 And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? 24 "And if a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 "And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. 26 "And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished!"** Jesus point is obvious and clear. Would an agent of Satan go about doing good and healing and bringing life and wisdom? If he did, he would be opposing all the evil that Satan's kingdom stands for. This wouldn't make any sense at all. He then explains His real purpose in doing these things, **"27 "But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house."** Jesus has shown

His **authority** over Satan and His demons by His obvious power over them. Indeed He has bound the strong man, and will soon “**plunder his house.**” Sadly, they are not convinced as we shall see. In fact, all the evidence of Jesus being the Son of God and Christ that has mounted to so far is so unmistakably clear, you have to be willfully blind to miss it. And this is what they were. Steeped in religious pride, they were **blind guides** to a **nation of wandering sheep**. Sadly, God’s judgment will reach it apex with them soon. Jesus seeing their great sin gives them a **stern warning**. “**28 "Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; 29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin " — 30 because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."**” The nature of the Scribes’ sin is here described by Jesus as an “**eternal sin.**” MacArthur comments, “*Apostates, like the unbelieving religious leaders of Jesus day, are those who have been fully exposed to the truth of the gospel and yet walk away from Christ in spite of the overwhelming evidence they have been given. At its heart, apostasy is a willful repudiation of the Holy Spirit’s testimony to the person and work of Jesus Christ. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, then, describes the apostate heart that with full knowledge has irrevocably rejected the one to whom the Spirit points. That is why it is an eternal sin, because no forgiveness is possible for those who refuse to stop rejecting Christ.*” Notice here that the issue at heart is the willful rejection of Jesus at the Holy Spirit’s testimony of His Person and Work. This is why the **blasphemy** of the **Holy Spirit** is more than just ascribing true Spirit wrought miracles to Satan, but **willfully refusing** to acknowledge **Jesus** for who He is. Indeed, when one is exposed to the truth of the Gospel, and sees it powerful affects in the lives of God’s people, and yet still **rejects Jesus as Lord and Savior**, they cannot be saved by any other means, and will die in their sins.

John 8:24 - 24 "I said therefore to you, that you shall die in your sins; **for unless you believe that I am He, you shall die in your sins." NASB**

Mark 3:31-35 - 31 And His mother and His brothers arrived, and standing outside they sent word to Him, and called Him. **32** And a multitude was sitting around Him, and they said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You." **33** And answering them, He said, "Who are My mother and My brothers?" **34** And looking about on those who were sitting around Him, He said, "Behold, My mother and My brothers! **35** "For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother."

Now Jesus “**own people**” have arrived to “**take custody**” of Him, as verse 21 had stated. “**31 And His mother and His brothers arrived, and standing outside they sent word to Him, and called Him. 32 And a multitude was sitting around**