

# Mark 3 Commentary

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John Mark

**MARK: THE SERVANT JESUS**

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Chart from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission  
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**THE LIFE OF CHRIST SHOWING COVERAGE BY MARK (SHADED AREA)**

## Mark 3:1 He entered again into a synagogue; and a man was there whose hand was withered.

NET Mark 3:1 Then Jesus entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand.

GNT Mark 3:1 Κα ε σ λθεν π λιν ε ς τ ν συναγωγ ν. κα ν κε νθρωπος ξηραμμ νην χων τ ν χε ρα.

NLT Mark 3:1 Jesus went into the synagogue again and noticed a man with a deformed hand.

KJV Mark 3:1 And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.

ESV Mark 3:1 Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand.

NIV Mark 3:1 Another time he went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there.

ASV Mark 3:1 And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there who had his hand withered.

CSB Mark 3:1 Now He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a paralyzed hand.

NKJ Mark 3:1 And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand.

NRS Mark 3:1 Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand.

YLT Mark 3:1 And he entered again into the synagogue, and there was there a man having the hand withered,

NAB Mark 3:1 Again he entered the synagogue. There was a man there who had a withered hand.

NJB Mark 3:1 Another time he went into the synagogue, and there was a man present whose hand was withered.

GWN Mark 3:1 Jesus went into a synagogue again. A man who had a paralyzed hand was there.

BBE Mark 3:1 And he went again into the Synagogue; and there was a man there whose hand was dead.

- **he entered:** Mk 1:21 Mt 12:9-14 Lu 6:6-11
- **withered:** 1Ki 13:4 Joh 5:3
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ANOTHER SABBATH COLLISION BETWEEN JESUS AND JEWISH LEADERS

**Parallel Passages:** Mark 3:1-6, Matthew 12:9-14, Luke 6:6-11

Matthew 12:9+ Departing from there, He went into their synagogue. 10 And a man was there whose hand was withered. And they questioned Jesus, asking, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"—so that they might accuse Him.

Luke 6:6+ On **another Sabbath** He entered the synagogue and was **teaching**; and there was a man there whose **right** hand was withered.

Keep the context in mind for in Mark 2 we learned the Jewish religious leaders accused Jesus of blasphemy for forgiving a man's sins (Mk 2:1-11+); they chided His disciples for Jesus dining with sinners (Mk 2:12-17); they questioned why His disciples did not fast (Mk 2:18-22); finally they questioned Jesus for allowing His disciples to pick and eat grain on the Sabbath (Mk 2:23-28). Their suspicions about Jesus were aroused. Can you feel the tension mounting?

[Lowell Johnson](#) background - At the end of Mark 1 Jesus was at the height of His popularity. He had been in His public ministry when we reach Mark 2 for about eighteen months and He was a celebrity! And why not! He was performing one miracle after another! People were amazed at His teaching. Then we get to Mark Chapter 2. Remember, we are in the first eighteen months of our Lord's public ministry. Things began to change when Jesus was in a house filled with people. Four men brought their paralyzed friend to Jesus for healing. They could not get into the house so they climbed on top of the house, tore the roof off, and let the man down in front of Jesus. Jesus is going to heal him, but before He does, He says to the man, "Your sins are forgiven you." The religious rulers jump on that and say, "Only God can forgive sins." From that point, Jesus began to deal heavily with the man-made

traditions of the Pharisees and scribes, especially fasting and what you could and could not do on the Sabbath day. God had given His law concerning the Sabbath, but the Jewish rabbis had added 613 written laws in their Torah. Of these, 248 were positive (Thou shall) and 365 were negative (Thou shall not).

**J C Ryle** - These verses show us our Lord again working a miracle. He heals a man in the synagogue, "who had a withered hand." Always about His Father's business--always doing good--doing it in the sight of enemies as well as of friends--such was the daily tenor of our Lord's earthly ministry. And He "left us an example that we should follow His steps." (1 Peter 2:21+, cf 1 Cor 11:1+) Blessed indeed are those Christians who strive, however feebly, to imitate their Master! (ED: See the only way a believer can possibly seek to imitate the Master - [The Holy Spirit-Walking Like Jesus Walked!](#))

**He entered again into a synagogue** - **NAS** leaves out the opening Greek word (kai) which is usually rendered "and," but in this context is more of "a topical connection with what precedes. As the last of five conflict stories, this incident forms the climax to these accounts of growing antagonism to Jesus." (Hiebert) The text says "**He**" with no mention of the disciples in any of the synoptic accounts. It was Jesus' custom to attend the synagogue service on the Sabbath. Was this the synagogue at Capernaum? We cannot be sure from the text (or comparing the other synoptic accounts).

Mark 2:23-28 recorded a Sabbath confrontation in the grain field and now Mark records another Sabbath collision in the synagogue. Luke 6:6+ has "**On another Sabbath He entered the synagogue and was teaching.**" What Sabbath? We cannot know for certain, but possibly soon after the Sabbath confrontation in the grainfields.

**Synagogue** (4864) (**sunagoge** from **sunágo** = lead together, assemble or bring together) refers to a group of people "going with one another" (**sunago**) literally describes a bringing together or congregating in one place.

**And a man was there whose hand was withered** - There "just happened" **providentially** to be a paralyzed person present! Jesus could have put off this healing until after the Sabbath, but this was an appointment for confrontation! It seems clear that Jesus intended to confront the false teaching of the Jews concerning the Sabbath and so He repeatedly healed on this day to which they had added many burdensome rules (Luke 4:31-35; 13:10-17; 14:1-6; John 5:1-9; 9:1-14). **Withered** is in the **perfect tense** which describes an action that took place in the past and was an abiding condition. It could have been from an accident or disease. In any case the tense speaks of the permanence of the condition. It is interesting that only Doctor Luke says it was specifically the man's **right hand** which is important because in this agrarian culture it would have been difficult for this man to engage in any meaningful labor.

Some commentators believe the Pharisees planted him in the synagogue to set Jesus up, which is possible as these men were very conniving and we know that later they did try to trap Jesus to "trip" Him up. However this is conjecture and it is also possible this man was a regular attendee at the synagogue. Truth be told God in His sovereignty had "providentially planted" this man in the synagogue!

**Withered** (dry) (3583) (**xeraino** from **xeros** = dry) means to become dry, to dry up and figuratively describes the whole body of a demon possessed boy that became stiffened and rigid (Mk 9:18). In Mark 3:1 it describes a limb which is shriveled, withered and has become useless. As plants are killed by drought, so the human body is damaged by certain harmful things. 15x in NT - Matt. 13:6; Matt. 21:19; Matt. 21:20; Mk. 3:1; Mk. 4:6; Mk. 5:29; Mk. 9:18; Mk. 11:20; Mk. 11:21; Lk. 8:6; Jn. 15:6; Jas. 1:11; 1 Pet. 1:24; Rev. 14:15; Rev. 16:12

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## THE HEALING OF THE WITHERED HAND - Ian MacPherson

[Jesus] entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.... And he saith unto the man, ... Stand forth.... stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out; and his hand was restored whole as the other. —Mark 3:1, 3, 5

There is a powerful passage in one of the published sermons of J. H. Jowett in which the great preacher points out that when Jesus ordered the man with the withered hand to stretch forth that atrophied limb He commanded him to do the one thing which seemed to him impossible. Had He asked him to stretch forth his left arm, he could have done it; had He bade him extend his right foot, he would have had no difficulty in complying with the injunction. But his right hand! Ah, that was different. There it hung, nerveless, shriveled, impotent by his side, incapable of responding to the impulses of his brain. The will to do was there, but the power to perform was not.

How vividly reminiscent of man's moral condition apart from Christ! Here is how Paul puts it in a passage of poignant and revealing autobiography: "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Rom. 7:18).

When Christ comes on the scene the whole situation is dramatically changed. Amos R. Wells has given us in verse a graphic picture of it:

I've a hand! a hand! a hand!  
To think He goes about  
So quietly, and does such things as this,  
Making poor half-men whole!

Well, here's a hand,  
A strong true hand that now is wholly His,  
To work or fight for Him or what He will:  
For He has been the Hand of God to me.

Of the condition of the man with the atrophied hand four suggestive things may be said:

**1. He had lost the executive of his will.**

In Ireland they tell of a left-armed sculptor who is alleged to have carved his masterpieces by holding the chisel between his teeth and tapping himself on the back of the head with a mallet. Most people prefer to do their work with their right hand!

**2. He had lost the expression of his friendship.**

"I ask not, therefore, of him with whom I would unite in love, Are you of my church, of my congregation? Do you receive the same form of church government, allow the same church officers, with me? My only question is this: 'Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?' " (John Wesley).

**3. He had lost the extension of his grasp.**

He had, as we say, "lost grip."

There is more power in a clasped hand than in a clenched fist. Our grasp gives us away. What is it we are clutching at? Is it something we covet for ourselves or is it someone we want to save?

**4. He had lost the exquisiteness of his touch.**

He had also got "out of touch" with things.

The brother-in-law of Elvet Lewis, the Welsh poet-preacher, told me that when Lewis visited Israel after going blind what he most remembered in retrospect was the "feel" of the cool water through the skin of the leather bottles in that hot land. Sighted people do not always appreciate the sense of touch as they should.

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**John H Jowett-**

THERE are withered limbs of the spirit as well as of the body. There are faculties and powers which are wasting away, sacred endowments which have lost their vital circulation. In some lives the will is a withered limb. In others it is the conscience. In others, again, it is the affections. These splendid moral and spiritual powers are being dried up, and they hang comparatively limp and useless in the life. They have been withered by sin and sinful negligence.

And the Lord is the healer of withered limbs. He can deal with imprisoned affections as the warm spring deals with the river which has been locked in ice. He can minister to a stricken will, and make it as a benumbed hand when the circulation has been restored. He can give it grip and tenacity. And so with all our powers. He, who is the Life, can vitalize all!

But here again the remnant of our withered endowment must be used in the healing. We must surrender to the Healer. We must obey. If the Lord says: "Stretch forth thy hand," we must attempt the impossible! In this region the impossible becomes possible in sanctified endeavour.

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**James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - THE WITHERED HAND Mark 3:1-7**

Observe here—

**I. Where the Saviour Was.**

He was in the synagogue, the public place of worship. What is the house of prayer if Jesus is not there? A mere recitation hall. When Jesus is present there is sure to be an interest. He loves to frequent the house of prayer. So do all that are like Him. Do you love the prayer meeting, or is it to you a dry, meaningless ceremony? If the latter, you must be a stranger to the loving Jesus. Those who have no desire to commune with Him can have no fitness to dwell with Him. Now notice—

## II. Whom the Saviour Met.

1. A MAN WITH A WITHERED HAND. Luke says it was his right hand, the hand we stretch out to receive. This may be taken to represent the faith by which the soul takes hold of the promises of God. How many withered hands there are still to be found at prayer meetings, how little taking hold of God? Friend, is your hand withered? Perhaps you are a backslider, and can remember the time when your hand of faith was healthy and strong. But now you have only the withered and helpless form.

2. MEN WITH WITHERED HEARTS. Those who “watched to accuse” (v. 2). This class is not yet ceased out of the house of God. Besides the sleepy indifference there is often the watchful faultfinder. Is your heart so withered that you have no love to Jesus and no sympathy with His work? To find fault with the all-wise Son of God and His infallible Word and working is surely the height of human arrogance. Remember, the eyes of the Almighty are watching you.

Now hear—

## III. What the Saviour Said.

1. TO THE MAN WITH THE WITHERED HAND. “Arise, stand in the midst” (margin). This would not be very pleasant exercise for one that desired to conceal his need. He that covereth his sins shall not prosper. You cannot be in a fit state to be saved so long as you are ashamed to confess your need. The Lord could have cured this man sitting as easily as standing, and in his own house as readily as in the synagogue; but in all likelihood if he had remained at his own fireside he never would have been healed. If your backsliding and unbelief are to be healed you must confess them; and if you confess, He is “faithful and just to forgive” (1 John 1:9).

2. TO THOSE WITH THE WITHERED HEARTS, the fault-finders, He said, “Is it lawful to do good or evil, to save or to kill?” (v. 4). Not to do good when you can is to do evil; not to save when you might is to kill. “They held their peace.” Ah, yes! one word from His lips and the accusers are speechless. Are you among those who would rather hold a certain form of religion that kills than give it up for the reality that gives life? The letter withereth, bindeth, killeth. The Spirit reviveth, liberateth, giveth life. Is yours, then, the religion of joyous liberty, or formal, miserable bondage?

## IV. What the Saviour Felt. He—

1. WAS ANGRY. “He looked round about on them with anger.” In the Old Testament much is said about “the anger of the Lord.” In the New much is said about “the love of the Lord.” But remember, this one is Lord. “The wrath of the Lamb” is as holy as “the blood of the Lamb.” Oh! poor, self-righteous, fault-finding sinner, beware! If you do not confess your sins, and seek His mercy, and receive His forgiveness now, the awful look that renders speechless, and the awful wrath that makes eternal misery, will be yours. Despise His love, and you shall be despised. But more—

2. WAS GRIEVED “at the blindness (margin) of their hearts.” While He is justly angry at man’s presumption, He is sadly grieved at man’s ignorance. He was not grieved because He was watched and misunderstood and maligned. He says, “Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children” (Luke 23:28), for well the Saviour knows what your end will be if you refuse Him. If you have never grieved over your own ignorance and hardness of heart, just think of the merciful Saviour’s grief over you.

## V. What the Saviour Did. He—

1. RESTORED THE WITHERED HAND. Nothing is impossible with Him. When this man “stood forth” at the word of Jesus, he no doubt expected that Jesus would heal him. So if you make full and honest confession of sin you may confidently expect forgiveness. Adam put forth his hand and took forbidden fruit, and immediately his spiritual hand was withered. All his sons are born with a withered hand. They can receive nothing unless it be given them of God. But when the hand is restored they can lay hold on eternal life. Is your hand withered? Jesus only can restore it.

2. WITHDREW HIMSELF (v. 7). There are three classes from whom Jesus withdraws Himself: the faultfinding, as we see here; the curious (John 12:21–36); and the unwilling (Luke 8:37). How sad when He who is the Light of the world turns His back upon those in blindness! Take care how you treat the gentle Lamb of God. Say unto Him, “Come,” and He cometh; but say, “Go,” and at last He goeth.

**HERE IS YOUR SOLEMN CHOICE:** Restoration or withdrawal. Wilt thou be made whole, or must He depart?

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## **Croft Pentz - CHRIST THE HEALER (Mark 3:1–12)**

Jesus had a compassionate heart! Whenever He saw a person in need, He stopped and helped them

### **I. THE SAVIOUR—Mark 3:1–4**

- A. The worshipping Saviour—“Entered into a synagogue”  
(Jesus took time to worship, so must you!—John 4:24)
- B. The watched Saviour—“Watched whether he would heal on the Sabbath”  
(People always sought to find fault with Jesus)
- C. The wise Saviour—v. 4  
(Jesus always had an answer for His enemies and critics)

### **II. THE STRETCHING—Mark 3:5**

- A. The command—“Stretch forth”  
(When Christ gives a command—obey)
- B. The faith—“He stretched it out”  
(To receive from God, you must have faith)
- C. The healing—“His hand was restored”  
(Obedience unto the Lord always brings results)

### **III. THE SCHEME—Mark 3:6–8**

- A. The plan—“Took counsel to destroy him”  
(Satan tries every plan to destroy Christ and His followers)
- B. The escape—“Jesus withdrew himself”  
(If Jesus was killed before the cross, there would be no salvation)
- C. The excitement—“Great multitudes came to hear him”  
(Christ’s presence always brings excitement)

### **IV. THE SPREADING—Mark 3:9–12**

- A. The speaking—v. 9  
(Today God speaks through His Word, and Holy Spirit)
- B. The healing—v. 10  
(The man came to Jesus because He had a compassionate heart)
- C. The power—v. 11  
(The unclean spirit is cast out—all changed by His touch)
- D. The charge—v. 12  
(Jesus had no pride—not anxious to receive credit for this)

He is able to meet your need! Be it small or great, He will help you

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## **CHRIST OUR HELPER—Mark 3:1–19 Croft Pentz**

### **I. THE PROBLEM—vv. 1–6**

- A. Cripple—v. 1. A man was present with a withered hand.
- B. Curious—v. 2. The people watch Christ to see if He would heal on the Sabbath, so they might criticize Him. It seems that only those who do good are criticized.
- C. Christ—vv. 3–4. Christ asks if it is all right to heal on the Sabbath. Is the Sabbath a day to help others? They could not answer Him.
- D. Complete—v. 5. Jesus asks that the man stretch forth His hand. When he obeyed Christ, he was healed. Obedience always brings God’s blessings.
- E. Counsel—v. 6. The Pharisees meet with the Herodians (a Roman political party), seeking plans and ways of destroying Christ. They were not happy with His good work. They seek to destroy someone who was doing good!

### **II. THE PERSON—vv. 7–12**

Christ proves Himself as the Son of God by helping mankind.

- A. Seeking—vv. 7–8. Many seek Christ. They seek Him for help and blessing. Man always seeks Christ in time of need. However, we should always seek Him—not only in times of trouble.
- B. Sick—vv. 9–10. Many sick come, seeking healing. Often man is easy to win to Christ when he is sick because he needs help. A healthy person needs nothing, therefore he does not seek God.
- C. Saviour—v. 11. The evil spirit respects Christ as the Messiah, the Son of God.

D. Self-contained—v. 12. He tells them not to make known His power. He was a very humble man.

### III. THE PLAN—vv. 13–19

A. Place—v. 13. Christ went up to the mountains to pray. He always sought the quietness of the mountains to pray and have fellowship with God.

B. Preaching—v. 14. Christ ordains twelve to preach the gospel.

C. Power—v. 15. The power to heal the sick and cast out devils.

D. People—vv. 16–19. The names of the twelve disciples.

#### Mark 3:2 They were watching Him to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him.

Wuest - And they kept on spying upon Him closely, as to whether He would on the Sabbath heal him, in order that they might bring a formal accusation against Him before a tribunal.

NET Mark 3:2 They watched Jesus closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they could accuse him.

GNT Mark 3:2 κα̅ παρε̅ρου̅ν α̅τ̅ν ε̅ το̅ ς β̅βα̅σι̅ν θε̅ρα̅πε̅σει̅ α̅τ̅ν, να̅ κα̅τη̅γο̅ρ̅ω̅σι̅ν α̅ το̅ .

NLT Mark 3:2 Since it was the Sabbath, Jesus' enemies watched him closely. If he healed the man's hand, they planned to accuse him of working on the Sabbath.

KJV Mark 3:2 And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.

ESV Mark 3:2 And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him.

NIV Mark 3:2 Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath.

ASV Mark 3:2 And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.

CSB Mark 3:2 In order to accuse Him, they were watching Him closely to see whether He would heal him on the Sabbath.

NKJ Mark 3:2 So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him.

NRS Mark 3:2 They watched him to see whether he would cure him on the sabbath, so that they might accuse him.

YLT Mark 3:2 and they were watching him, whether on the sabbaths he will heal him, that they might accuse him.

NAB Mark 3:2 They watched him closely to see if he would cure him on the sabbath so that they might accuse him.

NJB Mark 3:2 And they were watching him to see if he would cure him on the Sabbath day, hoping for something to charge him with.

GWN Mark 3:2 The people were watching Jesus closely. They wanted to see whether he would heal the man on the day of worship so that they could accuse him of doing something wrong.

BBE Mark 3:2 And they were watching him to see if he would make him well on the Sabbath day, so that they might have something against him.

- Ps 37:32 Isa 29:20,21 Jer 20:10 Da 6:4 Lu 6:7 11:53,54 14:1 Lu 20:20 Joh 9:16
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**KEEPING EYES ON JESUS  
FOR THE WRONG REASONS!**

**Parallel Passages:** Mark 3:1-6, Matthew 12:9-14, Luke 6:6-11

Matthew 12:10+ And a man was there whose hand was withered. And they questioned Jesus, asking, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"—so that they might accuse Him.

Luke 6:7+ The scribes and the Pharisees were watching Him closely to see if He healed on the Sabbath, so that they might find reason to accuse Him.

**They were watching Him** - The old version of Wycliffe translates "They espied Him," i.e., they played the spy. This is a perfect illustration of the word surreptitious, which means they were marked by quiet, caution, secrecy; taking of pains to avoid being observed! **They** of course is the scribes and Pharisees if we compare Luke 6:7+ (some think this refers to all the Jews which is possible, but it is not likely that everyone else watching had the underlying motive to "catch" Jesus in breaking of some artificial Sabbath rule!). **Watching** is in the imperfect tense and means they kept on closely and intently watching Him, bent on finding some fault with reference to the Sabbath (you can almost picture these men like vultures eyeing carrion, ready to swoop in!). The idea of the verb is that they were watching out of the corner of their eyes, in other words "spying" on Him! They were not looking directly at Him but Jesus changes that in Mk 3:5 when He looks around at them! They were like wild animals lying in wait, ready to pounce the moment Jesus made a miscue (at least according to their interpretation of a "miscue!") **Wuest** writes "Here were the watchdogs of Israel's religion, attempting to discredit this claimant to Messiahship by finding Him violating its regulations."

**Watching** (watching closely) (3906)(paratero from **para** = beside + **tereo** = watch) means to watch closely, to observe scrupulously or carefully, even with the sense of to spy. The preposition para- meaning beside depicts these religious leaders as if they are observing from the sideline, so to speak (which also pictures their aloofness to Jesus, for they wanted no fellowship with Him). They were watching (maliciously), lying in wait for (Mk 3:2; Lk 6:7; Lk 14:1) looking for an opportunity (cf Lk 20:20). Here in Mark 3:2 **paratero** is in the middle voice which is reflexive (shows the agent's action affects the agent) and thus calls attention to their personal interest in the proceedings

**J C Ryle** on **watching** - What a melancholy proof we have here of the wickedness of human nature! It was the Sabbath day, when these things happened. It was in the synagogue, where men were assembled to hear the word and worship God. Yet even on the day of God, and at the time of worshiping God, *these wretched formalists were plotting mischief against our Lord*. The very men who pretended to such strictness and, sanctity in little things, were full of malicious and angry thoughts in the midst of the congregation. (Pr 5:14) Christ's people must not expect to fare better than their Master (Jn 15:18, 19, 20, Mt 10:24). They are always **watched** by an ill-natured and spiteful world. Their conduct is scanned with a keen and jealous eye. Their ways are noted and diligently observed. They are marked men. They can do nothing without the world's noticing it. Their dress, their expenditure, their employment of time, their conduct in all the relations of life, are all rigidly and closely marked. Their adversaries wait for their halting, and if at any time they fall into an error, the ungodly rejoice. It is good for all Christians to keep this before their minds. Wherever we go, and whatever we do, let us remember that, like our Master, we are "**watched**." The thought should make us exercise a holy jealousy over all our conduct, that we may do nothing to cause the enemy to blaspheme (cf 1 Pe 1:17+, 1 Pe 2:12+, 1 Pe 3:1,2+, 1 Pe 4:14-16+, Mt 5:11,12+). It should make us diligent to avoid even the "appearance of evil." (1 Th 5:22+) Above all, it should make us pray much, to be kept blameless in our tempers, tongues, and daily public demeanor. That Savior Who was "**watched**" Himself, knows how to sympathize with His people, and to supply grace to help in time of need (Heb 4:16+, Heb 2:18+).

**To see if He would heal him on the Sabbath**- The Pharisees knew Jesus could heal and also knew He was compassionate, so this was a setup for Jesus to break their Sabbath regulations! But God's law did not forbid healing on the Sabbath. It was the additions by the rabbis which prohibited the "practice of medicine" on the Sabbath unless the person was on the verge of death. (Mishnah, m. Shabbat 6.3; 12.1; 18.3; 19.2; m. Yoma 8.6) For these Pharisees their legalistic proscriptions took precedence over the needs of a man with a withered hand! Talk about lack of compassion! Morison says these Pharisees were motivated by "the true spirit of *ecclesiastical bloodhounds*." **A T Robertson** adds that "One can see the commotion among the long-bearded hypocrites at this daring act of Jesus." For other Sabbath healings by Jesus see Luke 13:10–17; Luke 14:1–6; John 5:2–18 and John 9:1–17.

**Lenski** - This was not the **Sabbath** that is mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, for Matthew states that Jesus departed thence, i. e., from the neighborhood where the disciples had plucked the ears of grain (**ED**: Lk 6:6+ says "another Sabbath"). He again entered a synagogue as in Mk 1:21+, and as his custom was generally, Mk 1:39+. The name of the town is not mentioned. Luke 6:6+ adds that Jesus engaged in teaching....Luke states that Jesus knew the thoughts of these opponents of his. From Matthew, however, we learn that Jesus did not allow these thoughts to remain unspoken. In some way Jesus made these men speak out. They, of course, hide their evil intention to secure a legal charge against Jesus. All they say is that they would like to know whether it is lawful (εξῆστι) to heal on the Sabbath. Note that this is all they think of: "Is it lawful?" never for a moment: "Is it merciful?"



**THOUGHT** - You can mark it down that the Pharisees illustrate a **basic spiritual principle** that the more religious you are and the prouder you are about your religion and your so-called their "spirituality," the more resistant you are to the Gospel of grace. In fact like the Pharisees you hate grace because you hate the Giver of grace Jesus Christ! You may not say that, but you are either for Him or against Him! There is no middle ground with Jesus! So the Pharisees are prototypes of all religious Christ haters down through the ages. You are not a "Pharisee" are you? Remember that the Pharisees said "no" to the more flagrant, obvious, external sins and boasted in their "self-denial" but they were deceived by their pride and full of dead men's bones so to speak (Mt 23:27). Keeping rules deceives one into thinking they are "holy" by keeping those rules! Religion (without relationship to Jesus) can deceive a person into thinking they are okay with God, when in truth they are dead to God! Are you a Pharisee? Or have you walked the [Roman Road to salvation](#)?

**Sabbath** (4521)([sabbaton](#) from [shabath](#) - 07673 = to cease from work, intermission - see note on [shabath](#)) in this context refers to the seventh day of the week, held sacred by the Jews (Mt 12:8; Mk 2:27f; Lk 6:7, 9; Jn 5:9f, 18; Acts 1:12; 13:27, 44). God instituted the Sabbath in Ge 2:3 "Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made." Then He set it apart for the Jews in Ex 20:8 "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." And then He gave them one stipulation in Ex 31:15 "For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, holy to the LORD; whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death." The Jews came up with a plethora of rules and regulations about what constituted "work" and now the Pharisees, the "gatekeepers" of all the legalistic rules, were watching Jesus to see if He did a work on the Sabbath so they could not just accuse Him but kill Him as specified in Exodus 31:15! What is fascinating is that Jesus would in fact heal the man, not with a "work" but with a "Word!" Even from a technical standpoint Jesus was not guilty, but that is not how the legalists interpreted it! (See John MacArthur's discussion of some of these ridiculous rules).

**So that they might accuse Him** - This verb for **might accuse** refers to making a formal accusation as before a tribunal or when one brings a charge publicly. David's words were prophetic declaring "The wicked spies upon the righteous and seeks to kill him." (Ps 37:32) What a contrast these religious leaders were with the man with a withered hand, for while the latter came to worship the wicked came to watch! Both were in the same synagogue, but with different motives. Why do you come to church? What is your motivation to come? Ritual or relationship (with Jesus and others)? Worship or watch (and be seen by others)?

**Might accuse** (2723)([kategoreo](#) from [kata](#) = against + [agora](#) = assembly, place of public speaking. Prefix [kata](#)- implies animosity!) means to speak against a person before a public tribunal, bring an accusation in court or to bring a charge publicly. The idea is to speak openly against (kata-), and so to accuse and condemn in a legal sense. The cognate word [kategoria](#) was a legal technical term that referred to the content of the accusation or charge made against someone. All of the Gospel uses of [kategoreo](#) involve accusing Jesus (except Jn 5:45)! All 22 uses - Mt. 12:10; Mt. 27:12; Mk. 3:2; Mk. 15:3; Mk. 15:4; Lk. 6:7; Lk. 23:2; Lk. 23:10; Lk. 23:14; Jn. 5:45; Jn. 8:6; Acts 22:30; Acts 24:2; Acts 24:8; Acts 24:13; Acts 24:19; Acts 25:5; Acts 25:11; Acts 25:16; Acts 28:19; Ro 2:15; Rev. 12:10. As the context shows the Pharisees did not just want to **accuse** Him but to **kill** Him, Lk 6:11+ describing them as **filled with rage**, out of their mind with anger and began to conspire as to how they might destroy Him! Presumably they were thinking of Ex 31:15 that stated that **"whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death"**

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**Alfred Edersheim** has a lengthy discussion on the man-made rules that were to be followed on the Sabbath, writing "The terribly exaggerated views of the Rabbis, and their endless, burdensome rules about the Sabbath may best be learned from a brief analysis of the Mishnah, as further explained and enlarged in the Jerusalem Talmud. [6476] For this purpose a brief analysis of what is, confessedly, one of the most difficult tractates may here be given." (See [Appendix xvii. The Ordinances and Law of the Sabbath as Laid Down in the Mishnah and the Jerusalem Talmud](#))

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### THREE IMPORTANT POSITIONS - James Smith - Handfuls on Purpose

MARK 3:3; 1 KINGS 17:1; PHIL. 4:1

"Can your horse run fast?" was a question addressed to a boy by a gentleman as the former was holding the horse's head in a busy London street. He replied, "No, sir; he cannot run fast, but he can stand fast"; a great quality to be admired and commended in a horse. Yes, and in men and women. For these are difficult days, and there are many temptations to turn us from the paths that are right and good.

How can we stand fast in times of trial and temptation is an important question. For our comfort, let us notice that this is not the first

position we should take. There are two prior ones, as follows:

**I. Stand Forth**” (Mark 3:3). This is the sinner’s position. The man in the story here was only conscious of shortcomings, and not moral leprosy, yet he needed the healing touch of the Saviour just as much as the leper. This is a lesson all very respectable sinners should take to heart. Yet, whether conscious of moral leprosy or not, we all need the Saviour. To receive His blessed healing ministries we must take the definite step to Him, standing forth even in the midst (see marginal note), that is, a public confession of our sinnership.

**II. Stand Before** (1 Kings 17:1). This is the position of the believer. Elijah was known as the man who stood before God. This position is suggestive of fellowship as well as service. We are saved that we might, yea, should, might we not say must stand before God; that is to say, that we might enter into blessed friendship with Him, and such a friendship bearing the fruit of happy and successful service.

**III. Stand Fast** (Phil. 4:1). This is the position of the loyal friend, loyal to all the interests of the Lord. This follows naturally the other two; in fact, the prior positions fit us for this one. Oh, to be true to Him at all times under all circumstances, and at all costs!

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#### Related Resources on Sabbath:

- American Church Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- American Tract Society [Sabbath](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Sabbath Day's Journey Sabbath](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Sabbath Sabbath Day's Journey Second Sabbath](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Sabbath Day's Journey Sabbath](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Sabbath Sabbath Sabbath Day's Journey](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- Wilson's Bible Types [Sabbath](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Sabbath](#)
- Condensed Biblical Cyclopaedia [Sabbath and Feasts](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopaedia [Sabbath](#)
- McClintock - [Sabbath](#)
- [Sabbath - Multiple Dictionaries, Naves and ISBE](#)
- [What is the Sabbath day? from "Got Questions?"](#)
- [How is Jesus our Sabbath Rest?](#)
- [How can we enter into God's rest?](#)
- [Rest in the Bible - a detailed discussion](#)
- [Does God require Sabbath-keeping of Christians?](#)
- [What day is the Sabbath, Saturday or Sunday?](#)
- [Do Christians have to obey the Old Testament law?](#)
- [What does it mean to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy?](#)
- [Is working on Sunday a sin?](#)

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#### Yoma 8:6 -

- A He who is seized by ravenous hunger— they feed him, even unclean things, until his eyes are enlightened.
- B He who was bitten by a crazy dog—they do not feed him a piece of its liver’s lobe.
- C And R. Mattiah b. Harash permits doing so.
- D Further did R. Mattiah b. Harash say, **“He who has a pain in his throat—they drop medicine into his mouth on the Sabbath,**
- E **“because it is a matter of doubt as to danger to life.**
- F **“And any matter of doubt as to danger to life overrides the prohibitions of the Sabbath”**

Wuest And He says to the man having the withered hand, Arise, and stand in the midst.

NET Mark 3:3 So he said to the man who had the withered hand, "Stand up among all these people."

GNT Mark 3:3 κα λ γει τ νθρ π τ τ ν ξηρ ν χε ρα χοντι, γειρε ε ς τ μ σον.

NLT Mark 3:3 Jesus said to the man, "Come and stand in front of everyone."

KJV Mark 3:3 And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.

ESV Mark 3:3 And he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come here."

NIV Mark 3:3 Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone."

ASV Mark 3:3 And he saith unto the man that had his hand withered, Stand forth.

CSB Mark 3:3 He told the man with the paralyzed hand, "Stand before us."

NKJ Mark 3:3 And He said to the man who had the withered hand, "Step forward."

NRS Mark 3:3 And he said to the man who had the withered hand, "Come forward."

YLT Mark 3:3 And he saith to the man having the hand withered, 'Rise up in the midst.'

NAB Mark 3:3 He said to the man with the withered hand, "Come up here before us."

NJB Mark 3:3 He said to the man with the withered hand, 'Get up and stand in the middle!'

GWN Mark 3:3 So he told the man with the paralyzed hand, "Stand in the center of the synagogue."

BBE Mark 3:3 And he said to the man, Get up and come forward.

- **He said to the man with the withered hand:** Isa 42:4 Da 6:10 Lu 6:8 Joh 9:4 1Co 15:58 Ga 6:9 Php 1:14,28-30 1Pe 4:1
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## FRONT AND CENTER!

Jesus was not trying to hide this Healing, but to the contrary sought to make it obvious to all in the synagogue.

**Parallel Passages:** Mark 3:1-6, Matthew 12:9-14, Luke 6:6-11

Matthew 12:11+ And He said to them, "What man is there among you who has a sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and lift it out? 12 "How much more valuable then is a man than a sheep! So then, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."

Luke 6:8+ But He knew what they were thinking, and He said to the man with the withered hand, "Get up and come forward!" And he got up and came forward.

## JESUS CALLS PARALYZED MAN FORWARD TO CHALLENGE PHARISEES' PERVERTED SABBATH RULES

While the text does not state it specifically, clearly Jesus was aware of the malicious intent of His opponents, Luke writing "He knew what they were thinking." (cf Jn 2:24+ = "He knew all men") This is another piece of evidence that Jesus was not just a Man (which He was), but was also God, for only God could read the minds of men, (1 Sa. 16:7; 1 Ki 8:39; 1 Chr. 28:9; Jer 17:10; Ezek 11:5). And so Jesus "did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man." (John 2:25+).

**He said to the man with the withered hand** - Luke 6:6 told us Jesus **was teaching** so presumably He has come to end of the didactic session and now will give some "*practical application*"! (Don't you wish the synoptic writers had told us which Scriptures He was teaching!) Put yourself in this man's place. Very likely he had endured abuse and scorn because of his withered hand, especially since many Jews associated illness with sin. And so he very likely had a considerable degree of shame at his condition. And now Jesus focuses His spotlight directly on this man. Imagine what was going through his mind. Surely he became self-conscious (excessively and uncomfortably conscious of his appearance). "Should I get up and go forward?" Luke 6:8+ says "**And he got up and came forward.**" The man's obedience was immediate. As someone has said delayed obedience is really disobedience.

This paralyzed man's obedience would result in his blessing.

**THOUGHT** - It is always best to obey Jesus when He tells us to do something in His Word. It may conflict with our plans and desires. It may not always be the most comfortable or convenient thing to do. But it is always the best thing to do. And to obey is always to enter into His blessing, whether tangible (as with this man) or spiritual (knowing we are in the center of His will and are pleasing to our Father). To obey is always better than sacrifice (1 Sa 15:22). Jesus wants to put Himself on display in your life so He wants you to **stand up** and to **stand out** for Him.

**Withered** (3584)(xeros) literally means dry or dried up (like land - Heb 11:29, Mt 23:15; plants - Lk 23:31) but in the present context referred to the damaged arm which was paralyzed and, useless as described in each synoptic account - Mt 12:10, Jn 5:3, Lk 6:6,8.

**Get up and come forward!** - The NET renders it "Stand up among all these people." **Young's Literal** is of course more literal - **"Rise up in the midst."** Jesus issued one command ([present imperative](#)) not two, a command for this man **Get up** and join Him on the "center stage" so all in the synagogue could clearly see him and his pathetic shriveled hand. He knew the Jewish leaders were watching "out of the corner of their eye," but this man in directly in front of their front row seats! He is not trying to hide what He is about to do (cf Jn 18:20, cf Acts 26:26+). This is a direct confrontation of the rigorous rules of the rabbis regarding the Sabbath! This scene recalls Jesus' words to the paralyzed man in Mark 2:11 "I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and go home."

If we cross reference Matthew's account, at this point the Pharisees "questioned Jesus, asking "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?." Jesus was not fooled by their question for Luke tells us "He knew what they were thinking." (Lk 6:8+). As **Hiebert** suggests "Apparently when Jesus gave an indication that He intended to heal the man, they raised the legal question challenging the propriety of the act." And this prompts Jesus [counterquestion](#) in Mark 3:4.

This passage also reminds us of another similar **Sabbath scene** at the Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem (Jn 5:1-3), John recording...

A man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had already been a long time in that condition, He said to him, "Do you wish to get well?" The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I am coming, another steps down before me." Jesus \*said to him, "Get up, pick up your pallet and walk." Immediately the man became well, and picked up his pallet and began to walk. **Now it was the Sabbath on that day.** So the Jews were saying to the man who was cured, **"It is the Sabbath, and it is not permissible for you to carry your pallet."** (John 5:5-10)

**Mark 3:4 And He said to them, "Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to kill?" But they kept silent.**

Wuest And He says to them, Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill? But they kept on being quiet.

NET Mark 3:4 Then he said to them, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath, or evil, to save a life or destroy it?" But they were silent.

GNT Mark 3:4 κα λ γει α το ς, ξεστιν το ς σ ββασιν γαθ ν ποι σαι κακοποι σαι, ψυχ ν σ σαι ποκτε ναι; ο δ σι πων.

NLT Mark 3:4 Then he turned to his critics and asked, "Does the law permit good deeds on the Sabbath, or is it a day for doing evil? Is this a day to save life or to destroy it?" But they wouldn't answer him.

KJV Mark 3:4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

ESV Mark 3:4 And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent.

NIV Mark 3:4 Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent.

ASV Mark 3:4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

CSB Mark 3:4 Then He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do what is good or to do what is evil, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent.

NKJ Mark 3:4 Then He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they kept silent.

NRS Mark 3:4 Then he said to them, "Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent.

YLT Mark 3:4 And he saith to them, 'Is it lawful on the sabbaths to do good, or to do evil? life to save, or to kill?' but they were silent.

NAB Mark 3:4 Then he said to them, "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath rather than to do evil, to save life rather than to destroy it?" But they remained silent.

NJB Mark 3:4 Then he said to them, 'Is it permitted on the Sabbath day to do good, or to do evil; to save life, or to kill?' But they said nothing.

GWN Mark 3:4 Then he asked them, "Is it right to do good or to do evil on the day of worship, to give a person back his health or to let him die?" But they were silent.

BBE Mark 3:4 And he said to them, Is it right to do good on the Sabbath or to do evil? to give life or to put to death? But they said nothing.

- **Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath** Mk 2:27,28 Ho 6:6 Mt 12:10-12 Lu 6:9 13:13-17 14:1-5
- **But they kept silent.:** Mk 9:34

**Parallel Passages:** Mark 3:1-6, Matthew 12:9-14, Luke 6:6-11

Matthew 12:11+ And He said to them, "What man is there among you who has a sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and lift it out? 12 "How much more valuable then is a man than a sheep! So then, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."

Luke 6:8 But He knew what they were thinking, and He said to the man with the withered hand, "Get up and come forward!" And he got up and came forward. 9 And Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to destroy it?"

## **THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS "HELD THEIR PEACE"**

**Lenski** - According to Matthew, Jesus said more; he first used the illustration of a sheep that had fallen into a pit on the Sabbath, which the owner would certainly lift out though it was the Sabbath; yet how much better than a sheep is a man? Then Matthew restates the substance of the questions asked in Mark and in Luke in declarative form: that it is certainly lawful to do good on the Sabbath.

The often colorful KJV has "**But they held their peace**" (recorded only by Mark) describing the Pharisees' response to Jesus' [counterquestion](#). To [hold one's peace](#) (similar to "hold your tongue") is an idiomatic way of saying to refrain from speaking, to remain silent. It can describe one remains quiet despite wanting to say something. Of course "*held their peace*" is a bit of a [misnomer](#) in this context, because the intention of the religious leaders was not *peace* with Jesus but *war* with Him!

Notice that Jesus' [counterquestion](#) changes the question of the Pharisees in Matthew 12:10+ from "Is it legal?" to "Is it moral?" or "Is it ethical?" Notice also that Jesus contrasts two types of "doing." The question is which is more consistent with the Mosaic Law regarding the Sabbath (not the added rabbinic regulations)?

**Lenski** - In a number of instances Jesus answered, not what is asked, but what should be asked. He does so here. These Jews made the alternative either "to do" or "not to do on the Sabbath" and then decided that lawfulness required the latter and disregarded everything else and entirely misconceived the purpose of the Sabbath. **They made it a law that was strictly imposed on man instead of a blessing bestowed on man. They thus allowed no work of mercy for suffering man on the Sabbath although they would inconsistently work to save a sheep on the Sabbath, for they would not want to lose the sheep. But some man they would treat heartlessly—his suffering meant no loss to them.** So Jesus restates the question in the way in which it ought to be put: "Is it lawful to do good, namely what is morally excellent, on the Sabbath or to do harm, what is morally base?" Thus put, the question answers itself. Deeds that are morally excellent would only grace and honor the old Jewish legal Sabbath.

**And He said to them, "Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to kill?"**- Note that with His question **is it lawful**, Jesus is directing these legalists back to the Mosaic Law, the Word of God! Jesus asks them a question not because they did not know, but because they did know the answer. They knew His question had to be answered "to do good and to save life." The phrasing of the question implies that failure to do good was to do harm! They knew that on a Sabbath one who is able to do good or to save a life and yet refuses to do so is guilty of evil. His logic is that healing this man would be doing **good** and not to heal him would be evil. Notice that Jesus does not answer the question here but He does answer the question in Matthew stating **"So then, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath"** (Mt 12:12b+). To do good on the Sabbath is in accord with what Jesus had taught in Mark 2:27+ that "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." In Matthew's version Jesus gives an illustration regarding rescue of sheep by an owner to prove that the Pharisees recognized the principle of doing good in practice.

And He said to them, "What man is there among you who has a sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and lift it out? "How much more valuable then is a man than a sheep! So then, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." (Mt 12:11-12)

"If the Spirit of grace is absent,  
the Law is present only to convict and kill."  
-Augustine

**Lenski** - To leave the man unhealed would be morally base—the greatest desecration of the Sabbath. But could Jesus not wait and do his healing on a weekday? To have waited would have left a totally wrong impression on the people—as if it were really unlawful to heal on the Sabbath. This was the very error Jesus wanted to eradicate. The simple primer question of Jesus, which any child should have answered on the instant, these Jews answer with silence. Significant silence—so shall they be dumb in the judgment when they are confronted with their sins.

**Do you see the [horns of the dilemma](#) of the Pharisees?** To agree that it is lawful to **do good** and to **save a life** on the Sabbath would have left them with no basis for accusing Jesus of wrongdoing. On the other hand if they agreed that it is **good to do harm** and **to destroy** a life on the Sabbath, they would be going against the clear teaching of the Old Testament, not to mention that they would in essence be admitting that they were filled with evil instead of mercy (In fact they were filled with evil, but refused to vocalize it in this situation). And so as Mark records, they did the only wise thing they had done up to this point - they kept their mouth shut! Wouldn't it have been great to have been a fly on the wall! And imagine what the rest of the Jews in the synagogue must have been thinking when they heard Jesus' question! Not only was Jesus' teaching amazing (Mt 7:28+), His arguments and logic were **"airtight"** (indisputable, irrefutable, unassailable, impregnable; , flawless, airtight, bulletproof, conclusive)!

**Hiebert** comments ""**To save life, or to kill**—the extension of the contrast carried the alternatives to their logical conclusion. If, as they admitted, the use of healing means was lawful on the Sabbath to save a life, then surely an act of restoration to wholeness was also praiseworthy. That which is morally good does not become morally evil just because it is done on the Sabbath. To place their religiously held scruples above any concern for human need was inconsistent with God's beneficent concerns for humanity in instituting the Sabbath. Bishop asserts that Jesus' statement of the startling extremes was "reminiscent of Palestinian psychology. The Semitic mind demands clear-cut decisions. There are no middle terms between 'doing good' and 'doing evil,' between 'saving a life' and 'destroying.' The choice is absolute."" (Mark Commentary)

**J C Ryle** on **do good** - Let us observe, in the second place, the great principle that our Lord lays down about Sabbath observance . He teaches that it is lawful **"to do good"** on the Sabbath. This principle is taught by a remarkable question. He asks those around Him, whether it was **"lawful to do good or evil on the Sabbath days, to save life, or to kill?"** Was it better to heal this poor sufferer before Him with the withered hand, or to leave him alone? Was it more sinful to restore a person to health on the Sabbath, than to plot murder, and nourish hatred against an innocent person, as they were doing at that moment against Himself? Was He to be blamed for saving a life on the Sabbath? Were they blameless who were desirous to kill? No wonder that before such a question as this, our Lord's enemies **"held their peace."** It is plain from these words of our Lord, that no Christian need ever hesitate to do a really good work on the Sunday. A real work of mercy, such as ministering to the sick, or relieving pain, may always be done without scruple. The holiness with which the fourth commandment invests the Sabbath day, is not in the least degree invaded by anything of this kind.

**Brian Bell** observes that "Their rigidity to **keep the law** actually led them to **abuse it far worse** than they even think Jesus did! (Their rigidity led to **hate** and **murder!**). Jesus was able to look behind the law to see how they were **intended** for our benefit. Their religion was **loving ritual**; Jesus religion was **loving God** and **loving man**. Jesus was **people-centered**; the Pharisees were **law-centered**! The Pharisees made a **huge mistake** that many still make today, this idea that you actually can *domesticate real faith* into humanly attainable standards. (a 1000 x's NO!) " ([Mark 3 Commentary](#))

**Lawful** (permitted)([1832](#))([exesti](#) from from **ek** = out + **eimí** = to be) is an impersonal verb, signifying "it is

permitted, it is lawful" (or interrogatively, "is it lawful?"). **Exesti** occurs most frequently in the synoptic Gospels and the Acts (see list below) especially in Jesus' conflicts with the Pharisees over His actions (and those of His disciples) on the Sabbath. All uses of **exesti** - Mt. 12:2; Mt. 12:4; Mt. 12:10; Mt. 12:12; Mt. 14:4; Mt. 19:3; Mt. 20:15; Mt. 22:17; Mt. 27:6; Mk. 2:24; Mk. 2:26; Mk. 3:4; Mk. 6:18; Mk. 10:2; Mk. 12:14; Lk. 6:2; Lk. 6:4; Lk. 6:9; Lk. 14:3; Lk. 20:22; Jn. 5:10; Jn. 18:31; Acts 2:29; Acts 8:37; Acts 16:21; Acts 21:37; Acts 22:25; 1 Co. 6:12; 1 Co. 10:23; 2 Co. 12:4

## SULLEN SILENCE

**But they kept silent.** - **Kept silent** is in the [imperfect tense](#), picturing them continually keeping their mouth shut. They remained silent. Matthew helps us understand why the religious bigots held their tongue for Matthew's version records Jesus' stinging rebuke "**How much more valuable then is a man than a sheep! So then, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath**" (Mt 12:12+) "The obvious answer could only stamp their pious Sabbath practices as false." (Hiebert) It is interesting that in Mark 1:25+ Jesus rebuked an evil spirit commanding him to "**be quiet.**" (a different verb [phimoo](#)) So not only did Jesus shut the mouths of evil spirits but also the mouths of evil men!

**D L Moody** - These are indeed obstinate in their infidelity who, when they can say nothing against a truth, will say nothing for it; and when they cannot resist, yet will not yield.

**THOUGHT** - One day, His presence will evoke the diametrically opposite reaction from all men (including evil men whose mouths were shut or who now blaspheme Him), Paul writing that "at the Name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that **every tongue will confess** that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil 2:10-11<sub>+</sub>) And then once again when evil men are face to face with Jesus their Judge (Jn 5:22, 23, 28, 29) at the Great White Throne, they will once again **keep silent** and will have nothing to say to defend themselves or to excuse their life of continual sin, John recording "And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds." (Rev 20:12<sub>+</sub>) What is the message? Don't keep silent about Jesus, but confess Him as your Lord and Savior (Ro 10:9-10<sub>+</sub>) or otherwise you will be forced to be silent before Him as your Judge!

**Kept silent** (hushed, quiet)(4623)([siopao](#) from **siopē** = silence, a hush, properly, muteness, i.e. involuntary stillness, or inability to speak) means to be silent, hold one's peace, say nothing as in this passage. In Mark 4:29 Jesus commanded the wind and sea "**Hush, be still.**" In Mk 9:34 Jesus' disciples **'kept silent** for on the way they had discussed with one another which of them was the greatest." In Mk 10:48 the blind beggar kept crying out to Jesus to have mercy on him and "Many were sternly telling him to **be quiet**, but he kept crying out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" In Mk 14:61 Jesus **"kept silent** and did not answer. Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" The other uses of **siopao** - Mt. 20:31; Mt. 26:63; Lk. 1:20; Lk. 19:40; Acts 18:9. **Wuest** adds that "The verb is imperfect. They kept on being quiet. Theirs was a painful, embarrassing silence. Expositors says: "What could they reply to a question which looked at the subject from a wholly different point of view, the ethical, from the legal one they were accustomed to? There was nothing in common between them and Jesus.""

**Mark 3:5** 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.

NET Mark 3:5 After looking around at them in anger, grieved by the hardness of their hearts, he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

GNT Mark 3:5 κα περιβλεψ μενος α το ς μετ ργ ς, συλλυπο μενος π τ πωρ σει τ ς καρδ ας α τ ν λ γει τ νθρ π , κτεινον τ ν χε ρα. κα ξ τεινεν κα πεκατεστ θη χε ρ α το .

NLT Mark 3:5 He looked around at them angrily and was deeply saddened by their hard hearts. Then he said to the man, "Hold out your hand." So the man held out his hand, and it was restored!

KJV Mark 3:5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was

restored whole as the other.

ESV Mark 3:5 And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

NIV Mark 3:5 He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored.

ASV Mark 3:5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth; and his hand was restored.

CSB Mark 3:5 After looking around at them with anger and sorrow at the hardness of their hearts, He told the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

NKJ Mark 3:5 And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

NRS Mark 3:5 He looked around at them with anger; he was grieved at their hardness of heart and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

YLT Mark 3:5 And having looked round upon them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their heart, he saith to the man, 'Stretch forth thy hand;' and he stretched forth, and his hand was restored whole as the other;

NAB Mark 3:5 Looking around at them with anger and grieved at their hardness of heart, he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out and his hand was restored.

NJB Mark 3:5 Then he looked angrily round at them, grieved to find them so obstinate, and said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' He stretched it out and his hand was restored.

GWN Mark 3:5 Jesus was angry as he looked around at them. He was deeply hurt because their minds were closed. Then he told the man, "Hold out your hand." The man held it out, and his hand became normal again.

BBE Mark 3:5 And looking round on them he was angry, being sad because of their hard hearts; and he said to the man, Put out your hand. And he put it out, and his hand was made well.

- **with anger:** Lu 6:10 13:15 Eph 4:26 Rev 6:16
- **grieved:** Ge 6:6 Jdg 10:16 Ne 13:8 Ps 95:10 Isa 63:9,10 Lu 19:40-44 Eph 4:30 Heb 3:10,17
- **hardness:** Isa 6:9,10 42:18-20 44:18-20 Mt 13:14,15 Ro 11:7-10,25 2Co 3:14 Eph 4:18
- **Stretch:** 1Ki 13:6 Mt 12:13 Lu 6:10 17:14 Joh 5:8,9 9:7 Heb 5:9
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Parallel Passages:** Mark 3:1-6, Matthew 12:9-14, Luke 6:6-11

Matthew 12:13+ Then He \*said to the man, "Stretch out your hand!" He stretched it out, and it was restored to normal, like the other. 14 But the Pharisees went out and conspired against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.

Luke 6:10+ After looking around at them all, He said to him, "Stretch out your hand!" And he did so; and his hand was restored. 11 But they themselves were filled with rage, and discussed together what they might do to Jesus.

## **JESUS' SWEEPING LOOK OF ANGER TEMPERED WITH GRIEF**

References to the emotions of Jesus are peculiar to Mark, so it is not surprising that this is the only mention in the Gospels of Jesus specifically being angry.

**After looking around at them with anger** - Vainly did Jesus look over this group of hypocrites for one who would respond to His question in the previous passage! Jesus' angry eyes scanned the crowd of unbelieving Pharisees gathered in the synagogue. It was a penetrating gaze! This is a frightening verse! One can only imagine the consciences of these men as the Creator of the Universe turned and gazed into their eyes! One would have thought that one look from Jesus would have gotten their attention (cf John on the Isle of Patmos - Rev 1:14, 17, 18+), but their hearts were intractably hardened! We all know a few folks like this, who we've shared



the truth with again and again, only to see them take a increasingly harder stance against the truth of the Gospel of Jesus! This is such a tragic scene! Jesus exhibits controlled, righteous anger against these men for their despicable malice and evil. There are two words for **anger** in Greek, [thumos](#) and [orge](#), the former speaking of a violent outburst of passion and the latter describing a more settled disposition. Jesus was expressing a deep-seated wrath against these unfeeling legalistic hypocrites. As an aside, **anger** by itself is not necessarily sin. So God does allow men to exhibit a righteous anger like Jesus did in this case, but for fallen men such anger can easily become sin if not carried out enabled by the Spirit, Who Alone can control our fleshly tendency (cf Ps 4:4 and Eph 4:26, 27).

**Lenski** - Jesus let his eyes pass over the scribes and Pharisees (α τοῦς) to see whether at least one man among them would make a response. They all remained silent, and this explains his anger. The divine anger is far different; it is the holy reaction in the heart of God or of Jesus against man's hardness of heart. God and Jesus are not impassive; man's sin and wicked resistance stir them most deeply(ISMG)

**Hiebert** offers these insightful comments - His holy indignation against evil was unalloyed by that feeling of malignity and vindictiveness which renders human anger almost always sinful. Anger against sin is an essential part of a healthy moral nature. Jesus' reaction was perfectly consistent with His love and mercy. As a true man, Jesus experienced normal human emotions, among them anger as well as grief at obstinate sin. Thus Mark notes that Jesus "is 'grieved' at men's hardness of heart (Mk 3:5); he marvels at their unbelief (Mk 6:6); he has 'compassion' on the hungry crowd (Mk 6:34; 8:2); he 'sighs deeply in his spirit' when Pharisees seek a sign from him (Mk 8:12); he is 'indignant' at the disciples' treatment of children (Mk 10:14); he betrays his love for the rich man (Mk 10:21); he is 'greatly distressed and troubled,' his soul is 'very sorrowful' at Gethsemane (Mk 14:33-34)." In His reaction to the sullen refusal of the Pharisees to respond to the truth, the incarnate Christ revealed the character of our holy God. (Ibid)

**Looking around** (4017)([periblepo](#) from [peri](#) = around + [blepo](#) = to look) means literally to glance at or look around in various directions. It means to observe from the side, to observe minutely, going along as it were with the object for the purpose of watching its movements (Swete). It was used for keeping a watchful eye on criminals, for watching out for a bowl lest it be stolen (MM). Galen used the subst. of empirical medical observation (DMTG, 260). It was also used of observing one's conduct to see if the person would act falsely toward another. Jesus' gaze swept over the whole group of Pharisees. Scroggie says it describes a slow, searching gaze. **Robertson** says "The eyes of Jesus swept the room all round and each rabbinical hypocrite felt the cut of that condemnatory glance." All but one of the 7 NT uses describe Jesus looking around. In the NT [periblepo](#) is found only in the [middle voice](#) (reflexive voice) meaning to look round about oneself. This is a favorite verb of Mark - Mk. 3:5; Mk. 3:34; Mk. 5:32; Mk. 9:8; Mk. 10:23; Mk. 11:11; Lk. 6:10. When Jesus looks at you, what does He see? **Wuest** adds that "The aorist in juxtaposition with the present tense of the participle "being grieved," shows that it was a swift, sweeping glance. The prefixed preposition [peri](#) (περι), meaning "around," indicates that His glance took them all in."

**J C Ryle** on **looking around at them in anger** - We are told that "He looked round about on them with ANGER, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts." This expression is very remarkable, and demands special attention. It is meant to remind us that our Lord Jesus Christ was a man like ourselves in all things, sin only excepted. Whatever sinless feelings belong to the constitution of man, our Lord partook of, and knew by experience. We read that He "marveled," that He "rejoiced," that He "wept," that He "loved," and here we read that He felt "anger." It is plain from these words that there is an "anger" which is lawful, right, and not sinful. There is an indignation which is justifiable, and on some occasions may be properly manifested. The words of Solomon and Paul both seem to teach the same lesson. "The north wind drives away rain, so does an angry countenance a backbiting tongue." "Be angry and sin not." (Pr 25:23. Eph 4:26+) Yet it must be confessed that the subject is full of difficulty. Of all the feelings that man's heart experiences, there is none perhaps which so soon runs into sin as the feeling of anger (cf James 1:19,20+, Ps 4:4NLT, Ps 4:4ESV, Ps 4:4NIV). There is none which once excited seems less under control. There is none which leads on to so much evil. The length to which ill-temper, irritability, and passion, will carry even godly men, all must know. The history of "the contention" of Paul and Barnabas at Antioch, and the story of Moses being provoked until he "spoke unadvisedly with his lips," are familiar to every Bible reader. The dreadful fact that passionate words are a breach of the sixth commandment, is plainly taught in the Sermon on the Mount. And yet here we see that there is anger which is lawful. Let us leave this subject with an earnest prayer, that we may all be enabled to take heed to our spirit in the matter of anger. We may rest assured that there is no human feeling which needs so much cautious guarding as this. A sinless wrath is a very rare thing. The wrath of man is seldom for the glory of God. In every case a righteous indignation should be mingled with grief and sorrow for those who cause it, even as it was in the case of our Lord. And this, at all events, we may be sure of--it is better never to be angry,

than to be angry and sin.

**Anger** (wrath) (3709) (**orge** from **orgaô** = to teem, to swell) is a word which derives from the idea of something swelling until it eventually bursts (think of an over-ripe tomato that begins to swell and show cracks in the skin). Orge was used of sap rising in a tree as it builds and builds. And so orge describes anger that proceeds from one's settled nature and is not a petulant, irrational outburst which we as humans often exhibit. Orge is a holy, just revulsion against what is contrary to and opposes God's holy nature and will. The classic description is found in Ro 1:18+ where Paul writes "For the **wrath** of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who (actively, continually, willfully) suppress the truth in unrighteousness." In sum orge describes God's settled indignation and controlled passion directed against sin and the sinner. Aren't we who are saved by grace grateful that His anger is balanced by His mercy or we would have been doomed!

**Wuest** - There are three words speaking of anger, **thumos**, indicating a sudden outburst of anger that cools off quickly, **orge**, defining an abiding and settled habit of mind, not operative at all times, but exhibiting itself in the same way when the occasion demands it, and **parorgismos** which speaks of anger in the sense of exasperation. The latter is forbidden in Scripture, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (Eph. 4:26+); the second, **orge** is permitted, but the qualification is that no sinful element be included in it.

**Grieved at their hardness of heart** - Jesus is mad and sad, angry and afflicted. Jesus' **anger** is balanced by His grief, in a sense commiserating with the calamities which He knew they would bring on themselves and on the nation of Israel. **Hardness** means **obtuseness** of mental discernment, but in this context the obtuseness is not mental but moral and spiritual. It means the process by which something becomes more and more like stone. How did their **hardness of heart** manifest? They were seeking to find fault (Mk 3:2). They would not admit wrong when Jesus turned the tables on them with His question in Mark 3:4. (cf Mt 12:11-12+). Fault finders do not like to admit their own faults! Hard hearted people do not like to admit wrong!

**Lenski** - It is the obdurate and wilful resistance of the heart to the divine truth. To see it in the hearts of these scribes and Pharisees saddened Jesus. We catch a glimpse of the emotional life of Jesus. With indignation and sadness in his heart he wrought this miracle, not with joy. He labored to make these men understand; he made the truth about the Sabbath so plain that a child could see it. But it was all in vain. (ISMG)

**Grieved** (4818) (**sullupeo** from **sun** - with + **lupeo** - to grieve, be in distress, cause pain) means to feel sympathy, to feel sorry for. It can be found in classical Greek meaning "hurt together, share in grief". Used twice in the Septuagint - Ps 69:20 and Isa 51:19. This is the only NT use of this verb which in the **present tense** emphasizing Jesus continuous grief which contrasts with His momentary angry look (as determined by use of the **arist tense**). We see the heart of Jesus in other passages like Mt 23:37-38 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. 38"Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!"

**Hardness** (4457) (**porosis** from **poroo** = to harden, petrify, render insensitive) literally describes the covering of a part with a **callus** or thick growth of skin (Hippocrates used it as a technical medical term). Poros is also used of the hard callus representing the new bone growth in a fracture site. Have you ever done hard manual labor repetitively using your hands? If you have, you probably developed a callus and you can better understand what Jesus is saying. So just as that callus on your hand affected the sensitivity to touch, so too the callousness of these religious charlatans made their hearts insensitive to the Truth of Jesus' words. One writer adds that **porosis** expresses the condition of moral insensibility or "the deadness that supervenes when the heart has ceased to be sensible of the stimuli of the conscience." Even though their hearts (and most of the hearts of the Jews in Israel) were calloused and insensitive to spiritual truth, Paul shows that there is hope for the nation because "a partial **hardening** (porosis) has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in." (Romans 11:25+) **Robertson** says "Their own heart or attitude was in a state of moral ossification (πρωρωσις [pōrōsis]) like hardened hands or feet." These Jewish leaders were no better than the pagan Gentiles that Paul described as "being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart." (Eph 4:18+). The tragedy was that the Jewish religious leaders were not ignorant of the things of God and were therefore more culpable than the idol worshipping Gentiles, a thought that would have horrified these Jews had they known the truth!

**Heart** (2588) (**kardia**) does not refer to the physical organ but is always used figuratively in Scripture to refer to the seat and center of human life. The heart is the center of the personality, and it controls the intellect, emotions, and will. No outward obedience is of the slightest value unless the heart turns to God. **Kardia** as

stated above refers not to the physical organ (over 800 mentions and none refer to the physical organ!), but is always used figuratively to center of our personality, to so to speak to our "**control center**" (to make a play on the ["air traffic control center"](#) at the airport which carefully guards and guides what flies in and what flies out. How applicable to our "hearts" which are so prone to wander!). In short **kardia** refers to the the [affective](#) center of our being wherein lies the capacity of moral preference and volitional desire. The **kardia** generates thoughts that make the decisions which the mind works out. In other words, our logic flows out of our heart-decisions and not vice versa. **Kardia** in Mark - Mk. 2:6; Mk. 2:8; Mk. 3:5; Mk. 6:52; Mk. 7:6; Mk. 7:19; Mk. 7:21; Mk. 8:17; Mk. 11:23; Mk. 12:30; Mk. 12:33

**THOUGHT** - If you are reading these notes and know that you have a hard heart, you are in grave danger and every time you refuse an offer to receive Jesus as Savior, your heart becomes a little more calloused to the Word of Truth. If that describes you, then the warning in Hebrews 3 is for you - "Do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked me, as in the day of trial in the wilderness....As I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest!...'And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were **disobedient**? So we see that they were not able to enter because of **unbelief**. (Heb 3:8, 11, 18-19+) Notice unbelief parallels disobedience. The converse is that if you say you believe and yet you steadfastly refuse to obey, than your "belief" will take you straight to Hell (cp Jesus' words in Mt 7:21-23+ and Paul's admonition in 2 Cor 13:5+)! Faith alone saves but the faith that saves is never alone but brings forth fruit in keeping with repentance (Mt 3:8+).

**Brian Bill** - Isaiah 53:3 says that He is "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." In Matthew 23:37, Jesus is greatly grieved as He considers the hard hearts of those in Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!" And another occasion when Jerusalem comes into view, Luke 19:41 says that Jesus "wept over it." Jesus laments because He loves people. This is captured clearly in Mark 10 when He challenges the rich young ruler to give up his idols and his self-righteous rule keeping. Check out verse 21: "And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, 'You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have...and come, follow me.'" What is it that makes Jesus get angry and grieved? Listen. There's something far worse than a withered hand; it's a withered heart. To the Pharisees, the man with a withered hand was just a pawn; to Jesus He was a person made in the image of God. Their legalism had eroded their love leading them to have "hardness of heart." This describes someone who willingly and repeatedly refuses to repent and receive Jesus Christ. The word "hardening" is a present process and literally means, "callous and insensitive." It was used to describe marble. Hard hearts break Jesus' heart. We can go all the way back to Genesis 6:6 to hear some shocking words from the Lord: "And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart." ([Sermon](#))

**He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand."** - Jesus gives the man a command in the [aorist imperative](#) which conveys the sense of "Do this now!" "Don't delay!" Notice He does not touch the man or command him to be healed, but only to stretch out his withered hand. This would make it difficult for him to be accused.

**And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored** - Don't miss that this lame man expressed at least some degree of faith in immediately responding to Jesus' command. And remember that the hand he is stretching out was paralyzed, so in essence Jesus was asking the man to do something that heretofore had been impossible! In fact his ability to stretch it out demonstrated it was restored. Notice that the man responded to Jesus not with "How can I stretch it out? It is paralyzed?" And so by faith in Jesus' words, he responded not knowing what would happen (cf to how believers are called to "walk by faith, not by sight" 2 Cor 5:7). His faith was manifest in his obedience, as true faith always is. Jesus commanded. He obeyed. His obedience brought blessing, in this case healing of his paralyzed limb. When Jesus commands do I obey? Note that Jesus' performance of healing on the Sabbath is another illustration of His claim to be "**Lord of the Sabbath**" (Mark 2:28+).

**D L Moody** - Every conversion is a miracle. The sinner can no more "believe" than this man could raise his withered hand, without power being given from on high.

**Stretch...stretched** (1614)([ekteino](#) from **ek** = out + **teino** = to stretch) means stretch out literally, as a gesture with one's hand stretched out. Jesus' stretched His hands out "toward His disciples" (Mt 12:49), to Peter drowning (Mt 14:31), to the leper (Mk 1:41, Mt 8:3, Lk 5:13, cf healing in Acts 4:30). **Ekteino** is used of the stretching out of Paul's hand as he prepared to offer his verbal defense (Acts 26:1). **Ekteino** is used in all three synoptic accounts of Jesus telling the lame man to stretch out his hand (Mt 12:13, Mk 3:5, Lk 6:10).

**Was restored** (600)([apokathistemi](#) from **apo** = from + **kathistemi** = to set in order, appoint) means literally to

restore to an earlier condition. It indicates complete restoration, a return to a former condition. **Apokathistemi** in secular Greek was a medical technical term for restoring to health (to cure or recovery from illness) and has that meaning in the three synoptic uses (Mt 12:13, Mk 3:5, 8:5, Lk 6:10) It is interesting that this verb is used in the Septuagint to describe restoration of Nebuchadnezzar's reason after God humbled him for 7 years of eating grass. (Da 4:36+) If you are reading this and you are not a follower of Jesus Christ, than you have a "withered heart" not a withered hand. The good news is that Jesus is still in the business of healing "withered hearts" and is willing and able to give you a new heart and a new spirit. Ezekiel 36:26-27+ says " I will give you (THIS IS THE NEW COVENANT GIVEN TO ISRAEL BUT APPLICABLE TO ALL WHO WILL HEAR AND COME AND RECEIVE) a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone (A HARD HEART LIKE THE PHARISEES) from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances."

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**Healing Anger - "PURE" ANGER IS A GIFT FROM GOD**, holding the power to heal, to cleanse, to make positive change, to give life. Anger can only do these things, though, when tempered with compassion and when rightly focused. This is the kind of anger that drove Jesus to heal on the Sabbath. It is not the kind of anger most of us entertain most of the time. (David Baker)

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**Brian Bill** suggests the following action steps...

### **1. We should be angry about sin.**

The Bible says that we're to be angry in a righteous kind of way. Ephesians 4:26 says, "Be angry and do not sin." When you see a child abused you should be angry. When you hear about abortion it should make your mad. We should be angry about evil and how our culture is sliding south. There's a place for holy indignation.

But we also need to be very careful. I like what Tim Challies says about righteous anger:

"Does God allow his people to express anger? Yes, he does. But only under these circumstances: You are reacting against actual sin, you are more concerned with the offense against God than the offense against yourself, and you are expressing your anger in ways consistent with Christian character."

And I would add that most of us could stand to be angrier about our own sins instead of covering them up or excusing them or cozying up to them.

### **2. It's even better to grieve greatly about sin.**

I've been asking God to break me and make me weep more, especially for my own sins. It's working because I cry all the time. I don't want to just get mad; I also want to get sad about sin. Here's a good prayer to pray: "Lord, break my heart with the things that break your heart." Psalm 119:136: "My eyes shed streams of tears because people do not keep your law!" I long for the kind of heart Paul had for the lost as seen in Romans 9:2 and Ro 10:1: "I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart...My heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved."

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## **An Angry Leader Ephesians 4:26**

Is there such a thing as an angry leader? Indeed, Jesus had this quality, and when we use it rightly, we follow Him. In Mark 3:5, Jesus looked "at them in anger." Holy anger is the counterpart to love. Both are part of the nature of God. Jesus' love for the man with the withered hand aroused His anger against those who would deny him healing. Jesus' love for God's house made Him angry at the sellers and buyers who had turned the temple into a "den of robbers" (Matthew 21:13).

Great leaders—people who turn the tide and change the direction of events—have been angry at injustice and abuse that dishonors God and enslaves the weak. Wilberforce moved heaven and earth to emancipate slaves in England and eliminate the slave trade—and he was angry! F. W. Robertson described his sense of anger on one special occasion: "My blood was at the moment running fire, and I remembered that once in my life I had felt a terrible might; I knew and rejoiced to know that I was inflicting the sentence of a coward's and a liar's hell." Martin Luther claimed he "never did anything well until his wrath was excited, and then he could do anything well."

But holy anger is open to abuse. Many who feel it allow anger to become their downfall. Bishop Butler teaches six conditions that make anger sinful:

- When, to favor a resentment or feud, we imagine an injury done to us.
- When an injury done to us becomes, in our minds, greater than it really is.
- When, without real injury, we feel resentment on account of pain or inconvenience.
- When indignation rises too high and overwhelms our ability to restrain.
- When we gratify resentments by causing pain or harm out of revenge.
- When we are so perplexed and angry at sin in our own lives that we readily project anger at the sin we find in others.

Paul argues for holy anger when he repeats the advice of Psalm 4:4: "In your anger do not sin" (Ephesians 4:26). This anger is not selfish and does not center on the pain you currently feel. To be free of sin, such anger must be zealous for truth and purity, with the glory of God its chief objective. (J Oswald Sanders)

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**Steven Cole discusses this nameless paralyzed man's faith** - The man with the withered hand pictures how we should respond when Jesus stomps on our toes. He could have refused to do what Jesus asked because of fear of the Pharisees. They easily could take out their anger on him: "You know what our law states. Why didn't you wait and come back tomorrow for healing? This upstart Jesus is just undermining our heritage and way of life! You shouldn't have gone along with Him!" But the man wanted to be healed even if it meant enduring the wrath of the Pharisees. He could have refused to obey Jesus out of embarrassment, as I've already said. When Jesus asked him to stretch out his hand, he could have thought, "Is He mocking me? He knows that my problem is precisely that I cannot stretch out my hand!" He could have thought of a lot of excuses why he couldn't do what Jesus asked him to do. But instead, recognizing his own impotence and need, **he believed and obeyed Jesus. He was instantly healed.**

There were several elements in his **obedient faith** that we must follow.

**First**, he recognized and admitted his need and inability. He didn't angrily say, "Why are you singling me out? I'm no different than anyone else here." He didn't deny or camouflage his problem. He didn't offer to go fifty-fifty in helping Jesus solve the problem. If you want Jesus to heal your soul, you must admit, "I am a hopeless, helpless sinner. My thoughts, my attitudes, my words, and my deeds have continually violated Your holy Word. I cannot save myself. Lord, I need Your powerful Word to save me."

**Second**, he believed in Christ's ability to heal him. This isn't stated, but it's implicitly behind his action. Probably he had heard how Jesus had healed the paralytic. He knew how Jesus had healed everyone who gathered at Peter's door one evening. He had just heard Jesus teach. Now Jesus was looking directly at him. He knew and believed that Jesus had the power from God to heal him. Even so, we must look at the records of Jesus' life and ministry and come to the conclusion that He is who He claimed to be. He is God in human flesh, the only Mediator between sinners and a holy God. He is able to save my soul.

**Third**, he acted in obedience to Christ's command. Jesus commanded him to do something impossible: "Stretch out your hand!" But with the command, Jesus imparted the power and ability to obey it. The man obeyed and was instantly healed. Jesus commands sinners to do something impossible: Repent and believe in the gospel (Mk 1:15). If you will look to Him and cry out, "Lord, I cannot repent and believe by my ability, but grant me repentance and faith by Your grace," He will do it and you will be instantly saved.

Although the text does not say so, I agree with **G. Campbell Morgan's insight** (The Westminster Pulpit [Baker], 1:294) that Jesus didn't heal this man so that he could wrap his healed hand in a bandage and protect it, but so that he could use it. By exercising and using it, he would maintain the new strength. Even so, when the Lord has delivered us from our sins, He expects us to use our healed lives in service for His glory.

**Conclusion** - Morgan also points out that the only man in the synagogue that Jesus sought out was the man with the greatest need. If you have a problem, it does not exclude you from Jesus. Rather, it makes you the target of His gracious call. You may have an embarrassing problem that you would rather not face up to and you certainly don't want to expose it in public. But Jesus says to you, "Arise and stand in the midst! Admit that you have a sin problem." He just kinda sorta stomps on your aorta! But if you will respond in obedient faith, He will say, "Stretch out your hand!" He will impart the power of His salvation, and you will be changed in your heart to the praise of the glory of His saving grace. When Jesus stomps on your toes, don't resist Him. Respond with obedient faith and He will save you and use you for His glory. ([Luke 6:6-11 When Jesus Stomps on Your Toes](#))

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Mark 3:5 - A TIME FOR ANGER - And when he had looked round about on them with anger... Mark 3:5.

It is time we rediscovered how much the Bible has to say about the wrath of God. It is time we remembered our Lord's look of anger, His driving the traders out of the temple, His denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees. It is time we called to mind that He will return in vengeance on His adversaries (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). It is the other side of love and, if there is a place for it in God's heart,

there is room for it in the hearts of His people if for the same reason and expressed in the same way. We need an outbreak of holy indignation! (Vance Havner)

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### **Grieved People**

1. A GRIEVED SAVIOUR Mark 3:5
2. A GRIEVED DISCIPLE John 21:17
3. A GRIEVED APOSTLE Acts 16:18
4. A GRIEVED BROTHER Rom. 14:15
5. A GRIEVED PROPHET Dan. 7:15
6. A GRIEVED SINNER Mark 10:22
7. A GRIEVED GOD Heb. 3:17

### **What Can Cause Grief?**

1. MUCH WISDOM Eccl. 1:18
2. SIN Gen. 6:6; 1 Cor. 4:10; Heb. 3:17
3. REBELLION Ps. 78:40; Isa. 63:10
4. ENCOURAGING AN ENEMY Neh. 13:4–8
5. HARDNESS Mark 3:5
6. BEREAVEMENT 1 Sam. 30:6
7. THE NEEDY Job 30:25

### **Grief of Christ John 11:35**

1. PROCLAIMED IN PROPHECY Isaiah 53:3, 4
2. CONFIRMED BY MARK Mark 3:5
3. OBSERVED IN HIS ATTITUDE Matthew 26:37
4. ACKNOWLEDGED TO DISCIPLES Matthew 26:38
5. INDICATED IN HIS PRAYER Matthew 26:39
6. EXPRESSED IN HIS CRY Matthew 27:46
7. MANIFESTED IN WEEPING Luke 19:41; John 11:35

### **The Compassion of Christ**

1. CHRIST HAD COMPASSION ON THE MULTITUDES Matt. 9:36
  2. CHRIST HAD COMPASSION ON THE HUNGRY MULTITUDES Mark 8:2
  3. CHRIST HAD COMPASSION ON THE LEPERS Mark 1:40, 41
  4. CHRIST HAD COMPASSION ON THE BLIND Matt. 20:34
  5. CHRIST HAD COMPASSION ON THE BEREAVED Luke 7:12, 13
  6. CHRIST HAD COMPASSION ON THE AFFLICTED Mark 3:5
  7. CHRIST HAD COMPASSION ON THE SINFUL AND THE LOST Luke 15:1, 2 (Golden Nuggets)
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### **Jesus Persecuted By: R. G. Lee**

“Therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus” John 5:16

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

Truly, Jesus could say on many occasions what David said on one occasion: “For the enemy hath persecuted my soul” (Psalm 143:3).

#### **I. JESUS RECEIVED PERSECUTION FROM THE HEARTS OF MEN**

That means that some hated Him. Even as “from within, out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness” (Mark 7:21–22), so from the hearts of men came against Jesus a persecuting hatred.

Jesus knew of this hatred. We find evidence of that in Mark 3:5:

“And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, stretch forth thine hand.”

#### **II. JESUS ENDURED TONGUE PERSECUTION**

“And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him” (Luke 16:14).

“Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest” (John 18:24).

Jesus was sent to Caiaphas who declared Him to be a blasphemer—to Caiaphas who had toward Jesus “a perpetual sneer astride his lips.”

Their tongues found pleasure in labelling Him a glutton and a wine-bibber. (Luke 7:33, 34).

And their tongues, set on fire of hell, twisted His sayings and misquoted Him and made false reports about Him. What persecution of tongue!

### III. JESUS SUFFERED THE PERSECUTION OF DEATH-PLOTTING VIOLENCE

He lived “in the agony of lonely dedications renewed at every stage and in the midst of constant rejection of affection.”

To men Jesus gave His heart of love, His sensibilities. Yet records of what men did against Him fill us with horror.

“Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him” (John 10:31). (Golden Nuggets)

#### **Mark 3:6 The Pharisees went out and immediately began conspiring with the Herodians against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.**

Wuest - And having gone out, the Pharisees at once with the Herodians were giving counsel against Him, how they might destroy Him.

NET Mark 3:6 So the Pharisees went out immediately and began plotting with the Herodians, as to how they could assassinate him.

GNT Mark 3:6 καὶ ἐξῆλθον οἱ Φαρισαῖοι ἐθὺς μετὰ τὸν ῥοδίων συμβοῦλον ὅπως αὐτὸν ποιοῦσιν.

NLT Mark 3:6 At once the Pharisees went away and met with the supporters of Herod to plot how to kill Jesus.

KJV Mark 3:6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

ESV Mark 3:6 The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

NIV Mark 3:6 Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

ASV Mark 3:6 And the Pharisees went out, and straightway with the Herodians took counsel against him, how they might destroy him.

CSB Mark 3:6 Immediately the Pharisees went out and started plotting with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

NKJ Mark 3:6 Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.

NRS Mark 3:6 The Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

YLT Mark 3:6 and the Pharisees having gone forth, immediately, with the Herodians, were taking counsel against him how they might destroy him.

NAB Mark 3:6 The Pharisees went out and immediately took counsel with the Herodians against him to put him to death.

NJB Mark 3:6 The Pharisees went out and began at once to plot with the Herodians against him, discussing how to destroy him.

GWN Mark 3:6 The Pharisees left, and with Herod's followers they immediately plotted to kill Jesus.

BBE Mark 3:6 And the Pharisees went out, and straight away made designs with the Herodians about how they might put him to death.

- **Pharisees:** Ps 109:3,4 Mt 12:14 Lu 6:11 20:19,20 22:2 Joh 11:53
- **Herodians:** Mk 8:15 12:13 Mt 22:16
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Parallel Passages:** Mark 3:1-6, Matthew 12:9-14, Luke 6:6-11

Matthew 12:14 But the Pharisees went out and conspired against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.

Luke 6:11 But they themselves were filled with rage, and discussed together what they might do to Jesus.

## COMMON ENEMIES BECOME ALLIES

While Mark mentions Jesus' anger, he does not mention the religious leaders rage. Conversely, Luke does not mention Jesus' anger, but does describe the rage of the Pharisees and Herodians. There is a striking difference between Jesus righteous anger and their evil rage.

**Edwards** - Markan irony is again present: the authorities deny Jesus the right to do good on the Sabbath while they conspire to do evil on the Sabbath. (PNTC)

**The Pharisees went out and immediately began conspiring with the Herodians against Him** - The phrase **began conspiring with** is in the [imperfect tense](#). One can just picture them one after another offering up their ideas of how to kill Jesus! The **Herodians** as you can discern from their name were political adherents to Herod and the Romans, both of which were hated by the **Pharisees**. So here we see an example of the ancient proverb "[the enemy of my enemy is my friend](#)" in which two generally opposing parties (Pharisees and Herodians) choose to work together against their common enemy Jesus Christ! The irony is that the name Pharisees means "separatist," but they did not live up to their name and were willing to work closely with men they despised so that might kill Jesus! Their plotting anticipates Mark 15:3,4, where the ruling priests began "to accuse Him harshly." We see several passages alluding to these natural enemies uniting forces to destroy their common Enemy, Jesus ( Mark 8:15; 12:13; Matt. 22:16). And we dare not miss the irony here, for even as the legalistic Pharisees were plotting murder in their hearts against Jesus of breaking their (not God's) Sabbath laws, they themselves were breaking the law (God's not their additions) "You shall not murder!" (cf Mt 5:21, 22+)

The only other appearance of the **Herodians** in the Gospels was during Passion Week, when they joined with the Pharisees in asking Jesus about paying tribute to Caesar (Mt. 22:15–16; Mk 12:13).

**THOUGHT** - Beloved follower of Jesus, this hatred toward Christ continues today and explains why men will often reject you and your narrow minded (to them) Gospel and why terrorist groups target Christians. Forewarned is forearmed. Jesus declared "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also" (Jn 15:18-20, cf Jn 17:14, Pr 29:27). Forewarned is forearmed so keep in mind that the idea of persecute is to continuously hound someone, to stay after them, to ridicule them, to dog them, to watch their every move to try to catch them doing something for which you can accuse them, to not let up on them. This world is not our home and we are aliens and strangers and should expect persecution and derision from those who are dead in their trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1+) and detest our holiness (not "holier than thou" but genuine Spirit enabled holy lives!).

**Immediately** (2117) ([euthus](#)) means they met together with their enemy at once so great was their rage ("rage of madness" - Lk 6:11) and hatred against Jesus! It is as if when the withered hand went out and was restored, the Pharisees headed for the door! Expositors says: "The stretching forth of the withered hand in obedience to Christ's command, conclusive evidence of cure, was the signal for an **immediate** exodus of the champions of orthodox Sabbath-keeping; full of wrath because the Sabbath was broken, and especially because it was broken by a miracle bringing fame to the transgressor."

**Conspiring** (plotting together)(4824) ([sumboulion](#) from **sún** = together + **boulé**= counsel) to engage in joint planning so as to devise a course of common action, often one with a harmful or evil purpose." The are plotting evil on the holy Sabbath! Talk about profaning the Sabbath -- planning how to the Lord of the Sabbath!

**Herodians** - Mentioned only 3x in the Bible - Matt. 22:16; Mk. 3:6; Mk. 12:13. The [Holman Bible Dictionary](#) has this entry on Herodians "Member of an aristocratic Jewish group who favored the policies of Herod Antipas and thus supported the Roman government. Apparently they lived in Galilee, where Antipas ruled, and joined the Jerusalem religious authorities in opposing Jesus. They tried to trap Jesus into denying responsibility for Roman taxes (Matthew 22:15-22 ; Mark 12:13-17 ). Their plots began the road to Jesus' crucifixion (Mark 3:6)." Herodians were not a sect of Judaism, but were essentially secularists. There were Jews in Israel who had no interest in religion, they were secularists and they attached themselves to the Herodian cause, to the cause of Herod the Great and his progeny. Herodians were politically driven, and loyal to the Herodian dynasty. Herodians were considered by true Jews to be Hellenists, to have been Romanized, or in some adverse way influenced by the Greek culture and they were staunch enemies of the Pharisees. For



more see [Who were the Herodians?](#)

**As to how they might destroy Him** - It is a bit ironic that only moments before (Mk 3:4) Jesus had spoken of **to save a life or to kill** and here these evil men begin to conspire as to how to **kill** Him! Their hearts were so hard, the truths He spoke found not fertile soil to lodge! **To destroy** means they wanted to to utterly do away with Jesus! This is Mark's first specific allusion to Jesus' death. Do you see the amazing irony and utter hypocrisy in this scene -- on one hand Jesus heals on the Sabbath and because of this healing, these evil men are plotting His murder on the same Sabbath day! The religious hatred and opposition to Jesus was beginning to rise and would culminate in His murder on the Cross. These deceived men thought they might be able to destroy Him and in fact probably thought they had succeeded after He died on Calvary. Little did they know that what they meant for evil would turn out to be the greatest good for mankind and as a result of their evil actions many would be saved, just as had occurred with Joseph in the OT (cf Ge 50:20).

**Destroy** (622)(**apollumi** from **apo** = away from or wholly + **olethros** = state of utter ruin <> **ollumi** = to destroy) means to destroy utterly, to kill and was the same verb used to describe Herod's searching "for the Child (INFANT JESUS) to **destroy** Him." (Mt 2:13+). So the irony is that what Herod could not accomplish, these wicked followers, the Herodians along with the "separatist" Pharisees would eventually finish on the Cross! Wuest writes "One wonders whether our Lord when He uttered the words "to save life or to kill" (Mk 3:4), was referring to their purpose of putting Him to death."

### **Mark 3:7 Jesus withdrew to the sea with His disciples; and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and also from Judea,**

Wuest - And Jesus with His disciples withdrew to the sea, and a vast multitude from Galilee followed, and from Judaea.

NET Mark 3:7 Then Jesus went away with his disciples to the sea, and a great multitude from Galilee followed him. And from Judea,

GNT Mark 3:7 Κα ἰησοῦς μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ ἐξῆλθεν εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν, καὶ πολλὸς πλῆθος πῦν Γαλιλαίας [κόλοθησεν], καὶ πῦν οὐδαίας

NLT Mark 3:7 Jesus went out to the lake with his disciples, and a large crowd followed him. They came from all over Galilee, Judea,

KJV Mark 3:7 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judaea,

ESV Mark 3:7 Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea, and a great crowd followed, from Galilee and Judea

NIV Mark 3:7 Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed.

ASV Mark 3:7 And Jesus with his disciples withdrew to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and from Judaea,

CSB Mark 3:7 Jesus departed with His disciples to the sea, and a large crowd followed from Galilee, Judea,

NKJ Mark 3:7 But Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea. And a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judea

NRS Mark 3:7 Jesus departed with his disciples to the sea, and a great multitude from Galilee followed him;

YLT Mark 3:7 And Jesus withdrew with his disciples unto the sea, and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judaea,

NAB Mark 3:7 Jesus withdrew toward the sea with his disciples. A large number of people (followed) from Galilee and from Judea.

NJB Mark 3:7 Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lakeside, and great crowds from Galilee followed him. From Judaea,

GWN Mark 3:7 Jesus left with his disciples for the Sea of Galilee. A large crowd from Galilee, Judea,

BBE Mark 3:7 And Jesus went away with his disciples to the sea, and a great number from Galilee came after him: and from Judaea,

- **Jesus:** Mt 10:23 Mt 12:15 Lu 6:12 Joh 10:39-41 11:53,54 Ac 14:5,6 Ac 17:10,14
- **and a great multitude:** Mt 4:25 Lu 6:17
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- **Galilee:** Mk 1:39 Jos 20:7 21:32 Lu 23:5 Joh 7:41,52

## JESUS' MAGNETISM

**Related Passages:** Mark 3:7-12

Matthew 12:15-21+ But Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. Many followed Him, and He healed them all, 16 and warned them not to tell who He was. 17 This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: 18 **“BEHOLD, MY SERVANT WHOM I HAVE CHOSEN; MY BELOVED IN WHOM MY SOUL is WELL-PLEASSED; I WILL PUT MY SPIRIT UPON HIM, AND HE SHALL PROCLAIM JUSTICE TO THE GENTILES. 19“HE WILL NOT QUARREL, NOR CRY OUT; NOR WILL ANYONE HEAR HIS VOICE IN THE STREETS. 20“A BATTERED REED HE WILL NOT BREAK OFF, AND A SMOLDERING WICK HE WILL NOT PUT OUT, UNTIL HE LEADS JUSTICE TO VICTORY. 21 “AND IN HIS NAME THE GENTILES WILL HOPE.”**

Keep the context in mind that Mark has described five confrontations with the Jewish leaders (Mk 2:6–11; Mk 2:15–17; Mk 2:18-22, Mk 2:23–28; and Mk 3:1–6), so the tension is building to such a point that now Jesus withdraws. He had withdrawn to the seashore in Mk 2:12 after He had been accused of blasphemy for forgiving the paralytic's sin and then healing him to authenticate His authority to forgive sins. Now he retires a second time to the seashore after healing another paralyzed man.

**Thomas Constable** refers to Mark 3:7-6:6 as "The Servant's Later Galilean Ministry" explaining that "There are some structural similarities between Mk 1:14–3:6 and Mk 3:7–6:6a. The beginnings and endings of these two sections are similar. The first section describes Jesus' ministry in Galilee before the religious leaders determined to kill Him, and the second shows His ministry after that decision. That decision is the basis for the division of Jesus' Galilean ministry into an earlier and a later stage." (Expository Notes) (See Jensen's chart at the top of this page which shows Jesus' increasing popularity and then religious confrontation.)

**Jesus withdrew to the sea with His disciples - Bock** notes that "As in Mark 1:14, which introduces Mark 1:14–3:6, Mark begins this new section with the use of the name **“Jesus.”** (BECNT-Mk) Compare Mk 2:13 where **He went out again by the seashore.** The Greek has **“kai”** which is usually translated **“and”** and serves to couple or link this event with the previous Sabbath synagogue confrontation. The **NET** translates the **“kai”** as **“then”** (see [note on “time sensitive” word](#)) to emphasize the implied sequence. Matthew 12:15 says **Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there** (Mark does not explain His withdrawal to the sea). In other words, in His omniscience, Jesus knew that the Pharisees were in a rage (Lk 6:11+), so much so that they were willing to ally themselves with their hated opponents the Herodians in order to determine how to destroy Jesus. (Mk 3:6, Mt 12:14). Hatred and rage makes people do unusual, unexpected things! But don't misunderstand, for Jesus did not withdraw out of fear, for He was not afraid of the Pharisees.

**Vincent** - “Mark alone notes no less than eleven occasions on which Jesus retired from His work, in order to escape His enemies or to pray in solitude, for rest, or for private conference with His disciples. See Mk 1:12, 3:7, 6:31, 46; 7:24, 31; 9:2, 10:1, 14:34.”

It is notable that in Greek the phrase with **His disciples** is placed in a position of emphasis, but here does not describe all those following Him but a smaller group of men He had chosen (exactly how many and who is not absolutely clear - presumably Simon, Andrew, James, John and Matthew - cf Mk 1:16-20, Mk 2:13-14, and possibly Phillip and Nathanael - Jn 1:35-51). Jesus would soon call on them to serve Him by providing a boat in Mk 3:9. The phrase **with His disciples** indicates these men were were sharing not only in the rising hostility from the Jewish leaders toward Jesus but also in His increasing popularity with the masses.

**Withdrew** (left, departed, gone aside, stepping aside)(402)(**anachoreo** from **ana** = back again or emphatic + **choreo** = depart, make room) means to depart from a location. Louw-Nida says it means to "move away from a location, implying a considerable distance." **Anachoreō** is used several times in Matthew to describe a strategic withdrawal in the face of danger (Mt 2:12–14, 22; 4:12; 12:15; 14:13; 15:21). Moulton and Milligan state regarding the sense of **anachoreo** that “The connotation of ‘taking refuge’ from some peril will suit most of the NT passages remarkably well.” The withdrawal to the Sea of Galilee was an act of prudence not a result of fear!

**Vincent** has an interesting note that the Gospel of Mark "alone notes no less than eleven occasions on which Jesus retired from His work, in order to escape His enemies or to pray in solitude, for rest, or for private conference with His disciples. See Mark 1:12, Mk 3:7, Mk 6:31, 46; Mk 7:24, 31; Mk 9:2, Mk 10:1, Mk 14:34.”

**And a great multitude from Galilee followed; and also from Judea - Great** marks this as an exceptionally large crowd. **Hiebert** writes "The conflicts with the Pharisees did not diminish Jesus' popularity with the masses. They seemed to draw the common people to Him in even larger numbers." (Expositional Commentary) Notice the addition of the adjective **great** ([polus](#)) which is emphatic in the Greek and draws attention to the large number of people who were being drawn to Him. Matthew 12:15 describes the **great multitude** as **many followed Him and He healed them all**. **Judea** is south of Galilee (where Jesus had earlier engaged in public ministry - Jn 3:22), indicating His reputation had spread, a truth accentuated by Mark's mention of multiple disparate geographic regions in the following passage! If the Pharisees were raging over Jesus' healing on the Sabbath, just imagine their jealous ire about to explode as they hear the news that people are coming from far and wide!

**Multitude** (crowd, throng)([4128](#))([plethos](#) from **pletho** = to fill - gives us English "plethora") means fullness or magnitude. is also used to express quantity, size, or number of something, e.g., an amount of money or length of time. In classic Greek it had the basic meaning of multitude. In the Gospels and Acts **plethos** usually means a quantity (of people).

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The Hidden Christ

1 Peter 1:8

1. PRESENCE WITHDRAWN Mark 3:7
2. CLOUD OVERSHADOWED THEM Luke 9:34
3. EYES WERE HELD Luke 24:16
4. PRESENT BUT NOT KNOWN John 1:26
5. ASCENDED IN A CLOUD Acts 1:9
6. HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD Colossians 3:3
7. JOY UNSPEAKABLE 1 Peter 1:8

**Mark 3:8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan, and the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon, a great number of people heard of all that He was doing and came to Him.**

Wuest - And from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea and across the Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a vast multitude hearing constantly of such great things which He is continually doing, came to Him.

NET Mark 3:8 Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan River, and around Tyre and Sidon a great multitude came to him when they heard about the things he had done.

GNT Mark 3:8 κα π εροσο λ μων κα π τ ς δουμα ας κα π ραν το ορδ νου κα περ Τ ρον κα Σιδ να, πλ θος πολ κο οντες σα πο ει λθον πρ ς α τ ν.

NLT Mark 3:8 Jerusalem, Idumea, from east of the Jordan River, and even from as far north as Tyre and Sidon. The news about his miracles had spread far and wide, and vast numbers of people came to see him.

KJV Mark 3:8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

ESV Mark 3:8 and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and Sidon. When the great crowd heard all that he was doing, they came to him.

NIV Mark 3:8 When they heard all he was doing, many people came to him from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and the regions across the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon.

ASV Mark 3:8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and beyond the Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing what great things he did, came unto him.

CSB Mark 3:8 Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan, and around Tyre and Sidon. The large crowd came to Him because they heard about everything He was doing.

NKJ Mark 3:8 and Jerusalem and Idumea and beyond the Jordan; and those from Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard how many things He was doing, came to Him.

NRS Mark 3:8 hearing all that he was doing, they came to him in great numbers from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan, and the region around Tyre and Sidon.

YLT Mark 3:8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea and beyond the Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon --

a great multitude -- having heard how great things he was doing, came unto him.

NAB Mark 3:8 Hearing what he was doing, a large number of people came to him also from Jerusalem, from Idumea, from beyond the Jordan, and from the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon.

NJB Mark 3:8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea and Transjordan and the region of Tyre and Sidon, great numbers who had heard of all he was doing came to him.

GWN Mark 3:8 Jerusalem, Idumea, and from across the Jordan River, and from around Tyre and Sidon followed him. They came to him because they had heard about everything he was doing.

BBE Mark 3:8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and the other side of Jordan, and the country about Tyre and Sidon, a great number, hearing what great things he did, came to him.

- **Idumaea:** Isa 34:5 Eze 35:15 36:5 Mal 1:2-4, Edom
- **beyond:** Nu 32:33-38 Jos 13:8-14
- **Tyre and Sidon:** Mk 7:24,31 Jos 19:28,29 Ps 45:12 87:4 Isa 23:1-18 Eze 26:1-28:26
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Location of Idumea - Click to Enlarge  
(See another well done map)

**And from Jerusalem, and from Idumea** (only mention in NT), **and beyond the Jordan, and the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon** - The mention of **Jerusalem** signifies that even the nation's religious capital was ringing with Jesus' exploits (and probably making the jealous Jewish religious leader's ears ring, so to speak!) **Jerusalem** is in Judea (see map) and to the south of Galilee. And on the map **Idumea** is south of Judea (and south of [Hebron](#)), while **beyond the Jordan** refers to land east of the Jordan which likely would include [Perea](#) (and possibly further west to [Decapolis](#)) whose inhabitants were mixed but contained a large Jewish element. It was under the rule of Herod Antipas. Finally **Tyre and Sidon** were north of Galilee along the Mediterranean coast (In the region of [Phoenicia](#) on the map above in the region of modern Lebanon). These geographical locations (South, West, and North) indicate that Jesus' reputation had now spread outside of traditional Jewish territory. Notice on the map the territory of **Samaria** just south of Galilee, about which Hiebert states "No representatives from Samaria are mentioned. The Samaritans remained aloof from the religious interests of the Jews."

**Idumaea and the Idumeans:** West of the `Arabah the country they occupied came to be known by the Greek name Idumaea, and the people as Idumeans. Hebron, their chief city, was taken by Judas Maccabeus in 165 B.C. (1 Maccabees 4:29, 61; 5:65). In 126 B.C. the country was subdued by John Hyrcanus, who compelled the people to become Jews and to submit to circumcision. Antipater, governor of Idumaea, was made procurator of Judea, Samaria and Galilee by Julius Caesar. He paved the way to the throne for his son Herod the Great. With the fall of Judah under the Romans, Idumaea disappears from history. (ISBE) "In our Lord's time Idumea was practically a part of Judea with a Jewish circumcised population" (George Adam Smith). ([More on Idumea](#))

**A great number of people heard of all that He was doing and came to Him - A great number of people** in the context of the geographic locations mentioned above seems to indicate a great number of Gentiles were now coming to see Jesus! He is the God not just of the Jews but of Jews and Gentiles! Indeed the parallel account in Matthew 12:17-18+ says Isaiah's OT prophecy was fulfilled stating that Jesus, God's Servant, "**SHALL PROCLAIM JUSTICE TO THE GENTILES.**" **Heard** is in the [present tense](#) so more accurately they were "hearing constantly" (Wuest) How had they heard of God's Servant? No email, no texting, no internet. Word of mouth spread throughout the middle east! What had they heard? Mark does not tell us specifically but comparing with Matthew's account it is very likely they had heard how **He healed...all** who **followed Him** (Mt 12:15+).

**A great number of people heard** about His miracles, **all He was doing** (healing, casting out demons, etc). The phrase **all that He was doing** is more literally "how great things he was doing," because the pronoun [hosos](#) (translated "all" in NAS) according to **BDAG** "pertains to a comparative quantity." The idea is how great of quantity of what He was doing, and from Matthew's parallel account it refers primarily to **healing**. And so the **NLT** accurately paraphrases it "*The news about His miracles had spread far and wide, and vast numbers of people came to see Him.*" And the verb **was doing** is the picturesque [imperfect tense](#), picturing Jesus as performing one miracle after another after another, turning no needy soul away! No wonder a **great number...came!** John Phillips aptly points out that at this point in His Galilean ministry "The multitudes were still full of enthusiasm for this amazing Messiah....So much for the Pharisee-Herodian coalition!...In one sweeping embrace, Mark gathers up the whole land. The entire country was [agog](#) with excitement." (Exploring Mark)

They came from all over the nation, and some even came from foreign nations.

- 1) Crowds came from all over Galilee. Imagine a district so heavily populated that it embraced over two hundred cities with populations of fifteen thousand or more (see note—Mt. 4:12–13). Teeming multitudes streamed to Jesus from all over the district (William Barclay).
- 2) Crowds came from Judea and Jerusalem. This was a hundred-mile journey.
- 3) Crowds came from Idumaea which lay in the deep south, bordering Palestine and Arabia. Idumaea was the Greek and Roman name for Edom or the land of Esau (Ge. 25:30; 36:1, 8). The significant point is that these people traveled a great distance to reach Jesus.
- 4) Crowds came from beyond Jordan which refers to the populations who lived on the east side of the Jordan River.
- 5) Crowds came from the north, from the foreign land of Phoenicia and from the nation's two major cities, Tyre and Sidon. (POSB)

**Ray Stedman** - I think we have difficulty grasping the size of this crowd. This was not just a few people, or a few thousand. There were literally tens of thousands of people, undoubtedly, in this crowd. They came from all over this country -- from Galilee, from Judea, which began fifty miles to the south, from Jerusalem, the capital of Judea some seventy miles south of the Sea of Galilee, and beyond that from the land of Idumea, or Edom, way down in the southern desert, and from the region east of the Jordan River stretching out into the Arabian Desert, and from the west clear to the Mediterranean coast and up the coast to Tyre and Sidon, the area now in the country of Lebanon -- from throughout this entire area they came. They flocked out from all the cities to hear this amazing prophet who had risen in Galilee and was saying such startling things. You can see how Mark traces the emphasis upon the crowd throughout this division. In Mk 3:20, he says, "and the **crowd** came together again, so that they could not even eat." Then in Mk 3:32, "a **crowd** was sitting about him..." And in Mk 4:1: "Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him..." And then, in Mk 3:36, Mark says, "And leaving the **crowd**," they went across to the other side of the lake. In Mk 5:21: "And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him..." And in Mk 5:24: "And a great **crowd** followed him and thronged about him." So this is the period when Jesus is pressed by the great masses of people, the period of his greatest popularity. For many, this has been the symbol of Jesus' success, as it would be for many in evaluating a person today. Anybody who can get a great crowd following him is regarded as a success. We have all kinds of people who do that. We call them "stars" -- there are star actors, star athletes, star singers, star politicians -- various people who have attained what in our day is a mark of success. No wonder the title of one of today's most popular musicals is Jesus Christ, Superstar. He is the one who drew all these great multitudes out from the cities of his day. **For many, this has been the symbol of Jesus' success, as it would be for many in evaluating a person today. Anybody who can get a great crowd following him is regarded as a success.** We have all kinds of people who do that. We call them "stars" -- there are star actors, star athletes, star singers, star politicians -- various people who have attained what in our day is a mark of success. **No wonder the title of one of today's most popular musicals is Jesus Christ, Superstar.** He is the one who drew all these great multitudes out from the cities of his day. But as you read this account through, you see that **Mark's intention is to underscore the weakness of popularity, the empty, hollow worthlessness of being popular, and how much damage and danger popularity produced in our Lord's ministry.** There are six ways this is brought out in this division. We will take only the first of them in this study, from Mk 3:7, to the end of the chapter. We will see three false and always hindering effects which are invariably produced when a movement becomes popular. They are a warning for us. Popularity produced them in the days of Jesus and popularity produces them today. We will see them now as we go through them. ([Mark 3:7-35 False Forces](#))

**Mark 3:9 And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the crowd, so that they would not crowd Him;**

Wuest - And He spoke to His disciples to the effect that they should always keep a small boat in readiness for Him because of the crowd, in order that they might not crush Him.

Phillips - So Jesus told his disciples to have a small boat kept in readiness for him, in case the people should crowd him too closely.

NET Mark 3:9 Because of the crowd, he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him so the crowd would not press toward him.

GNT Mark 3:9 κα ε πεν το ς μαθητα ς α το να πλοι ριον προσκαρτερ α τ δι τ ν χλον να μ θλ βωσιν α τ ν·

NLT Mark 3:9 Jesus instructed his disciples to have a boat ready so the crowd would not crush him.

KJV Mark 3:9 And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

ESV Mark 3:9 And he told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, lest they crush him,

NIV Mark 3:9 Because of the crowd he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him.

ASV Mark 3:9 And he spake to his disciples, that a little boat should wait on him because of the crowd, lest they should throng him:

CSB Mark 3:9 Then He told His disciples to have a small boat ready for Him, so the crowd would not crush Him.

NKJ Mark 3:9 So He told His disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for Him because of the multitude, lest they should crush Him.

NRS Mark 3:9 He told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, so that they would not crush him;

YLT Mark 3:9 And he said to his disciples that a little boat may wait on him, because of the multitude, that they may not press upon him,

NAB Mark 3:9 He told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, so that they would not crush him.

NJB Mark 3:9 And he asked his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, to keep him from being crushed.

GWN Mark 3:9 Jesus told his disciples to have a boat ready so that the crowd would not crush him.

BBE Mark 3:9 And he made a request to his disciples to have a little boat ready for him, so that he might not be crushed by the people;

- **because of the crowd:** Mk 5:30 Joh 6:15
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

The striking picture portrayed in Mark 3:9-10 is not found in Matthew's parallel account.

**And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the crowd-** Mark alone gives us the detail about **a boat**. His **disciples** were described in Mark 2:15, 16, 18, 23 and here clearly are His inner circle of men, not the many "followers" in general, for most of them would prove themselves "pseudo" **disciples** (cf Jn 6:66). And so the little boat was continually kept in readiness and close to shore so that He might be placed aboard at a moment's notice if it were in imminent danger of being crushed. Mark never says Jesus actually boarded the boat.

**Wuest** says **boat** is more accurately a rowboat or small ship and "is the translation of **ploiarion**. In John 21:3, we have the disciples entering a ship, a **ploion**, their large fishing vessel. In Jn 21:8, they row from the **ploion** in a **ploiarion**, a little boat, namely, the rowboat or dinghy which was attached to the large fishing boat. The small ship that waited on Jesus, was a rowboat."

**Should stand ready** ([present tense](#) continually ready) (4342)([proskartereo](#) from **prós** = motion, direction toward + **karteréo** = be strong, steadfast, firm) means to be earnest towards, giving constant attention to something, in this case keeping the boat in a constant state of readiness for Jesus! This verb also conveys the idea of "devotion" to a task and thus describes a devotion and alert attitude toward prayer (Acts 1:14+, Acts 6:4+, Col 4:2+)

**So that** (hina - [term of purpose](#)) **they would not crowd Him** - The verb **crowd** indicates that the **crowd** was so large that the people were pressing hard upon Jesus, and He was in danger of being crushed. NLT paraphrases it **so the crowd would not crush Him** as explained more fully in Mk 3:10. Therefore the **boat** was to wait on him in order that he might get into it if it became necessary to escape the pressure of the crowd. The swelling crowds speak to His rising popularity which stands in marked contrast with the negative reaction of the Pharisees in Mark 3:6. Why did they **crowd Him**? Mark 3:10 explains why they were pressing in, not just for a view, but for a **touch**.

**Crowd** (2346)([thlibo](#) from **tribos** = wear away, rub, break in pieces; NIDNTT says **thlibo** is from **thlao** = squash, crush) (See [thlipsis](#)) literally means to press, squeeze, crush (used of crushing grapes to extract juice), squash, hem in and then to be narrow. **Thlibo** is used literally in the present passage and pictures the crowd pressing in and putting pressure upon Jesus forcing Him to get in the boat. This verb is commonly used

figuratively as when Paul referred to the hardships he and his fellow workers experienced during their missionary journeys (2Cor 1:6; 4:8; 7:5; 1Th 3:4; 2Th 1:1-7).

**Wiersbe** - The **crowd** was dangerous to His cause, of course, because they were not spiritually motivated; and the authorities could accuse Him of leading a popular revolt against the Romans. Yet Jesus received the people, healed the sick, and delivered the demonized.

**Mark 3:10 for He had healed many, with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order to touch Him.**

Wuest - For He healed many, so that as a result, they kept on jostling Him in order that they might be touching Him, as many as had a distressing bodily disease.

Phillips - For he healed so many people that all those who were in pain kept pressing forward to touch him with their hands.

NET Mark 3:10 For he had healed many, so that all who were afflicted with diseases pressed toward him in order to touch him.

GNT Mark 3:10 πολλοις γαρ θερπευσεν, οστε πιπιππειν ατνα ατοψωνται σοι εχον μστιγας.

NLT Mark 3:10 He had healed many people that day, so all the sick people eagerly pushed forward to touch him.

KJV Mark 3:10 For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.

ESV Mark 3:10 for he had healed many, so that all who had diseases pressed around him to touch him.

NIV Mark 3:10 For he had healed many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch him.

ASV Mark 3:10 for he had healed many; insomuch that as many as had plagues pressed upon him that they might touch him.

CSB Mark 3:10 Since He had healed many, all who had diseases were pressing toward Him to touch Him.

NKJ Mark 3:10 For He healed many, so that as many as had afflictions pressed about Him to touch Him.

NRS Mark 3:10 for he had cured many, so that all who had diseases pressed upon him to touch him.

YLT Mark 3:10 for he did heal many, so that they threw themselves on him, in order to touch him -- as many as had plagues;

NAB Mark 3:10 He had cured many and, as a result, those who had diseases were pressing upon him to touch him.

NJB Mark 3:10 For he had cured so many that all who were afflicted in any way were crowding forward to touch him.

GWN Mark 3:10 He had cured so many that everyone with a disease rushed up to him in order to touch him.

BBE Mark 3:10 For he had made such a great number well that all those who were diseased were falling down before him for the purpose of touching him.

- **He had healed many:** Mt 12:15 14:14
- **pressed:** or, rushed, touched, Mk 5:27,28 6:56 Mt 14:36 Ac 5:15 19:11,12
- **all those who had afflictions:** Mk 5:29 Ge 12:17 Nu 11:33 Lu 7:2 Heb 12:6
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**For (gar)** is a term of explanation that explains why the crowd was so large and was pressing in on Him.

**He had healed many** - Matthew says **He healed them all** (Mt 12:15) and **many** would indicate that there were many sick/ill following Him and all were healed.

**Healed** (cure) (2323) **therapeuo** from **therapon** = an attendant, servant) in classic Greek originally meant

to serve and gradually came to mean "to care" for someone, finally acquiring the meaning most often intended in the NT uses of "to heal" or "render medical treatment" (Mt. 4:24; Mt 12:10; Mk 1:34; Luke 6:7; 10:9) Therapeuō means healing, not merely in the sense of medical treatment, but in the sense of the real healing that the Messiah brings. One could say the original meaning of therapeuo (to serve) combined with the common NT meaning (to heal), in Jesus for even as He said in Mk 10:45 "even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." In that sense, these temporal physical healings by Jesus were but a shadow of the greater spiritual healing He would make possible by giving "His life as a ransom for many."

**With the result that all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order to touch Him**- The literal reading is quite striking "So that as a result they are falling upon him in order to touch him, as many as were having scourges" The combination of **afflictions** and the phrase **in order to touch Him** would strongly indicate that the people were seeking healing just from His **touch** but they were not seeking spiritual healing from His teaching. I agree with **Liefeld** that "The crowd seems to have had little interest in Jesus other than as a miracle-worker. Despite this, He graciously healed many of them." (EBC) The eager, excited, jostling crowd was interested in Jesus meeting their physical needs, but sadly not their spiritual needs! O my! Jesus' heart must have been breaking (cf Mt 9:36+)!

**Pressed around** ([epipipto](#)) is in the [present tense](#) picturing the crowd continually pressing in on Jesus. And actually the verb **pressed around** is literally falling upon Him, clearly a potentially dangerous situation! "The sight must have been pathetic. They hoped to obtain a cure even though it might be by a rude collision." (Wuest)

**Lenski** - Jesus healed many so that the result (στε with the infinitive) was that they literally fell upon him in order to touch him (the genitive α το after a verb of touching) and thus to receive healing like the woman mentioned in Mk 5:26, 27. Like a magnet, Jesus drew the sufferers from all these countries, and none reached him in vain.(ISMG)

**Spurgeon** - Jesus had healed many; these had informed other afflicted ones; these afflicted ones, anxious to obtain the boon, pressed around the Saviour in a mighty throng—every one striving to touch him that he might obtain immediate healing. At this present time, Jesus Christ has healed many. Spiritual sickness is as rife to-day as bodily sickness was in the period of our Lord's earthly sojourn; and he is at this hour graciously occupied in healing all kinds of moral deformity and moral disease. To our knowledge some great sinners have been saved. Some who were diseased with drunkenness, with dishonesty, with lasciviousness, have believed in Christ, and have been restored to virtue and to holiness. Surely, this ought to encourage others to hope that better things are possible to them through the Saviour's healing power.([Crowding to Touch the Saviour](#))

**Afflictions** (3148)([mastix](#)) refers literally to a whip, a whip lash or a scourge (Acts 22:24; Heb 11:36; 1 Ki. 12:11, 14; Pr 26:3) and here is clearly used figuratively to denote "painful bodily illnesses, torturing maladies." (Hiebert) It referred to a "**scourge**" from God meaning a disease, plague (Mk 3:10; Mk 5:29, 34; Lk 7:21; Ps. 32:10; Ps 39:10; Ps 89:32). **Robertson** says "Strokes or scourges, terms used by us today as a paralytic stroke, the influenza scourge." The KJV renders it "**as many as had plagues.**" **Vincent** says the word **mastix** is literally "**scourges**" adding that "Our word **plague** is from *plege*, Latin *plaga*, meaning a blow. Pestilence or disease is thus regarded as a stroke from a divine hand....The word here, *scourges*, carries the same idea." Compare the related verb [mastigoo](#) used in Hebrews 12:6 describing God's "rod" of discipline as "**scourges** every son He receives." .

**Pressed around** (1968)([epipipto](#) from **epi** = upon + **pipto** = fall) means literally to fall upon someone and in the present context to press against. Epipipto describes the father running to meet his prodigal son where he "**embraced** him and kissed him." (Lk 15:20+) It is used when Eutychus fell out of a window and died and "Paul went down and **fell upon** him" and his life returned (Acts 20:10+).

**Touch** (681)([hapto/haptomai](#) is the [middle voice](#) which constitutes majority of uses) means to grasp, to lay hold of with the basic meaning of touching for the purpose of manipulating or to exert a modifying influence upon oneself, in the present context undoubtedly to receive healing by touching Jesus. **Hiebert** explains that "From the manner of Jesus' healings, the crowd had concluded that if they could but touch Him they would be healed (cf. the story of the woman with an issue of blood in Mk 5:25–34+)."

**Spurgeon** - OUR Lord had been persecuted, and therefore he put forth many proofs of his power. When opposition attends the gospel it will be the more triumphant; the warnings of the devil prognosticate the success of the word. (ED DEAR PERSECUTED PASTOR/TEACHER, YOU MAY WANT TO READ THAT AGAIN!) When our Lord Jesus had done much, he was under a sacred necessity to do more; for every one who was healed busied himself in spreading abroad the fame of the beloved Physician, and others labouring under similar infirmities hastened at once to receive the like cure. The more we do for Christ the more we may do, and I think usually the more we must do. If we hold back from Christian labour we may think that but little is required of us; but as



soon as we once enter heart and soul into the Master's service, we shall feel as if we wanted a thousand hands and a hundred lives to overtake the growing demands upon us. I gather from the case before us in the text, that as it was with the Master so will it always be with the servants; their pace of usefulness will increase in geometrical proportion, like that of a falling stone. Healed multitudes will act as willing decoys to attract multitudes of their unhealed friends. If there be any here who have received the grace of God, it will be natural for them to induce others to listen to the word of life, that so they also may find salvation in our exalted Saviour. Thus it is that more and more the kingdom grows, until the strongholds of sin are overthrown and the gates of hell are shaken. The little cloud no bigger than a man's hand increases till it darkens all the skies, and at last deluges the earth with blessing. Let us take care that we prove not an exception to this blessed rule, never let us by unholy silence rob our Master of one of his best weapons, and the church of her greatest joy. You who are healed should publish abroad in every place the fame of the Friend of Sinners, it is your privilege and your duty. ([Crowding to Touch the Saviour](#))

**Ray Stedman** on crowds pressing to touch Jesus for healing -- This underscores certain unwanted and false emphases which were awakened by this crowd. They misunderstood the purpose for which Jesus came and they began to emphasize that which was secondary in his thinking. You see this all through the ministry of Jesus, especially with regard to the healing of physical bodies. Now, our Lord did heal physically -- there is no question about it. But, from that day to this, men have seized upon that as though it preeminently were the thing he came to do. Yet, as you read the Gospels carefully, you see that Jesus is very careful to play it down, and to emphasize that he came to heal the spirits of men and not their bodies. He healed their bodies in order to demonstrate what he could do, and would do, in the realm of the spirit -- for this is the way we are made. Human nature is such that what is going on internally must become externalized. It must show up in something which affects our bodies. We well know that if we are anxious or troubled or upset it can result, if long continued, in certain physical defects. We can develop a nervous tic or twitch, or can get ulcers -- all kinds of things can go wrong because of some malady in our inner man. Again, Jesus healed the body to demonstrate what he could do with the spirit. But the crowd misunderstood that, and they pressed around him so that he might touch those who were sick, and heal them -- so much so that our Lord had to resort to a stratagem to avoid being crushed, literally, by this crowd. That is how large it was. The interesting thing is that the device he used to get away was perfectly human. Notice that Jesus didn't play with magic here. He didn't build an invisible barrier around himself so that nobody could get close, or suddenly step into a phone booth, change clothes and then leap into the sky. He is human. And, in order to escape, he asks his disciples to keep a boat handy on the shore so that he can step into it and move out onto the lake where the crowd can't follow him -- in order that he might preach instead of heal. All they wanted was healing. He wanted to preach. This is one of the things popularity does. It invariably distorts a message and emphasizes something secondary, making it paramount in the eyes of the people, so that they miss the point.

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### **Mark 3:10 All who had diseases were pressing toward Him to touch Him.**

I read about a woman who told her husband, "Orson, I've been watching that young married couple across the street. Every morning when the husband leaves the house he kisses his wife good-bye, and every evening when he gets home he kisses her again and hugs her affectionately. Now why can't you do that?"

Orson replied, "Well, honey, I can't do that. I hardly know her."

He missed the point, but a lot of us miss the point. Sometimes my wife will say to me, "Robert, you haven't hugged me or kissed me all day."

I always delight to repair the damage.

There was once a lonely man who passed a bookstore while walking down the street. Looking in the window, he saw a book with the title How to Hug. He rushed in to buy the book, but to his chagrin he discovered it was the seventh volume of a dictionary. It covered all the words from "How" to "Hug."

Our church is a "hugging church," but not all churches are like that. I have a friend who died of Lou Gehrig's disease. He'd once belonged to my church in Nashville but moved away. He loved his new church, but the people there were more reserved in expressing their affection. "Sometimes," he told me, "I just need a hug."

Jesus knew how to have and to hold, so everyone wanted to touch Him. He knew the power of an appropriate, affectionate human-to-human touch. Make a point today to hug your spouse, your kids, or even a friend who needs a spot of love.

([My All in All - Robert J Morgan](#))

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### **Mark 3:11 Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall down before Him and shout, "You are the Son of God!"**

Wuest - And the spirits, the unclean ones, as often as they set eyes on Him, kept on falling prostrate before Him, and kept on crying out with a loud voice, saying, As for you, you are the Son of God.

Phillips - Evil spirits, as soon as they saw him, acknowledged his authority and screamed, "You are the Son of God!"

NET Mark 3:11 And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God."

GNT Mark 3:11 κα τ πνε ματα τ κ θαρτα, ταν α τ ν θε ρουν, προσ πιπτον α τ κα κ ραζον λ γοντες τι Σ ε υ ς το θεο .

NLT Mark 3:11 And whenever those possessed by evil spirits caught sight of him, the spirits would throw them to the ground in front of him shrieking, "You are the Son of God!"

KJV Mark 3:11 And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.

ESV Mark 3:11 And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God."

NIV Mark 3:11 Whenever the evil spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God."

ASV Mark 3:11 And the unclean spirits, whensoever they beheld him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.

CSB Mark 3:11 Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, those possessed fell down before Him and cried out, "You are the Son of God!"

NKJ Mark 3:11 And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, "You are the Son of God."

NRS Mark 3:11 Whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and shouted, "You are the Son of God!"

YLT Mark 3:11 and the unclean spirits, when they were seeing him, were falling down before him, and were crying, saying -- 'Thou art the Son of God;'

NAB Mark 3:11 And whenever unclean spirits saw him they would fall down before him and shout, "You are the Son of God."

NJB Mark 3:11 And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw him, would fall down before him and shout, 'You are the Son of God!'

GWN Mark 3:11 Whenever people with evil spirits saw him, they would fall down in front of him and shout, "You are the Son of God!"

BBE Mark 3:11 And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw him, went down before him, crying out, and saying, You are the Son of God.

- **unclean**: Mk 1:23,24 5:5,6 Mt 8:31 Lu 4:41 Ac 16:17 19:13-17 Jas 2:19
- **the Son of God**: Mk 1:1 Mt 4:3,6 8:29 14:33 Lu 8:28
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ANOTHER CHARGED CONFRONTATION WITH THE KINGDOM OF DARKNESS

**Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him** - ASV = "*whensoever they beheld him.*" **Saw** ([theoreo](#)) **Him** is in the [imperfect tense](#) which **Vincent** says is more accurately rendered "*whenever they beheld.*" The imperfect tense denotes a repeated act. "**Beheld** indicates that these **unclean spirits** (all uses = Mk 1:23+, Mk 5:13+, Mk 6:7+, Mt 10:1, Lk 4:36+, Lk 6:18+, Acts 5:16+, Acts 8:7+, Rev 16:13+) were looking at Jesus with critical interest to measure His true character and identity." (Hiebert) They would behold Him, fall down and shout again and again. The clear implication is that these demons possessed people and were crying out through their vocal cords. Notice that strictly speaking it was the [demoniacs](#) who were falling down and crying out because of the **unclean spirits** (demons) that controlled them.

**THOUGHT-** O, blessed [antithesis](#) -- how much better to be filled with the Holy Spirit and controlled by Him (Eph 5:18+) as He stirs in our heart a desire to fall down before Jesus and call out to Him with words of worship and praise!

**Unclean** (169) ([akathartos](#) from **a** = without + **kathairo** = cleanse from [katharos](#) = clean, pure, free from the adhesion of anything that soils, adulterates, corrupts, in an ethical sense, free from corrupt desire, sin, and

guilt, cf [akatharsia](#)) in a moral sense refers to that which is unclean in thought, word, and deed. It can describe a state of moral impurity, especially sexual sin (cf Rev 17:4+) and the word [foul](#) is an excellent rendering. The idea is that which is morally indecent, filthy, highly offensive and arousing aversion and disgust. It is notable that **every** use of **akathartos** in the Gospels (19x of 30 uses) is applied to [filthy](#) demonic spirits!

**THOUGHT** - Ponder the practical implication -- When we as believers receive a [barrage](#) of "flaming arrows of the evil one" (Eph 6:16+), what "[genre](#)" of thoughts do you think those arrows are intended to arouse (this is rhetorical)? And what is our defense in the first part of that Ephesians passage? How are you doing when unclean thoughts come flying out of the blue into your mind?

**Saw** (2334)([theoreo](#) from [theaomai](#) = to look at closely or attentively; cp [theoros](#) = a spectator; English = theater) means to gaze, look with interest and purpose, carefully examine with emphasis on attention to details, not of an indifferent spectator, but of one who looks at a thing with interest and for a purpose. It The idea is to behold intensely or attentively as in our English word [scrutinize](#) which means to examine closely and minutely. **Vincent** explains that [theoreo](#) "was more than simple seeing. The verb means looking steadfastly, as one who has an interest in the object, and with a view to search into and understand it: to look inquiringly and intently." All uses of [theaomai](#) in Mark - Mk. 3:11; Mk. 5:15; Mk. 12:41; Mk. 15:40; Mk. 15:47; Mk. 16:4; Lk. 10:18; Lk. 14:29

**Wuest** adds "The demons exhibited interest and purpose in their critical observation of the Lord Jesus. They looked at Him with a practiced eye, long used to the measuring of the good and the true as exhibited in the character of God. They recognized in Him the embodiment of the holiness out from the presence of which they were driven when the angel Lucifer fell and became Satan, in whose fall they shared because they followed him in his rebellion against the Most High....The verb is in the imperfect tense, the imperfect of repeated action." (Word Studies in the Greek)

**They would fall down before Him and shout, "You are the Son of God!"** - **Fall down before** is not the verb [proskuneo](#) (to fall down in worship like devil ask Jesus to do in Mt 4:9+) but [prospipto](#), and yet the idea is still similar in that the demons were submitting to and acknowledging the authority of Jesus over them (cf [prospipto](#) in Lk 8:27,28+ = "Son of the Most High God")! **Fall down** and **shout** (scream) are both in the [imperfect tense](#) indicating this was an ongoing [raucous](#) scene! "What horrible confusion this was, deep throaty, raucous voices from the Satanic world." (Wuest) Can you imagine what those in the crowd who were close enough to see and hear ([listen](#) to how the demons may have sounded as they repeated "You are the Son of God," "You are the Son of God," "You are the Son of God") the demons must have thought! What a scene this must have been! Jesus does not desire filthy "evangelists" proclaiming His purity! (Then or now!) The tragic irony is that the demons recognized Jesus' true identity, the Jews failed to recognize their own Messiah, even though they had been given literally 100's of prophecies that pointed directly to Him! (see [Messianic Prophecy](#))

**Hiebert** notes that "'Thou art the Son of God"—this full Christological title was their unwavering affirmation of His true identity. Thou is emphatic. They recognized His unique nature. Mark clearly regarded this confession as an acknowledgment of Jesus' superhuman nature. Swete comments, "The earliest confession of the Sonship seems to have come from evil spirits, who knew Jesus better than he was known by His own disciples." Brooks remarks, "Mark probably intended to contrast what the demons acknowledged as a fact with what the religious leaders were not willing to consider as a possibility." (Ibid)

Mark's Gospel has only 3 mentions of the phrase **Son of God**. It begins with the declaration that this was the "Beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the **Son of God**" (Mk 1:1+) and ends with another declaration from the Roman centurion who witnessed Jesus' crucifixion causing him to proclaim "Truly this Man was the **Son of God**." The centurion was close but inaccurate, for Jesus is not "**was**" but "**is**" the Son of God! He is alive!

**Wuest** on "**You are the Son of God**" The word "**You**" is intensive, as shown by the Greek text. The Greek verb (**are**) carries its own person with it. When a personal pronoun is used in connection with the verb, it is intensive in use. It is, "*As for you, you are the Son of God*" This intensive use particularizes the subject of the verb. Our Lord is the unique, peculiar, only **Son of God**, in a class by Himself, with Whom in His unique relationship to God, no one can be compared. The Jews recognized this when they accuse our Lord of saying that God was His own, His unique, private Father, His Father in a sense in which He was not the Father of anybody else (John 5:18). This indicates a knowledge by the demons, of the Trinity. This same knowledge Satan himself possesses, for he said, "In view of the fact that You are Son of God by nature, speak to the end that these stones become loaves of bread" (Mt. 4:3+). (Ibid)

**Fall down** (4363)([prospipto](#) from **pros** = to, against + **pipto** = to fall) means to fall towards or upon something, to strike against. (1) with the dative of person prostrate oneself, fall down before or at the feet of

someone as a suppliant or as an act of reverence (Mk 3:11; Mk 5:33; Luke 8:28+). **Prospipto** describes Esther before the king (Esther 8:3+), the woman healed of hemorrhage (Mk 5:33, Lk 8:47+), the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:29+).

**Shout** (screaming)(2896)(**krazo**) refers to a loud cry or vociferation, and is a strong word expressing deep emotion. **Krazo** is one of those [onomatopoeic](#) words, the very pronunciation of which imitates the hoarse cry of the raven (**listen and just imagine the demons shouting**), and can be an inarticulate and brutish sound or an exclamation of fear or pain. Abbott-Smith says "generally used of inarticulate cries, *to scream, cry out* (Aesch., etc.)" It is used of the cry of an animal, the barking of a dog and two men in a quarrel, trying to bawl each other down (so Aristophanes, Knights, 1017)"

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**Ray Stedman on unclean spirits** - Behind these diseases, the Scriptures tell us, were oftentimes the presence and the power of unclean spirits. Have you noticed how many times in Scripture these demons are called "unclean"? In this day when we are seeing such an upsurge of demonic activity, we need to understand this, because it is one of the ways you can recognize the presence of a demon. It is unclean -- either morally or physically.

A friend told me of dealing years ago with a man who had an unclean spirit. As they talked in a hotel room in Portland, this man placed his hat on the bed. When he left, my friend found a ring of foul smelling grease where his hat had been. The odor pervaded the room for days -- evidence of the uncleanness of that spirit. I remember talking with a girl who had fallen into the practice of using a Ouija board. It eventuated in her hearing voices that demanded she write things down before she could sleep at night. Invariably what she had to write was moral filth -- obscenities, ugly, evil words. Sometimes she would have to write pages of them before the voices would cease and she could sleep. That is a mark of the kind of spirits these were.

Mark tells us that when they saw Jesus they always identified him. They cried out, "You are the Son of God." And Jesus invariably silenced them and cast them out. Why do you suppose he rejected this testimony from these demonic entities? You remember that when Paul and Silas were in Philippi, a young girl followed them and cried out something similar: "These men are servants of the most high God." They refused that witness. Paul finally cast the demon out. So, everywhere in the Scriptures, you find both the Lord and the apostles rejecting this kind of testimony. Yet it was true. He was the Son of God. But Jesus would not permit that witness to come from these demons. What was his reason for that?

Well, we can be sure of one thing -- these unclean spirits did not desire to advance the cause of Christ by their witness. They told the truth, but they did so because they knew it would hurt the cause of Jesus, not help it. They were out to mislead people about Christ. So something about the way they told this, though it was true, was nevertheless misleading, and that is what our Lord rejected.

Some commentators suggest that, because they were known to be "lying spirits," their testimony that Jesus was the Son of God would be construed as proof that he wasn't. In Mark Twain's fascinating book about his travels in the West and Hawaii, *Roughing It*, there is an account of a man who was a notorious liar, who was known in the community to be a spinner of tall tales. No one ever believed anything he said. One day they found him hanging dead, with a suicide note pinned on him, written in his own hand, and saying that he had taken his own life. But the coroner's jury pronounced it murder. They said that if the man himself said he had taken his own life, it was proof he hadn't!

But it is more likely that these demons intended that men would believe he was the son of the God whom they worshipped, i.e., Satan himself. When they said, "He is the Son of God," people would associate Jesus with demonic beings and with the devil himself. Therefore it is no accident that in just two more paragraphs you read of a delegation coming from Jerusalem who accuse Jesus of being possessed by a devil. That is why Jesus totally rejected this witness from the underworld that he was the Son of God. ([Mark 3:7-35 False Forces](#))

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### **Bruce Barton - TURN, TURN**

The evil (unclean) spirits knew that Jesus was the Son of God, but they had no intention of following him. Many people followed Jesus but didn't understand his true purpose for coming. Some people came for miracles, some came to hear his teaching, but they didn't understand the way of the cross. Knowing about Jesus, or even believing that he is God's Son, does not guarantee salvation. You must also follow and obey him (see also James 2:17). (LAC-Mark)

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### **Mark 3:12 And He earnestly warned them not to tell who He was.**

Phillips - But he warned them repeatedly that they must not make him known.

Wuest - And He kept on rebuking them and charging them under penalty that they should not make Him

known.

NET Mark 3:12 But he sternly ordered them not to make him known.

GNT Mark 3:12 κα πολλὰ πῆρμα ἄτοσ νὰ μὰ τὴν φανερὴν ποιῶσιν.

NLT Mark 3:12 But Jesus sternly commanded the spirits not to reveal who he was.

KJV Mark 3:12 And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.

ESV Mark 3:12 And he strictly ordered them not to make him known.

NIV Mark 3:12 But he gave them strict orders not to tell who he was.

ASV Mark 3:12 And he charged them much that they should not make him known.

CSB Mark 3:12 And He would strongly warn them not to make Him known.

NKJ Mark 3:12 But He sternly warned them that they should not make Him known.

NRS Mark 3:12 But he sternly ordered them not to make him known.

YLT Mark 3:12 and many times he was charging them that they might not make him manifest.

NAB Mark 3:12 He warned them sternly not to make him known.

NJB Mark 3:12 But he warned them strongly not to make him known.

GWN Mark 3:12 He gave them orders not to tell people who he was.

BBE Mark 3:12 And he gave them special orders not to say who he was.

- Mk 1:25,34 Mt 12:16 Ac 16:18

#### Parallel passage

Matthew 12:16+ and warned them not to tell who He was.

**And He earnestly warned them not to tell who He was** - **Warned** is in the [imperfect tense](#) and is modified by the adjective [polus](#) ("much, many" indicates the severity of His rebuke), so that this is more literally "many times He was charging them" one after another, again and again! It indicates that a number of demon-possessed "witnesses" were actively acclaiming Him as the "**Son of God**," much to His [annoyance](#)! Yes, Jesus wanted men to know Him as the Son of God, but not from the [malevolent](#) testimony of unclean spirits but through His righteous words and works.

Jesus' warning the **unclean spirits** (demons) is reminiscent to Paul's command to the **spirit of divination** in the **slave-girl** (Acts 16:16+) in Philippi when "She continued doing this (crying out, saying, "These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation." Acts 16:17+) for many days. But Paul was greatly [annoyed](#), and turned and said **to the spirit**, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out at that very moment." (Acts 16:18).

**Warned** (2008) ([epitimao](#) from **epi** = upon + **timao** = to honor) means literally to put honor upon and then to mete out due measure and so then to find fault with, to censure severely, to rebuke, to express strong disapproval of, or to denounce. In classical Greek its predominating sense is that of severe, strenuous reproach for unworthy deeds or acts. **Marvin Vincent** adds that "The word is commonly rendered rebuke in the New Testament. In classical Greek its predominant sense is that of severe, strenuous reproach for unworthy deeds or acts. It is several times used in the New Testament, as here, in the sense of charge. In this sense the word carries, at bottom, a suggestion of a charge under penalty (*time*).

**Mark 3:13 And He went up on the mountain and summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him.**

NET Mark 3:13 Now Jesus went up the mountain and called for those he wanted, and they came to him.

GNT Mark 3:13 Κα νὰ βὰ νει ες τὸς καὶ προσκαλεταί ος θελεν αὐτοῦ, καὶ πλῆθον πρὸς αὐτόν.

NLT Mark 3:13 Afterward Jesus went up on a mountain and called out the ones he wanted to go with him. And they came to him.

KJV Mark 3:13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto

him.

ESV Mark 3:13 And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him.

NIV Mark 3:13 Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him.

ASV Mark 3:13 And he goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto him whom he himself would; and they went unto him.

CSB Mark 3:13 Then He went up the mountain and summoned those He wanted, and they came to Him.

NKJ Mark 3:13 And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him.

NRS Mark 3:13 He went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him.

YLT Mark 3:13 And he goeth up to the mountain, and doth call near whom he willed, and they went away to him;

NAB Mark 3:13 He went up the mountain and summoned those whom he wanted and they came to him.

NJB Mark 3:13 He now went up onto the mountain and summoned those he wanted. So they came to him

GWN Mark 3:13 Jesus went up a mountain, called those whom he wanted, and they came to him.

BBE Mark 3:13 And he went up into the mountain, and sent for those whom it was his pleasure to have with him: and they went to him.

- Mt 10:1-4 Lu 6:12-16
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Parallel Passage: Words in bold not in Mark's account.**

Luke 6:12-16+ It was at this time that He went off to the mountain **to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.** 13 And when day came, **He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them, whom He also named as apostles:** 14 Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James and John; and Philip and Bartholomew; 15 and Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot; 16 Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Matthew 10:1-4 Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. 2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him.

**Craig Evans** on Matthew 10 - Matthew 10:1–4—Matthew reserves Mark's narrative of the appointment of the twelve, combines it with Mark's narrative of the sending of the twelve (cf. Mk 6:7–13), and presents this combined and edited material as the introduction to Jesus' second major discourse, the missionary discourse that comprises Matthew 10.

### **AN INVITATION NOT TO BE REFUSED**

**Hiebert** - The appointment of the Twelve marked an important turning point in the Lord's ministry. They formed an official body of adherents closely related to Him whom He would train to help in the work and equip to carry on the work after His death. Their participation was demanded by the growth of the work and the deepening hostility of the religious leaders. Luke 6:12–16 gives a parallel account. (ED: Not sure if Mt 10:1-4 is a definite parallel).

**And He went up on the mountain**- The **mountain** is not named, but undoubtedly close to the Sea of Galilee. Matthew has "When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him." (Mt 5:1<sup>±</sup>) Luke tells us "It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, **and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.**" (Lk 6:12+) This crucial decision of disciples who would spread the Gospel after His crucifixion was bathed in prayer. This was a **crisis**, a crucial stage, an important turning point in the course of His ministry.

**THOUGHT** - How many times have you (I) spent the whole night in prayer before a really crucial decision or crisis point in your life? This time was crucial for Jesus, for these were the men who would spread His gospel to the world, and if so the decision was of critical, even eternal importance!

**NET on went up on the mountain** - The expression up the mountain here may be idiomatic or generic, much like the English "he went to the hospital" (cf. Mk 15:29), or even intentionally reminiscent of Exod 24:12 (LXX), since the genre of the Sermon on the Mount seems to be that of a new Moses giving a new law.

**Leon Morris on the mountain** - Mountains are often in Mark sites of revelation or significant junctures in Jesus' ministry (3:13; 6:46; 9:2; 11:1; 13:3; 14:26), as they are sites of revelation in the OT. Jesus' ascent of a mountain to call the Twelve has the significance of Moses' ascent of Mt. Sinai to receive and transmit the Ten Commandments (Ex 19:1–25; 20:18–20) (Ibid)

The verb **went** is [present tense](#) which is the [historical present](#) (see more detailed discussion here) and calls for a vivid imagination on the part of the reader. The **historical present** describes a past event as though it were actually taking place. Here the present is a pictorial tense, displaying the action vividly before our eyes. In English we often use the historical present when recounting personal experiences such as "then he says to me". The Gospel of Mark frequently uses historical present - see [peculiarities of Mark](#). Mark wants us to picture Jesus walking up the mountain.

**THOUGHT** - I wonder how many "crucial" decisions I have made in my lifetime and not taken time to bathe them in prayer. O, perhaps I may have uttered an "arrow prayer," but certainly did not spend an entire night in prayer!

**And summoned those whom He Himself wanted** (See also related passage Mt 10:1-4) - After the entire night in communion with His Father Jesus was now ready to chose "Deity's Dozen," the 12 mortal men who would be privileged to engage in a mighty mission, the greatest enterprise in the history of mankind! More accurately the Greek says "*He summoned those whom He willed*," the point being that Jesus determined the call. It was "His call," not theirs! These men did not volunteer or apply to be His disciples! I think of in our modern world when one receives a "[summons](#)," it is not his choice but the will of the judge or court which issues the summons. Jesus was the "Judge" issuing the summons! This is a [sovereign](#) call from the Sovereign! Culturally, Jewish rabbis did not call disciples but disciples chose the rabbi they preferred to follow! Jesus is not your typical Rabbi! As **Morris** says "Disciples do not decide to follow Jesus and do him a favor in so doing; rather, his call supersedes their wills, summoning one who does not intend to follow (Mk 10:21) and debarring one who would (Mk 5:19)." (Ibid) Since the Son always did what the Father desired and was pleasing to Him (Jn 5:30, Jn 6:38, Jn 8:28, Jn 17:4), these were the men that the Father was calling through His Son. Commentators differ on how many Jesus called, some saying it was more than 12 from whom the final 12 would be selected (because of the phrasing of Lk 6:13+ "He called His disciples to Him [implying more than 12] and chose twelve of them" [implying out of a larger number]) but others feel He called just 12 men to follow Him as "learners" (disciples)

**Summoned** (4341) ([proskaleo](#) from **pros** = to + **kaleo** = to call) is used only in the [middle voice](#) and means to call to oneself. In the present context the use of the [middle voice](#) shows that Jesus "in calling these individuals did it in His own interest. They were to be for Himself. The prefixed preposition *pros*, meaning "to" or "towards" gives us the idea "unto Him." (Wuest) **Summoned** is also [historical present](#) as He is calling to Himself ( ) a select number out of the vast crowd. Just as God took the initiative in calling out these 12 disciples, in a similar manner God takes the initiative in calling ([effectual call](#)) all who would believe in Jesus and be His disciples.

**Gundry** - The mountain sets him in a position of sovereignty. The present historical tense of  $\alpha\beta\alpha\iota\upsilon\epsilon\iota$ , "goes up," and of  $\pi\rho\sigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$ , "summons," emphasizes this position and his exercise of sovereignty (cf. God's summoning Moses up Mount Sinai). For Jesus' authoritative summons, see also Mk 3:23; 6:7; 7:14; 8:1, 34; 10:42; 12:43. Only once does Mark use the verb for someone else's summoning (Mk 15:44).. (Mark: A Commentary)

**Wanted** (2309) ([thelo](#)) primarily refers to exercising of one's will with the underlying sense of to be willing, to desire, to want or to wish. Vine says *Thelo* "expresses not simply a desire, but a determined and constant exercise of the will." The Greek adds the intensive pronoun "Himself" for emphasis. "Jesus did not take volunteers; He chose and called those He **wanted**. Jesus "wanted" these men; so He called them, and they came. They did not hesitate to obey." (Barton) Gundry says "**Whom he willed**" reveals the selectivity of Jesus' summons and further emphasizes his sovereignty."

Luke says "And when day came, He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them, whom He also named **asapostles**." (Lk 6:13+)

**Lenski** - "Whom he himself ( $\alpha\ \tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ ) would" emphasizes the point that it was the will of Jesus himself to call to him only certain men; it was not their will that brought them to Jesus on this occasion. But from Luke 6:13+ we learn that the men thus called were those

who had become disciples of his. There was, no doubt, a goodly number, and from these Jesus appointed twelve as his apostles, Matt. 10:2 using this term. These twelve had already been attached to Jesus, Matthew apparently having been the last to join them (Mk 2:14). The appointing of the Twelve was so important for Jesus that, according to Luke, he spent the preceding night on the mountain in prayer. All the disciples whom Jesus called to him "came away" from their other interests and attended to what Jesus was now about to do. (ISMG)

In His Upper Room Discourse Jesus reminded the disciples "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you." (John 15:16) **John Phillips** has an interesting comment that Jesus "chose with great care from the ranks of the many who had become His followers those few with whom He intended to spend most of His time for the next year or so. He called; they came. This balance always exists in God's dealings with men. God will woo, but He will not ravish. He will invite, but He will not invade." (Exploring Mark)

**And they came to Him** - There is apparently no delay. He called. They came. **Came** is the common verb **aperchomai** which has the prefix "**apo-**" which speaks of separation and in this context Jesus is calling these men to separate from the larger uncommitted crowd. "It was an invitation to leave the vast crowd and follow Him up the hill." (Wuest) Note that **came** is in the **active voice** indicating that these men made a definite volitional choice to come and follow Jesus. And so once again we see the **juxtaposition** of **Divine Sovereignty** (effectual call) and **Human responsibility** (choice of one's will). Hopefully God will explain this mysterious truth to us in Heaven, as Paul alludes to declaring "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known." (1 Cor 13:12).

#### Related Resources:

- [What is the effectual calling/call?](#)
- [Irresistible Grace - is it biblical?](#)
- [What does it mean that God draws us to salvation?](#)
- [Does God pursue us?](#)

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**Ray Stedman on calling and appointing the twelve** - These are the twelve whom Jesus selected. It is evident in the contrast between this paragraph and the previous one that Mark wants us to understand that the witness Jesus wanted was not pretentious claims and impressive titles from demons, true as they might have been, but rather he wanted the witness of changed lives and empowered words, of men who had been with him and whose lives were different as a result, who were sent out to say what they had heard and learned, and who therefore had power to speak authoritatively -- even over the demons. This was the witness he chose. It is the witness he chooses yet today.

Notice that these twelve men were called to do three things:

They were called to a personal experience, first -- to be with him. Jesus never wants anybody to talk about Christianity as an advocate, but always as a witness, i.e., telling of something which has happened to you. If you are merely a salesman on behalf of Christianity, holding it up to be a very fine approach to life or a great moral teaching, then you are an ineffective witness. The Lord doesn't want that. He wants a witness who has had something happen to him.

Then they were sent out for purposeful evangelism. They were sent out to preach, to say what they had learned from him.

And they were given a powerful exorcism -- they were to cast out demons. That is,

**they were given something to say,  
they were sent out to say it, and  
they were given power over all the opposition.**

**It is extremely interesting that in order to reach the multitudes, our Lord selected only twelve men.** That is the way to do it. We often make a great mistake in our day by relying too heavily on mass media. We think we are going to reach the multitudes through all the great inventions which have come along -- radio, television, cassette tapes, etc. As helpful as they are, and rightful as they are in their place, nevertheless they will not take the place of men and women who have had a personal experience with Christ and who tell it but in whatever way they can -- perhaps even through some of these media -- and who have obvious power in their life to overcome the enemy and to stand against all opposition. This is the witness our Lord has chosen.

The twelve disciples are listed for us here and their names are familiar. Simon, James, and John are first, and they are all given special names by Jesus. He "surnamed" them, i.e. he chose other names for them. This marks them as belonging to an inner circle within the twelve. You remember how frequently we read after this that when Jesus went to do something special he took with him



**Peter and James and John.** He dealt more intimately with these three than he did with any of the others. Thereby he designated them leaders of this group, the means by which the others would be reached, in that remarkable method which both the Lord and the apostles employed of reaching the few in order to reach the many.

Peter he called the "rock"; James and John he called the "sons of thunder." It is instructive to me that when he looked at this group of twelve men, what he saw as being needed in this band was a **rock** and **two loud voices**. Peter was the acknowledged leader of the twelve and was the one who ultimately proved to be the rock, the steady one to whom the others looked for leadership and upon whom they relied for guidance, while James was the first of the apostles to be martyred and John was the last, and in-between the apostolic witness was delivered. James left his mark by laying down his life first among the twelve, and John remained until the end to gather up all the apostolic witness, solidify it, and transmit it to us in its final expression in the Gospel of John, the letters of John, and the book of Revelation. So this was the leadership within the twelve, and our Lord dealt with them so that they might be the witness which ultimately would reach not only the multitudes there at hand, but, eventually, all the world. Jesus was content to work with these. ([Mark 3:7-35 False Forces](#))

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## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HEAR THE CALL OF GOD?

First, God calls you to faith in Jesus. You will know this call by the growing desire in your heart to settle the matter of peace with God speedily. Respond to him—answer with a grateful, "Yes, Lord, I need you!"

Second, God calls you to service in Jesus' name. Wherever you are (and sometimes you need to move), whatever you're doing (and sometimes you need to upgrade your skills), God has a place of service for you. Jesus calls you and he wants you. Answer this call thoughtfully, seriously, in consultation with Christian advisers, "Yes, Lord, I love you and will follow you!" (Bruce Barton - LAC-Mark)

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## Morning, September 10

"And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him." —Mark 3:13

Here was sovereignty. Impatient spirits may fret and fume, because they are not called to the highest places in the ministry; but reader be it thine to rejoice that Jesus calleth whom he wills. If he shall leave me to be a doorkeeper in his house, I will cheerfully bless him for his grace in permitting me to do anything in his service. The call of Christ's servants comes from above. Jesus stands on the mountain, evermore above the world in holiness, earnestness, love and power. Those whom he calls must go up the mountain to him, they must seek to rise to his level by living in constant communion with him. They may not be able to mount to classic honours, or attain scholastic eminence, but they must like Moses go up into the mount of God and have familiar intercourse with the unseen God, or they will never be fitted to proclaim the gospel of peace. Jesus went apart to hold high fellowship with the Father, and we must enter into the same divine companionship if we would bless our fellowmen. No wonder that the apostles were clothed with power when they came down fresh from the mountain where Jesus was. This morning we must endeavour to ascend the mount of communion, that there we may be ordained to the lifework for which we are set apart. Let us not see the face of man to-day till we have seen Jesus. Time spent with him is laid out at blessed interest. We too shall cast out devils and work wonders if we go down into the world girded with that divine energy which Christ alone can give. It is of no use going to the Lord's battle till we are armed with heavenly weapons. We must see Jesus, this is essential. At the mercy-seat we will linger till he shall manifest himself unto us as he doth not unto the world, and until we can truthfully say, "We were with him in the Holy Mount."

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## An Ordination Sermon By: Virgil Edwards,

Mark 3:13–19

I. GOD MUST CALL THE PREACHER. vs. 13—And he goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would.

Ephe. 4:11—And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelist: and some, pastors, and teachers.

Jn. 15:16—Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you.

II. THE MOUNTAIN HERE IS A DISTINCT PLACE. Mk 3:13—And he goeth up into the mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would.

1. The mountain, a place of prayer. Matt. 14:23.

2. A place of Glory. Matt. 17:1; Mk. 9:2.

III. HE ORDAINED THEM TO BE WITH HIM. Mk 3:14—And he ordained twelve, that they should be with Him.

1 Cor. 1:9—God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

(We must touch God for man, before we can touch man for God.) 1 Jn. 1:3; Lk. 10:39, 42.

IV. THEY WERE ORDAINED THAT HE MIGHT SEND THEM.

Mk 3:14—and that he might send them forth.

Matt. 28:19–20—Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:... Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end

of the world. (If we “Go,” we can claim the “Lo.”)

#### V. THEY WERE ORDAINED THAT THEY SHOULD PREACH.

Mk 3:14—... and that he might send them forth to preach.

1. The preacher’s job is to “Preach.” 2 Tim. 4:2.
2. He is to preach in season and out of season. 2 Tim. 4:2.

#### VI. THEY WERE ORDAINED TO HAVE POWER.

Mk 3:15—And to have power...

Matt. 28:18—All power is given unto me...

Acts 1:8—Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you...

Micah 3:8.

#### VII. ONLY ONE OUT OF TWELVE BETRAYED HIS HONOR.

Mk 3:19—And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him. (We should never betray this great honor.)

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### Tell It On The Mountain

Read:Mark 3:1-15

He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. — Mark 3:13

I was surprised to see a nationally distributed news article commending a group of teenage snowboarders who hold weekly church services on a Colorado ski slope. In the Summit Daily News, Kimberly Nicoletti’s story captured a wide audience with her account of teens who love to snowboard and to tell how Jesus changed their lives. Undergirding the teenagers is a Christian youth organization equipping them to demonstrate God’s love.

It’s easier to do things yourself than to train others, yet Jesus poured Himself into a dozen disciples through whom His work would reach the world. In the midst of the pressing need of people clamoring to be healed, He climbed a mountain where “He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out” (Mark 3:14). One of those snowboarders in Colorado said of her discipleship training: “I’ve never been able to build relationships with family or friends; I’ve kept them at arm’s length. [The program] showed me God’s love. It opened me to reach out to people.” Experiencing Jesus’ love and being in company with Him and His followers, we find courage to act and speak in ways that honor our Lord. — David McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Let us go forth, as called of God,  
Redeemed by Jesus’ precious blood;  
His love to show, His life to live,  
His message speak, His mercy give.  
— Whittle

Witnessing isn’t a job to be done but a life to be lived.

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### Mark 3:14 And He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preach

NET Mark 3:14 He appointed twelve (**whom he named apostles**), so that they would be with him and he could send them to preach

GNT Mark 3:14 καὶ προῆσεν ὁ δεκά [ο ς καὶ πρῶτους ἑνδεκά] να σιν μετ ατο κα να πρῶτ λα το ς κηρ σσειν

NLT Mark 3:14 Then he appointed twelve of them and **called them his apostles**. They were to accompany him, and he would send them out to preach,

KJV Mark 3:14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,

ESV Mark 3:14 And he appointed twelve (**whom he also named apostles**) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach

NIV Mark 3:14 He appointed twelve--**designating them apostles**--that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach

ASV Mark 3:14 And he appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,

CSB Mark 3:14 He also appointed twelve-- **He also named them apostles**-- to be with Him, to send them out to preach,

NKJ Mark 3:14 Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach,

NRS Mark 3:14 And he appointed twelve, **whom he also named apostles**, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message,

REB He appointed twelve to be his companions and to be sent out to proclaim the gospel, with authority to drive out demons

YLT Mark 3:14 and he appointed twelve, that they may be with him, and that he may send them forth to preach,

NAB Mark 3:14 He appointed twelve (**whom he also named apostles**) that they might be with him and he might send them forth to preach

NJB Mark 3:14 and he appointed twelve; they were to be his companions and to be sent out to proclaim the message,

GWN Mark 3:14 He appointed twelve whom he called apostles. They were to accompany him and to be sent out by him to spread the Good News.

BBE Mark 3:14 And he took twelve to be with him, so that he might send them out as preachers,

- **He appointed twelve:** Joh 15:16 Ac 1:24,25 Ga 1:1,15-20
- **and that He could send them out to preach :** Lu 9:1-6 10:1-11 24:47 Ac 1:8
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JESUS PURPOSEFUL APPOINTMENT

Note that in v14-15 we see 3 distinct purposes for the appointment of the twelve.

**THOUGHT** - When Jesus calls you to Himself, He calls with purpose – we have not just been saved to wait to cash in a “fire insurance policy”! Yes, we are saved from something, but we are also saved FOR something. We are saved to serve His purpose. Peter says “you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” (1 Peter 2:9) So we are called FROM darkness to light, FOR the purpose of proclamation of His excellencies! Are you saved? Are you serving the purpose for which He called you out of spiritual darkness? The specific purpose may be different for different individuals (pastor, missionary, teacher, etc, etc), but rest assured He has called you for His purpose. Dear saint, wherever and whoever you are, don’t ever believe the lie that your redeemed soul does not have a great and holy purpose in the Kingdom of God! If you don’t know your purpose, then ask the Master and wait patiently for His answer. And remember that when He calls for a purpose, He also equips you so that you can fulfill that purpose (cf 1 Peter 4:10-11+, Eph 2:10+).

**And He appointed twelve** - Similar to Luke 6:13+ which says “He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them.” As alluded to above, it is based on these passages that some commentators feel the actual number called out of the large crowd was more than 12. **Appointed** is the verb [ποιοε](#) which more literally reads “**He made**” **twelve**,’ doing so with a definite act of His will so as to create a distinct group. **The Twelve** became a technical term for this group and hereafter in Mark’s Gospel “there seem to be no persons designated “disciples” in Mark’s Gospel other than the Twelve” (EBC). And **Liefeld** points out that “from this point on there seem to be no persons designated “**disciples**” in Mark’s Gospel other than **the Twelve**.” (Ibid) Why **twelve** men? Obviously it was intentional and would correspond to the 12 Jewish patriarchs and the 12 tribes (e.g, cf the “regeneration”, the Millennium, when they “shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Mt 19:28, cf “ the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb” - Rev 21:14+).

**Leon Morris** has an interesting thought on the verb “**He made**” - Although this is a common verb, it is very conceivable that Mark intends to recall the opening line of Genesis, “In the beginning God **made** (Septuagint = [ποιοε](#)) heaven and earth,” signifying that the Twelve are a new creation. Discipleship does not consist in what disciples can do for Christ, but in what Christ can make of disciples. (Ibid)

**Brian Bell** - 2 questions are answered here: How Jesus would make His message permanent? & How He would make His message duplicatable? He chose men whose heart He could write His message on, and who would go out from his presence to carry it abroad! By worldly standards...these men had no qualifications at all! Not wealth, no special positions, no special education, not trained theologians, not high ranking churchmen, they were 12 ordinary men! 12 ordinary men that were appointed, actually He made them (lit.) What they had going for them was: [1] they were attracted to Jesus & [2] they had courage to show they were on His side! These guys had all sorts of faults...but they loved Jesus & they weren't afraid to tell the world about Him...That sounds like the definition of a Christian!!! ([Commentary](#))

**Whom He named apostles** - Note that this sentence is not present in the **NAS** but is included in several other versions ([see above](#)). Luke 6:13+ does have "whom He also named as **apostles**" and Mt 10:2 also refers to them as **apostles**. Mark 6:30 records "The **apostles** gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught."

**Lenski** - Jesus was in the midst of his church, and the world was far away, and he now gave to his church these apostles (Eph. 4:11+).

**Technical Note on whom He named apostles** - The phrase "**whom he named apostles**" is lacking in the majority of manuscripts (A C(2) [D] L {1} 33 Ū latt sy). Several primary Alexandrian and Caesarean witnesses (a B [C\* W] Q {13} 28 pc co) include the phrase, so the external evidence is **strongly in favor of this reading**, especially since Alexandrian witnesses tend to witness to the shorter reading. It is possible that the Alexandrian witnesses have inserted these words to bring the text in line with Luke 6:13+ (TCGNT 69), but against this is the internal evidence of Mark's style: Mark tends toward gratuitous redundancy. **Thus the inclusion of this phrase is supported by both internal and external evidence and should be regarded as more likely original than the omission.** (NET Note)

- [Luke 6:13-16 Who were the twelve \(12\) disciples / apostles of Jesus Christ?](#)
- [Does the Bible record the death of the apostles? How did each of the apostles die?](#)
- [Who were the 70 \(or 72\) disciples in Luke 10?](#)
- [Was Matthias or Paul God's choice to replace Judas as the 12th apostle?](#)
- [What is an apostle?](#)
- [What are the biblical qualifications for apostleship?](#)

**So that** - (hina) is a [term of purpose](#) explaining why Jesus named these 12 and He gives 3 reasons - be with Him, preach and cast out demons (Mk 3:15).

## PURPOSE NUMBER ONE

**They would be with Him** - With is [meta](#) meaning to be in the company of implying fellowship and companionship as Jesus' "inner circle" of constant and closest earthly companions. What a privilege! This is the purest pattern of discipleship, the student being with the disciple Maker! **Louw-Nida** adds that [meta](#) refers to an associative relation that often involves joint participation in some activity. A phrase we often hear today would apply to the disciples who were to "**do life**" with Jesus (eat, sleep, walk, watch, talk, etc). They were to **BE** ([eimi](#) in [present tense](#) = continually) **with Him** so that they could continually learn from Him as disciples ("learners") who would then be able to pass on His teachings and model their life after His life, which after Pentecost they would be able to do in the power of the Spirit of Jesus! (Acts 1:8+ note Jesus said "**B E** My witnesses" not **D O** witnessing. The latter flows naturally/supernaturally out of the former!). Mark's point is clear that these 12 men had to **BE WITH** Jesus before they could **DO FOR** Jesus or as Paul says to disciples today to be imitators of him just as he is of Jesus. (1 Cor 11:1+, 1 Pe 2:21+, see [Walking Like Jesus Walked!](#)) You can hardly "[imitate](#)" Someone with Whom you do not spend time!

**THOUGHT** - Isn't this vital principle still valid for believers today? A believer has to **BE WITH** Jesus before he or she can **DO FOR** Jesus. Too many saints trying **DOING** while minimizing the importance of **BEING** and so not surprisingly their "doing" is oftentimes just that - **THEIR** DOING, not **HIS** DOING by His Spirit through them. Jesus warned against this mentality in John 15:5 stating that "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can **DO** nothing." We need to first **BE** with Jesus so that we are then equipped and prepared to **DO** for Jesus in the power of His Spirit. It should not surprise us to see this exact pattern played out in Acts, Luke recording "Now as they (OPPOSING JEWISH LEADERS) observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as **HAVING BEEN WITH JESUS.**" (Acts 4:13+). Practically speaking, how are we to **BE WITH** Jesus today? I hope you hear this as essentially

a rhetorical question, for since Jesus is the Word (Jn 1:1+, Rev 19:13+), obviously we need to spend extended time **WITH HIM** in His Word (**not** sermons, **not** books, **not** devotionals, etc, but in the "pure milk" 1 Pe 2:2+), not so that we might become **SMARTER SINNERS** but that we will be made more like the **SAVIOR** (as His Spirit takes the Word and uses it to transform us from glory to glory. 2 Cor 3:18+). And of course intimately linked with time in His Word is time conversing/communing with Him in prayer (cf 1 Th 5:17+).

**Jim Eliot** was a man who had been with Jesus. He once prayed "Father, make of me a crisis man. Bring those I contact to decision. Let me not be a milepost on a single road; make me a fork, that men must turn one way or another on facing Christ in me."

## PURPOSE NUMBER TWO

**And that He could send them out to preach** - "Unlike the students of the rabbis, who merely learned and memorized facts, the disciples were being trained to carry out a mission." (Barton) Jesus was only one person and He could not cover Palestine alone, so these 12 are called, commissioned and empowered as His representative, as His "mouthpiece" to proclaim the Good News. Jesus would allude to this in His Upper Room Discourse as He revealed to His disciples truth about their Helper (I like "Enabler" better! We don't just need a little "**help**" but we need to be **enabled!**) promising "'Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and **greater works than these he will do**; because I go to the Father (cf His parting promise in Lk 24:49+)." (Jn 14:12) Jesus' authority and work would be multiplied in the activities of the Twelve Spirit empowered apostles.

**Send...out** (649)(**apostello** from **apo** = from, away from + **stello** = to withdraw from, avoid) means to send off, to send forth, to send out. In this case the idea is Jesus is sending the 12 out with a commission to do something (preach, cast out demons) as His personal representative and clothed with His authority. As **Brian Bell** says "You have to be **won** in order to **win** others!"

**To preach** (**present tense** = they were to continually proclaim) (2784)(**kerusso** from **kerux/keryx** = a herald - one who acts as the medium of the authority of one who proclamation he makes; **kerugma** = the thing preached or the message) means to proclaim (publicly) or to herald or act as a public crier - the town official who would make a proclamation in a public gathering. The Imperial Herald would enter a town in behalf of the Emperor, and make a public proclamation of the message which his Sovereign ordered him to give, doing so with such formality, gravity, and authority as to emphasize that the message must be heeded! (Think about this in regard to the Gospel of God instead of the decree of a man! cf 1Th 2:13+). He gave the people exactly what the Emperor bade him give, nothing more, nothing less. He did not dare add to the message or take away from it. And so Jesus was sending out the 12 to make public proclamation of the Gospel with gravity, formality, and authority so that the Good News was not only heard but heeded. **Kerusso** was used of the official whose duty it was to proclaim loudly and extensively the coming of an earthly king, even as the glorious **Gospel** is to announce the coming of the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:16+).

**J C Ryle** - The beginning of this passage describes the appointment of the twelve apostles. It is an event in our Lord's earthly ministry, which should always be read with deep interest. What a vast amount of benefit these few men have conferred on the world! The names of a few Jewish fishermen are known and loved by millions all over the globe, while the names of many kings and rich men are lost and forgotten. It is they who do good to souls who are had "in everlasting remembrance." (Psalm 112:6. For he will never be shaken; The righteous will be remembered forever.)...**Like the apostles**, the faithful minister ought to keep up close communion with Christ. He should be much "with Him." His fellowship should be "with the Son." (1 John 1:3.) He should abide in Him. He should be separate from the world, and daily sit, like Mary, at Jesus' feet, and hear His word. He should study Him, copy Him, drink into His Spirit, and walk in His steps. He should strive to be able to say, when he enters the pulpit, "that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you." (1 John 1:3.) **Like the apostles**, the faithful minister ought to be a preacher. This must ever be his principal work, and receive the greatest part of his thoughts. He must place it above the administration of the sacraments. (1 Cor. 1:17.) He must exalt it above the reading of forms. An unpreaching minister is of little use to the church of Christ. He is a lampless light-house, a silent trumpeter, a sleeping watchman, a painted fire. **Like the apostles**, the faithful minister must labour to do good in every way. Though he cannot heal the sick, he must seek to alleviate sorrow, and to increase happiness among all with whom he has to do. He must strive to be known as the comforter, the counsellor, the peacemaker, the helper, and the friend of all. Men should know him, not as one who rules and domineers, but as one who is "their servant for Jesus' sake." (2 Cor. 4:5.) **Like the apostles**, the faithful minister must oppose every work of the devil. Though not called now to cast out evil spirits from the body, he must be ever ready to resist the devil's devices, and to denounce his snares for the soul. He must expose the tendency of races, theatres, balls, gambling, drunkenness, Sabbath-profanation, and sensual gratifications. Every age has its own peculiar temptations. Many are the devices of Satan. But whatever be the direction in which the devil is most busy, there ought the minister to be, ready to confront and withstand him. How great is the responsibility of ministers! How heavy their work, if they do their duty! How much they

need the prayers of all praying people, in order to support and strengthen their hands! No wonder that St. Paul says so often to the churches, "Pray for us."

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**F B Meyer - Mark 3:14** He appointed twelve. This is the threefold work of the Church, and of each disciple.

That we might be with Him. — The Master dearly loves our company. Let us seek it more. Not necessarily praying, or praising, or learning — but just being quietly with Him. It was said of a holy man, Mons de Rentz, that his union and converse with God were so wonderful, that after he had spent several hours therein, he found himself in the end as if he had only then begun it, except only that he had then yet more desire to continue it. And at length he arrived to that height that it seemed as though he never ended it at all; being wholly and constantly in inward recollection and application to God. After whose example let us press, that we may enjoy like near approach to God, and our lives be suitably ordered for his glory.

That He might send them forth to preach. — He cannot come forth train the secret chamber of eternity to preach, as once He was wont to do; and therefore He is ever raising up voices, witnesses, lips which He teaches how to speak, and touches with his live coal. Has He not sent you forth, if not by lip yet by life, to bear witness to his love? Like the seraphim, if you have two pairs of wings for reverent modesty, you have at least one pair for flight. On, breathe the prayer, Send me.

That they might have authority over demons. — The power of Satan is strong; it mastered Adam, but it not more than its match in the Christ-nature. If that nature is pregnant in you, you, too, will have power over all the power of the enemy, Nothing shall by any means hurt you, and you will be able to deliver others who have long been held captive.

**THOUGHT:** IN MY OPINION, F B MEYER IS NOT NECESSARILY ADVOCATING CASTING OUT DEMONS PER SE - THE GREATER MIRACLE IS SHARING THE GOSPEL WITH A SOUL IN SPIRITUAL DARKNESS AND IN BONDAGE TO THE DEVIL [ALBEIT NOT NECESSARILY "DEMON POSSESSED"] AND THE SPIRIT USING THE TRUTH OF OUR GOSPEL PROCLAMATION TO SET THAT CAPTIVE FREE! THAT IS REAL AUTHORITY OVER THE POWER OF DARKNESS! AND NOTICE WE ARE MERELY PARTICIPANTS WITH GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT AS WE PROCLAIM GOD'S HOLY WORD. IT IS GOD WHO CARRIES OUT THE SUPERNATURAL WORK, EVEN WHILE GIVING US THE PRIVILEGE OF PARTICIPATING IN HIS WORK!!! AMAZING GRACE INDEED! SO GREAT A SALVATION FOR SURE!

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**Mark 3:15 and to have authority to cast out the demons.**

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NET Mark 3:15 and to have authority to cast out demons.

GNT Mark 3:15 κα χειν ξουσ αν κβ λλειν τ δαιμνια

NLT Mark 3:15 giving them authority to cast out demons.

KJV Mark 3:15 And to have power **to heal sicknesses**, and to cast out devils:

ESV Mark 3:15 and have authority to cast out demons.

NIV Mark 3:15 and to have authority to drive out demons.

ASV Mark 3:15 and to have authority to cast out demons:

CSB Mark 3:15 and to have authority to drive out demons.

NKJ Mark 3:15 and to have power **to heal sicknesses** and to cast out demons:

NRS Mark 3:15 and to have authority to cast out demons.

YLT Mark 3:15 and to have power **to heal the sicknesses**, and to cast out the demons.

NAB Mark 3:15 and to have authority to drive out demons:

NJB Mark 3:15 with power to drive out devils.

GWN Mark 3:15 They also had the authority to force demons out of people.

BBE Mark 3:15 And give them the power of driving out evil spirits:

- **have authority** Mt 10:1. Lk 9:1. Lk 10:19. Lk 12:12. Ac 4:33. Acts 6:10.
- **to heal.** "to heal sicknesses" **ONLY PRESENT** in the KJV ([Greek Textus Receptus](#)) Mk 16:18. Mt 10:1. Lk 9:6. Ac 3:7. Acts

5:16. Acts 9:34. Acts 14:10. Acts 16:18. Acts 19:12. Acts 28:8. 1 Co 12:9.

- **cast out devils.** Mk 6:7. Mk 9:38. Mk 16:17. Mt 12:43-45. Lk 10:17. Ac 5:16. Acts 8:7. Acts 19:13-16.
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**And to have authority to cast out the demons-** Matthew records "Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them **authority** over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness." (Mt 10:1, cf Mt 10:8) **To have authority** implies that the disciples were given both the "**right**" and the "**might**" (the essence of the meaning of [exousia](#)) to expel demons, thereby demonstrating the power of the Kingdom of light over the Kingdom of darkness.

**Cast out** is [ekballō](#) used 17x in Mark, most often to describe the casting out of demons (Mk. 1:34; Mk. 1:39; Mk. 1:43; Mk. 3:15; Mk. 3:22; Mk. 3:23; Mk. 5:40; Mk. 6:13; Mk. 7:26; Mk. 9:18; Mk. 9:28; Mk. 9:38; Mk. 9:47; Mk. 11:15; Mk. 12:8; Mk. 16:9; Mk. 16:17).

**THOUGHT** Satan and the demons have power but it is delegated to them by the All Powerful God. It follows that spiritual warfare is not a power struggle. More accurately it is a truth struggle, the truth of God versus the lies of the devil. This is another reason we as believers need to daily be in the Word of Truth lest our minds begin to be conformed to the lies of this fallen, passing world (Ro 12:2+, 1 Jn 2:17+).

**THOUGHT** - Some today want the **authority** but are unwilling to first matriculate through Jesus' school of discipleship and surrender to His authority!

**Authority** (1849) ([exousia](#) from [éxesti](#) = it is permitted, it is lawful) means the power to do something and was a technical term used in the law courts, of a legal right. "**Authority** or right is the dominant meaning (of [exousia](#)) in the New Testament." (Vincent) **Exousia** refers to delegated [authority](#) and combines the idea of the "right and the might", these attributes having been granted to someone.

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**ILLUSTRATION OF POWER/AUTHORITY** - Illustration: There are 2 ways of handling pressure: One is illustrated by a bathysphere, the miniature submarine used to explore the ocean in places so deep that the water pressure would crush a conventional submarine like an aluminum can. Bathyspheres compensate with plate steel several inches thick, which keeps the water out but also makes them heavy and hard to maneuver. Inside they're cramped. When these craft descend to the ocean floor, however, they find they're not alone. When their lights are turned on and you look through the tiny, thick plate glass windows, what do you see? Fish! These fish cope with extreme pressure in an entirely different way. They don't build thick skins: they remain supple and free. They compensate for the outside pressure through equal and opposite pressure inside themselves. Christians, likewise, don't have to be hard and thick skinned - as long as they appropriate God's power within to equal the pressure without. (Jay Kesler in Campus Life. Leadership, Vol. 5, no. 2.)

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### Christ's Authority

1. AUTHORITY TO LAY DOWN HIS LIFE John 10:18, 19
2. AUTHORITY TO FORGIVE SINS Matt. 9:6, 8
3. AUTHORITY OVER DEMONS Mark 1:27
4. AUTHORITY OVER SICKNESS Mark 3:15
5. AUTHORITY TO JUDGE John 5:27
6. AUTHORITY OVER ALL MEN John 17:2
7. AUTHORITY IN HEAVEN AND EARTH Matt. 28:18

### Mark 3:16 And He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom He gave the name Peter),

GNT Mark 3:16 [κα πο ησεν το ς δ δεκα,] κα πθηκεν νομα τ Σ μωνι Π τρον,

NLT Mark 3:16 Here are their names: Simon (whom he named Peter),

KJV Mark 3:16 And Simon he surnamed Peter;

ESV Mark 3:16 He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter);

NIV Mark 3:16 These are the twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter);

ASV Mark 3:16 and Simon he surnamed Peter;

CSB Mark 3:16 He appointed the Twelve: To Simon, He gave the name Peter;

NKJ Mark 3:16 Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter;

NRS Mark 3:16 So he appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter);

YLT Mark 3:16 And he put on Simon the name Peter;

NAB Mark 3:16 (he appointed the twelve:) Simon, whom he named Peter;

NJB Mark 3:16 And so he appointed the Twelve, Simon to whom he gave the name Peter,

GWN Mark 3:16 He appointed these twelve: Simon (whom Jesus named Peter),

BBE Mark 3:16 To Simon he gave the second name of Peter;

- **Simon:** Mk 1:16 Mt 16:16-18 Joh 1:42 1Co 1:12 3:22 9:5 Ga 2:7-9, Cephas, 2Pe 1:1
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**And He appointed the twelve** - As discussed above in notes on verse 14, this literally reads "He made twelve." **Edwards** observes that this literal reading is "a curious wording since Twelve is something one counts or numbers rather than "makes." The phrase indicates a fixed, complete unit or college." (PNTC-Mark) There are four lists of the **twelve** (Mk 3:16–19; Mt 10:2–4; Lk 6:14–16; Acts 1:13) and while there is some minor variation in the names and the order, the number is always **twelve**, recalling the twelve tribes of Israel (Ge 35:22–26; Ge 49:1–28).

In Mt 10:2 we read "Now the names of the twelve **apostles** ([apostolos](#)) are these...." While Mark does not refer to the 12 as **apostles** here in most of the recent manuscripts (see [technical note above](#)), he does later recording "The **apostles** ([apostolos](#)) gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught." (Mk 6:30+) And so we see this special group of 12 would not only become **learners** (disciples), would also **apostles**, men He would send out and who would carry His message after He ascended back to His Father. They needed to learn before they could be sent.

Jesus' choice of 12 in some way seems to allude to the future eschatological significance (and reality) of the nation of Israel over whom they will sit in judgment as described in Matthew and Luke.

As **Edwards** says "the **Twelve** are not only an extension of Jesus' earthly ministry, but their function extends beyond time when they will sit in judgment over Israel. The call of the Twelve was surely significant to Mark's first Roman readers, both Gentiles and Jews. For Gentiles, it is a reminder that "salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22), that is, that the only savior proclaimed to the world is the one prepared for in Abraham and now present in Jesus. For Jews, likewise, the Twelve is a reminder that Israel fulfills its destiny only in the fellowship and service of Jesus." (Ibid)

Matthew 19:28 And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, **you** (12 disciples minus Judas Iscariot but with his replacement) also shall sit upon **twelve thrones**, judging the **twelve tribes of Israel**."

Luke 22:30+ that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and **you** (twelve) will sit on thrones **judging the twelve tribes of Israel**.

**John Phillips** gives us an interesting "summary" of some of the **twelve** - Most of the Master's men are little more than mere names to us, but the Lord knew them through and through-doubting Thomas, devoted John, diligent Matthew, devious Judas, dependable Andrew, daring Peter, discerning Nathaniel. (Exploring Luke)

**Simon (to whom He gave the name Peter)** - **Simon** heads the list but does not refer to the order of selection, because Jesus called Andrew, Peter's brother, before He called Peter John 1:40-42+. Nevertheless **Peter** is first in every list of the twelve, followed by James and John, this triad forming an inner circle that accompany Jesus on special circumstances (Mk 5:37; 9:2; 14:33).

**Peter** ([4074](#)) (**Petros**; Latin = Petrus) is a masculine proper noun which means a "stone" and generally a smaller stone than the feminine form **petra** which refers to a massive rock or a foundation boulder (eg Mt 7:24+). Peter is the Greek equivalent of the Syriac or Aramaic name **Cephas** (*Kephas* from Aramaic *kay fah*) which was assigned to Simon by Jesus. **Peter** was not always a model of rock-like (**petros** is a symbol of imperturbability as determined from used in Greek literature) firmness. Note for example his actions in Gethsemane, his denial three times of Christ, his unsuccessful attempt at walking on water and his conduct at Antioch (Gal 2:11-21+) where he is called **Cephas**. Despite all this **Peter** was clearly the leader of Jesus' disciples, the spokesman for the Twelve and one of the three closest to Jesus.

**Related Resources:**



- [Mark 3:13-19 Twelve Ordinary Men](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 6:12-13 Common Men, Uncommon Calling](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 6:14 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Peter, Part 1](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 6:14 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Peter, Part 2](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 6:14 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Peter, Part 3](#) - John MacArthur

**Mark 3:16 - What's in a Surname?** And Simon he surnamed Peter. Mark 3:16.

Our Lord had two outstanding apostles, Peter and Paul. Peter He surnamed and Paul He renamed. To Peter He said, "Thou art Simon... thou shalt be called Cephas." A lot had to happen before the handful of sand become a rock. But Jesus saw not merely the man he was but the man he was to be. Not that our Lord went around "seeing the good in everybody," the latent possibilities, calling out "hidden powers." "He knew what was in man." He saw within Simon nothing that Simon could make of himself, but rather what God would make of him. To educate the old Adam is to make him doubly dangerous. To polish him is to render him far more deceptive. To make him more religious is to leave him tenfold more the child of hell. When Jesus saw Simon, he saw Peter, not by reformation but by transformation. "Thou art... thou shalt be." Move out of your name into your surname! Come to Him just as you are, and by His grace be what you may become! What's in a surname? Everything, when it means that! "And Simon he surnamed Peter." (Vance Havner)

### THE TWELVE: THE MEN AND THEIR WORK—MARK 3:16–19. J D Jones

IN the last chapter we made the calling of the Twelve the subject of meditation. Here let us think of the men called.

We speak of these twelve men as the "glorious company of the apostles." And a "glorious company" in the deepest and truest sense they were. But when Jesus summoned them to Him on the hill they did not appear a "glorious company" to the scribes and Pharisees. They could, indeed, scarcely have seemed more insignificant. For what were they? A band of poor and illiterate provincials—fishermen, for the most part. There does not appear to have been a single man of wealth or rank or culture amongst them. Judged by the ordinary standard of society the Twelve were amongst the "weak things," and the "base things," and the "despised things" of the world. But they were chosen of God (1 Cor 1:27, 28).

Why did Jesus choose fishermen and ex-publicans to be His first apostles? Probably, as Dr A. B. Bruce suggests, for the prosaic reason that they were the best men that could be got. It was only amongst these humble provincials that Jesus could find the necessary love for Himself and faith in His mission. But while that may be true, it does not require any very great subtlety of thought to perceive that there must have been something in the social condition and personal character of these men that fitted them to become good apostles. (a) To begin with, they had unprejudiced minds, and were therefore far apter scholars in the school of Christ than scribes or rabbis could possibly have been. (b) Then, by the very fact that they were poor men, they belonged to what Mr Lathom calls "the stratum in which the centre of gravity of humanity lay." (c) And again, as Mr Lathom points out, the plain, homely, matter-of-fact character of these men was in itself an excellent qualification for the apostolate.

For what was the chief work and duty of the apostle? He was not primarily to be a theologian; his business was to be a witness, a witness to facts about Jesus, and especially to the great fact of the Resurrection. And when it comes to witnessing, the testimony of the plain, homely, unimaginative man is the most impressive of all. Now the apostles were men of that type. They were not subtle men, they were not imaginative or romantic men; they were not at all likely to confuse subjective experience and objective fact; they were men of a prosaic and literal type of mind, and therefore admirably fitted to be trustworthy and convincing witnesses.

Nevertheless, the striking fact remains, that the Twelve chosen to be Christ's first apostles were humble men, poor men, socially insignificant men; and this fact suggests two thoughts.

(1) The very insignificance of the apostles makes it all the more evident that the success of their labours was not due to their own gifts, but to the power of God working with them. Had the twelve been men of genius, we might have been tempted to account for their success by the gifts they possessed. But they were just a handful of unlettered provincials! And yet they turned the world upside down. We look at the men, and then we see the work accomplished through them, and we say, "This is the power of God." The insignificance of the messenger throws into relief the Divinity of the message. The weakness of the instruments calls our attention to the real Worker. These base and weak things of the world were employed, in order that all might know that the excellency of the power was of God.

(2) This list reminds us of the great things God can do with feeble instruments. With these weak, and base and despised things of the world He put to shame the wise and strong, and brought to nought things that are. God is continually putting His treasure into earthen vessels. He takes a Martin Luther, the son of a poor miner, a poverty-stricken student obliged to sing for his daily bread; He puts His truth in him, and then uses him to bring

spiritual freedom to half Europe. He takes John Bunyan, a tinker—yes, and a profane and foolish tinker at that; He reveals His truth to him, and then sets him to write his Dream, that has helped thousands of pilgrims, in every part of the world, on their heavenward way. God can do wonders with poor tools and insignificant folk.

Shall we not put ourselves into God's hands and say, "Oh, use me, Lord, use even me"?

### **Mark 3:17 and James, the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them He gave the name Boanerges, which means, "Sons of Thunder");**

- **James:** Mk 1:19,20 5:37 9:2 10:35 14:33 Joh 21:2,20-25 Ac 12:1
- **name:** Isa 58:1 Jer 23:29 Heb 4:12 Rev 10:11
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**And James, the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them He gave the name Boanerges, which means, "Sons of Thunder") - Sons of Thunder** refers to John and James' impulsive, impetuous character (as seen in Mark 9:38; 10:35-45; Luke 9:54)

#### **Related Resources:**

- [Mark 3:13-19 Twelve Ordinary Men](#)
- [Luke 6:12-13 Common Men, Uncommon Calling](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 6:14 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Andrew and James](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 6:14 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: John](#) - John MacArthur
- [Matthew 10:2 The Master's Men Andrew, James Son of Zebedee, John](#) - John MacArthur

### **Mark 3:18 and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot;**

- **Andrew:** John 1:40 6:8 12:21,22 Ac 1:13
- **Philip:** John 1:43-45 6:5-7 14:8,9
- **Bartholomew:** Mt 10:3 Lu 6:14 Ac 1:13
- **Matthew:** Mk 2:14 Mt 9:9 Lu 5:27-29, Levi, Lu 6:15
- **Thomas:** Joh 11:16 20:24-29 21:2 Ac 1:13
- **James:** Mk 6:3 Mt 10:3 13:55 Lu 6:15 Ac 15:13 21:18 1Co 9:5 15:7 Ga 1:19 Ga 2:9 Jas 1:1
- **Alphaeus:** Mk 2:14
- **Thaddaeus:** Mt 10:3 Lu 6:16 Joh 14:22 Ac 1:13, Judas the brother of James, Jude 1:1
- **Simon:** Mt 10:4 Lu 6:15 Ac 1:13, Simon Zelotes
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot -**

#### **Related Resources:**

- [Mark 3:13-19 Twelve Ordinary Men](#)
- [Luke 6:12-13 Common Men, Uncommon Calling](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 6:14 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Andrew and James](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 6:14 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: John](#) - John MacArthur
- [Matthew 10:2 The Master's Men Andrew, James Son of Zebedee, John](#) - John MacArthur
- [Matthew 10:3 The Master's Men, Philip and Bartholomew](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 6:15 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Matthew and Thomas](#) - John MacArthur
- [Luke 6:15-16 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: James, Simon, and Judas](#) - John MacArthur
- [Matthew 10:3b The Master's Men, Matthew and Thomas](#) - John MacArthur
- [Matthew 10:3-4 The Master's Men James Son of Alphaeus, Simon Zealot](#) - John MacArthur

## Mark 3:19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him.

- **and Judas Iscariot:** Mt 26:14-16,47 27:3-5 Joh 6:64,71 12:4-6 13:2,26-30 Ac 1:16-25
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him** (see Acts 1:16-25+) - He is always listed last in these lists. How would you like this name description? Little wonder that not too many parents name their children Judas! This phrase (who betrayed Him) is often the way Judas is described, by what he did rather than "who" he was, because in fact what he did was a perfect reflection of who he was in his heart!

**Betrayed** (handed over) (3860)([paradidomi](#) from **para** = alongside, beside, to the side of, over to +**didomi** = to give) conveys the basic meaning of to give over from one's hand to someone or something, especially to give over to the power of another. All uses of [paradidomi](#) in Mark - Mk. 1:14; Mk. 3:19; Mk. 4:29; Mk. 7:13; Mk. 9:31; Mk. 10:33; Mk. 13:9; Mk. 13:11; Mk. 13:12; Mk. 14:10; Mk. 14:11; Mk. 14:18; Mk. 14:21; Mk. 14:41; Mk. 14:42; Mk. 14:44; Mk. 15:1; Mk. 15:10; Mk. 15:15

### Related Resources:

- [Luke 6:16 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Judas Iscariot, Part 1](#)
- [Luke 6:16 Common Men, Uncommon Calling: Judas Iscariot, Part 2](#)
- [Matthew 10:4 The Master's Men, Part 5: Judas Iscariot](#)
- [Mark 3:13-19 Twelve Ordinary Men](#)
- [Mark 14:43-52 Judas's Betrayal](#)
- [And Judas Iscariot](#) J. Wilbur Chapman

THE FOUR NT LISTS OF JESUS' DISCIPLES				
	Matthew 10:2-4	Mark 3:16-19	Luke 6:14-16	Acts 1:13
1	Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Peter
2	Andrew	James	Andrew	James
3	James	James	James	James
4	James	Andrew	James	Andrew
5	Philip	Philip	Philip	Philip
6	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Thomas
7	Thomas	Matthew	Matthew	Bartholomew
8	Matthew	Thomas	Thomas	Matthew
9	James son of Alphaeus	James son of Alphaeus	James son of Alphaeus	James son of Alphaeus
10	Thaddaeus	Thaddaeus	Judas, son or brother of James	Judas, son or brother of James
11	Simon the Cananaean	Simon the Cananaean	Simon the Zealot	Simon the Zealot
12	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	--

The following table is from A B Bruce's classic Training of the Twelve - See Bruce's Chapter 4 THE TWELVE - Mt. 10:1-4; Mk 3:13-19; Lk 6:12-16; Acts 1:13.

FIRST GROUP		
Simon Peter		The man of rock.
Andrew		Peter's brother.
James		Sons of Zebedee, "sons of thunder"
John		
SECOND GROUP		

Philip		The earnest inquirer.
Bartholomew, or Nathanael		The guileless Israelite.
Thomas		The melancholy.
Matthew (Levi)		The publican (so called) by himself only.
<b>THIRD GROUP</b>		
James (the son) of Alphaeus		(James the Less?). (Mk 15:40)
Lebbaeus, Thaddaeus, Judas of James		The "three-named" disciple
Simon		The Zealot
Judas, the man of Kerioth		The Traitor

**Mark 3:20 And He came home, and the crowd gathered again, to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal.**

NET Mark 3:20 Now Jesus went home, and a crowd gathered so that they were not able to eat.

GNT Mark 3:20 Κα ρχεται ε ς ο κον· κα συν ρχεται π λιν [ ] χλος, στε μ δ νασθαι α το ς μηδ ρτον φαγε ν.

NLT Mark 3:20 One time Jesus entered a house, and the crowds began to gather again. Soon he and his disciples couldn't even find time to eat.

KJV Mark 3:19 And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house. 20 And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

ESV Mark 3:20 Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat.

NIV Mark 3:20 Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat.

ASV Mark 3:19 and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. And he cometh into a house. 20 And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

CSB Mark 3:20 Then He went home, and the crowd gathered again so that they were not even able to eat.

NKJ Mark 3:19 and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. And they went into a house. 20 Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

NRS Mark 3:19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. Then he went home; 20 and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat.

YLT Mark 3:19 and Judas Iscariot, who did also deliver him up; and they come into a house. 20 And come together again doth a multitude, so that they are not able even to eat bread;

NAB Mark 3:20 He came home. Again (the) crowd gathered, making it impossible for them even to eat.

NJB Mark 3:20 He went home again, and once more such a crowd collected that they could not even have a meal.

GWN Mark 3:20 Then Jesus went home. Another crowd gathered so that Jesus and his disciples could not even eat.

BBE Mark 3:20 And he went into a house. And the people came together again, so that they were not even able to take bread.

- **to such an extent:** Mk 3:9 Mk 6:31 Lu 6:17 Joh 4:31-34
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**STANDING ROOM  
ONLY!**

An event is described as **standing room only** when it is so well-attended that all of the chairs in the venue are occupied, leaving

only flat spaces of pavement or flooring for other attendees to stand, at least those spaces not restricted by occupancy by fire codes for ingress/egress of crowds.

The description in Mark 3:19-21 is reported only by Mark.

In Mark 3:20-35 we see the increasing rejection of Jesus which will continue into chapter 4. **Hiebert** describes the mounting opposition to Jesus (Mk 3:20-35) observing that "Two types of opposition to Jesus' popular ministry manifested themselves. There was the malicious opposition from the hostile Jewish leaders but also a well-meant but misguided interference on the part of His family. Mark introduces the **two types of opposition**. Jesus' family decided to put Him under restraint (Mark 3:19b-21), but before their arrival the religious leaders maliciously raised a slanderous charge against Him (Mark 3:22-30). The evident lack of sympathy with His ministry on the part of His family led Jesus to point out the identity of His spiritual kindred (Mark 3:31-35). **"In this passage," Williamson notes, "the two groups who should have recognized Jesus first, his own family and the teachers of the law, are both blind to his true identity."** (Mark Commentary)

**And He came home, and the crowd gathered again**- When did this occur? **Lenski** thinks that "Some time elapsed between the appointment of the Twelve and what is now told." What **home**? This was probably in Capernaum (cf Mk 2:1+) and Peter's **home** (cf Mk 1:29+). The crowd had been separated from Jesus when He was on the mountain and called His 12 disciples, but now they reassemble for so strong was the attraction of Jesus the Miracle Worker! By using the word **again** Mark refers to previous mentions of the people coming to the house (Mk 1:29-32+, Mk 2:1-2+, cf Mk 1:37, Mk 1:45).

Matthew 9:33 helps understand why the crowds kept coming - "After the demon was cast out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed, and were saying, **"Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."**"

**Gathered** (assembled)(4905)([sunerchomai](#) from **sun** = with, together + **erchomai** = to come) means to get together for a specific purpose, to assemble, to gather (Mk 3:20; Lk 5:15; Ac 1:6; 16:13; 22:30; 1 Cor 11:17-18, 20; 14:26) Gathered is in the [present tense](#) (more literally "He comes home), which is the [historical present](#) which calls for a vivid imagination on the part of the reader, describing a past event as though it were taking place at present. In this sense it is a pictorial tense, displaying the action vividly before our eyes. In English we often use the **historical present** when recounting personal experiences such as "then he **says** to me" (when we really mean "he said" it to me in the past). The Gospel of Mark frequently uses historical present - see [peculiarities of Mark](#). Mark wants us to picture the gathering crowd.

**to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal** - This description is similar to Mk 2:2+ which describes the crowded conditions as "many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room, not even near the door." In other words the crowd was so great no one could get through the door. Now the **crowd** was so packed that eating was impossible, and in this situation there was no boat to put some distance between the **crowd** and Jesus as in (Mk 3:9+). The passage implies they were hungry, but unable to satisfy their hunger. In a similar manner in Mark 6:31+ we read Jesus speaking to His disciples "Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while." (For **there were many people coming and going**, and they did not even have **time to eat**.)" Hiebert adds that the details about not able to eat "is an added touch in Mark's picture of the ceaseless activity of the Servant of the Lord. The persistent pressure of the clamoring crowds formed one of the burdens of His strenuous ministry." (Ibid)

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**Title** - "THE SERVANT UNDER ATTACK" - Alan Carr

**INTRODUCTION** -

**I. Mark 3:20-21 HIS FRIENDS -- ATTACKED HIS SANITY**

A. **THEIR REASONS** - He's "out of His mind" (Illustration - They called the famous evangelist D L Moody "Crazy Moody" because of his zeal for the Lord and evangelism of the lost)

B. **THEIR REMEDY** - "take Him by force"

**II. Mark 3:22-30 HIS FOES -- ATTACKED HIS SPIRITUALITY**

A. **THE ATTACK** - Mk 3:22

B. **THE ANSWER** - Mk 3:23-27

(1) A SECULAR ILLUSTRATION - Mk 3:24

(2) A SOCIAL ILLUSTRATION - Mk 3:25

(3) A SPIRITUAL ILLUSTRATION - Mk 3:26-27

C. **THE ALARM** - Mark 3:28-30

(1) THE SIN THAT CAN BE FORGIVEN - Mk 3:28

(2) THE SIN THAT CAN NEVER BE FORGIVEN - Mk 3:29

## CONCLUSION:

- Are you under attack for your faith? Are you being misunderstood and misrepresented? If you are being attacked for your faith in Jesus, you are in good company.
  - You ought to come today and thank Him that you are being counted worthy to suffer with Him, Matt. 5:11-12.
  - You should also pray that He will help you to be steadfast for His glory.
- If you are lost and He has been calling you to come to Him for salvation, I would suggest to you that you say "Yes" to His call today. Come while He is calling. Come while you can be saved.

**Mark 3:21 When His own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, "He has lost His senses."**

NET Mark 3:21 When his family heard this they went out to restrain him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."

GNT Mark 3:21 καὶ κοῦσαντες οὐ παρέλαθον κρατῆσαι αὐτὸν· λέγοντες ὅτι ἐστὶν ἄλογος.

NLT Mark 3:21 When his family heard what was happening, they tried to take him away. "He's out of his mind," they said.

KJV 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.

ESV Mark 3:21 And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind."

NIV Mark 3:21 When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."

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

CSB Mark 3:21 When His family heard this, they set out to restrain Him, because they said, "He's out of His mind."

NKJ Mark 3:21 But when His own people heard about this, they went out to lay hold of Him, for they said, "He is out of His mind."

NRS Mark 3:21 When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, "He has gone out of his mind."

YLT Mark 3:21 and his friends having heard, went forth to lay hold on him, for they said that he was beside himself,

NAB Mark 3:21 When his relatives heard of this they set out to seize him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."

NJB Mark 3:21 When his relations heard of this, they set out to take charge of him; they said, 'He is out of his mind.'

GWN Mark 3:21 When his family heard about it, they went to get him. They said, "He's out of his mind!"

BBE Mark 3:21 And when his friends had news of it, they went out to get him, saying, He is off his head.

- **His own people**, Mk 3:31 Joh 7:3-10
- **He is:** 2Ki 9:11 Jer 29:26 Ho 9:7 Joh 10:20 Ac 26:24 2Co 5:13
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**WELL-MEANING, BUT MISGUIDED  
INTERFERENCE BY JESUS' FAMILY**

You have probably heard the classic [trilemma](#) apologetic that Jesus is either "LIAR, LUNATIC, OR LORD," made famous by C S

**Lewis** (see [below](#)) Mark 3:20-29 illustrates these three possible choices.

**When His own people heard of this** - Who are **His own people**? Literally "those from the side of Him." This almost certainly refers to His family which is how most versions render it, for "the idiom most likely means the kinspeople or family of Jesus as is common in the [LXX](#)." (Robertson) This interpretation is supported by the context for Mark 3:31 **His mother and His brothers arrived, and standing outside they sent word to Him and called Him.** " **Heard** what? What had Jesus' family heard? Some commentators think this refers only to the immediate context because **His own people heard** He was not able to eat and/or was not giving consideration to His own needs, which one commentator says prompted His family to be concerned that He was failing to care for Himself (Liefeld, EBC). While that is possible, it is also likely what they had heard was that He was teaching that He was God (Mark 2:5+), that He could forgive sin (Mark 2:10+), not to mention that He had been casting out demons and the demons were identifying Him as **"the Holy One of God"** (Mk 1:24+) or **"the Son of God"** (Mk 3:11+). Those Jews who had witnessed these exorcisms heard these demonic declarations and seen the effect of casting out demons with their own eyes. And keep in mind that John tells us "not even His brothers were believing in Him." (Jn 7:5) So you can just imagine their reaction when they heard He was teaching that He was God!

**They went out to take custody of Him** - **NLT** - "they tried to take him away," which bring to mind having someone "committed" to a mental institute! Wuest says "They were intending to take Him by force and against His will." **They went out** indicates that they were not at the home. Possibly as some say they made the trek from nearby Nazareth, but this is conjecture.

**Take custody** (seize)([2902](#))([krateo](#) from **kratos** = strength) has basic meaning be strong or possess power and thus means to take hold of, grasp, hold fast, especially to "take hold of forcibly" in this case referring to **His own people**, probably His own family. Mark uses it of the arrest of John the Baptist (Mk 6:17)**Krateo** is used of arresting someone seven times in Mark (Mk 6:17; Mk 12:12; Mk 14:1, 44, 46, 49, 51 - all the other uses in Mark - Mk. 1:31; Mk. 3:21; Mk. 5:41; Mk. 7:3; Mk. 7:4; Mk. 7:8; Mk. 9:10; Mk. 9:27) to give you a sense of their resolve to remove Him from His current conditions. Eight of 15 uses in Mark refer to Jesus being seized (including His arrest).

**For** (gar) is a term of explanation, in context explaining why His own had come to seize Him and forcibly take Him away.

They called the famous evangelist D L Moody "Crazy Moody"  
because of his zeal for the Lord and evangelism of the lost  
-- Alan Carr

**Craig Evans** - The truly odd feature is the notation that his family, who have come from Nazareth, respond by trying to take custody of Him (lit. "seize him"). The evangelist explains that Jesus' family were saying that he was mad (lit. "outside of himself")—and it is his family who say this, not the excited crowd whom Jesus will later identify as his true family, nor the scribes who hold to a much more sinister opinion. Accusations of madness were sometimes made against prophets, exorcists, and healers. One of the Sibyls complains of being called a "crazy liar," yet she knows that she will be vindicated when her words come to pass (Sib. Or. 3:811–818). Too much learning, it was thought, could lead to madness (Acts 26:24: "Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad"; Alciphron, Letters of Courtesans, "Thais to Euthydemus" 1.34.1–2: "... ever since you took it into your head to study philosophy you have put on airs.... You have gone mad ..."). (BKBC - Mt-Lk)

**Ray Stedman** - Here are two reactions to Jesus, to the intensity of his ministry. He gave himself so totally to this ministry to these crowds that he had no time even to eat. His friends heard about this and were disturbed. The word translated "friends" really means "relatives" -- literally, "those from beside him." We learn from the latter part of the chapter that it is actually his mother and his brothers. They are up in Nazareth and word reaches them that he is not taking care of himself. He is not eating properly. He is not sleeping properly. His health is threatened. So they leave Nazareth and come to try to put him under restraint. Their feeling is that he has gone crazy, that he is "beside himself" -- literally, "outside himself" -- as a result of his concern for the hurt of the world. Now, Jesus will handle that misapprehension at the end of this account. ([False Forces Mark 3:7-35](#))

**They were saying, "He has lost His senses** - **Saying** is [imperfect tense](#) indicating they were saying this repeatedly! Sadly his own family thought Jesus was suffering a mental break down! **Has lost His senses** is one word in Greek ([existemi](#) below) which is more literally "He was beside Himself" or out of His head. His own family felt He was not acting rationally and/or that He was unbalanced. A similar charge was made by Festus against Paul (Acts 26:24+ - "out of your mind" = [mainomai](#)) In 2 Cor 5:13+ Paul wrote "For if we are **beside ourselves** (NET = "out of our minds," = [existemi](#)), it is for God; if we are of sound mind, it is for you."

Much madness is divinest sense  
To a discerning eye;  
Much sense the starkest madness.  
'Tis the majority

In this, as all, prevails.  
Assent, and you are sane;  
Demur—you're straightway dangerous,  
And handled with a chain.  
-- Emily Dickinson

**William Lane** notes that "Mark frequently inserts an event or narrative between two phases of some action of Jesus. This literary device is effective for indicating a lapse of time, for dramatically heightening the tension, or for drawing attention to a significant parallel or contrast. The first instance of intercalation occurs in this section: the narrative dealing with Jesus' family (Mk 3:20f., 31–35) is divided by the account of the Beelzebul controversy (Mk 3:22–30). The insertion of the incident involving the scribes from Jerusalem between the earlier and later phases of the family narrative is deliberate. It suggests that those in Jesus' family who declare that he is mad (Mk 3:21) are not unlike the scribes who attribute his extraordinary powers to an alliance with Beelzebul, the prince of the demons (Mk 3:22). The parallel is sharply emphasized by Mark's formulation of the charges against Jesus in verses 21 and 30: verse 21 "for they [his family] said, **He is beside Himself.**" verse 30 "for they [the scribes] said, **He has an unclean spirit.**" (NICNT-Mark)

**Brooks** adds that "Mark 3:20–35 is the first clear instance in the Gospel of *intercalation* or *bracketing* or *sandwiching*, a literary and theological device used to indicate a lapse of time, heighten tension, draw attention to, contrast, and most importantly to use two accounts to interpret each other." (NAC-Mark)

**Lost His senses** (1839) (**existemi** from **ek** = out + **hístemi** = to stand) literally means to stand outside oneself and thus to be beside oneself. The ideas include to throw out of position, to displace, to amaze, astonish, throw into wonderment, and **existemi** is "used in the classics of the act of driving one out of his senses, throwing one out of his mind." (Wuest) Used 4x by Mark most often the idea of amazement or astonishment in the other 13 NT uses - Everyone was "**amazed**" when the paralyzed man arose (Mk 2:12), they were "**astounded**" when the 12 yo girl was resurrected from the dead (Mk 5:42); His disciples in the boat in the storm were "**astonished**" when the wind stopped as He got into the boat with them. (Mk 6:51). Lane adds that the use in Mark "describes one who is ecstatic in the sense of psychic derangement." (Ibid)

**Hiebert** quotes **Hurtado** who writes "In recent years we have heard stories of other families who have attempted to dissuade family members (usually young adults) from fervent religious or political associations, sometimes forcibly in what is popularly called deprogramming, usually in the belief that their loved ones have been 'brain-washed' and are not in control of their minds. Seen in this light, the passage before us has a familiar human ring in it." (Ibid)

**J C Ryle** has a good word on the accusation that Jesus had **lost His senses** - There is nothing in this fact that need surprise us. The prophet who came to anoint Jehu was called a "mad fellow." (2 Kings 9:11.) Festus told Paul that he was "mad." (Acts 26:24+ **mad** = Greek word mania = insanity) Few things show the corruption of human nature more clearly, than man's inability to understand zeal in religion. Zeal about money, or science, or war, or commerce, or business, is intelligible to the world. But zeal about religion is too often reckoned foolishness, fanaticism, and the sign of a weak mind. If a man injures his health by study, or excessive attention to business, no fault is found:—"He is a diligent man."—But if he wears himself out with preaching, or spends his whole time in doing good to souls, the cry is raised, "He is an enthusiast and righteous over-much." The world is not altered. The "things of the Spirit" are always "foolishness to the natural man." (1 Cor. 2:14.) Let it not shake our faith, if we have to drink of the same cup as our blessed Lord. Hard as it may be to flesh and blood to be misunderstood by our relations, we must recollect it is no new thing. Let us call to mind our Lord's words, "He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me." Jesus knows the bitterness of our trials. Jesus feels for us. Jesus will give us help. Let us bear patiently the unreasonableness of unconverted men, even as our Lord did. Let us pity their blindness and want of knowledge, and not love them one whit the less. Above all, let us pray that God would change their hearts. Who can tell but the very persons who now try to turn us away from Christ, may one day become new creatures, see all things differently, and follow Christ themselves?

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**C S Lewis** in his classic **Mere Christianity** made the famous quote about Jesus '**Liar, Lunatic or Lord?**' -

I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but **I don't accept his claim to be God**. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a **lunatic** — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. ... Now it seems to me



obvious that He was neither a **lunatic** nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, **I have to accept the view that He was and is God**

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### **Josh McDowell - LORD, LIAR OR LUNATIC?**

The distinct claims of Jesus to be God eliminate the popular ploy of skeptics who regard Jesus as just a good moral man or a prophet who said a lot of profound things. So often that conclusion is passed off as the only one acceptable to scholars or as the obvious result of the intellectual process. The trouble is, many people nod their heads in agreement and never see the fallacy of such reasoning.

To Jesus, who men and women believed him to be was of fundamental importance. To say what Jesus said and to claim what he claimed about himself, one couldn't conclude he was just a good moral man or prophet. That alternative isn't open to an individual, and Jesus never intended it to be.

C. S. Lewis, who was a professor at Cambridge University and once an agnostic, understood this issue clearly. He writes: "I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God.' That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse."

Then Lewis adds: "You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronising nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

F. J. A. Hort, who spent twenty-eight years in a critical study of the New Testament text, writes: "His words were so completely parts and utterances of Himself, that they had no meaning as abstract statements of truth uttered by Him as a Divine oracle or prophet. Take away Himself as the primary (though not the ultimate) subject of every statement and they all fall to pieces."<sup>2</sup>

In the words of Kenneth Scott Latourette, historian of Christianity at Yale University: "It is nohis teachings which make Jesus so remarkable, although these would be enough to give him distinction. It is a combination of the teachings with the man himself. The two cannot be separated." "It must be obvious," Latourette concludes, "to any thoughtful reader of the Gospel records that Jesus regarded himself and his message as inseparable. He was a great teacher, but he was more. His teachings about the kingdom of God, about human conduct, and about God were important, but they could not be divorced from him without, from his standpoint, being vitiated."<sup>3</sup>

Jesus claimed to be God. He didn't leave any other option open. His claim must be either true or false, so it is something that should be given serious consideration. Jesus' question to his disciples, "But who do you say that I am?" (Matthew 16:15 ) has several alternatives.

First, consider that his claim to be God was false. If it was false, then we have two and only two alternatives. He either knew it was false or he didn't know it was false. We will consider each one separately and examine the evidence.

### **WAS HE A LIAR?**

If, when Jesus made his claims, he knew that he was not God, then he was lying and deliberately deceiving his followers. But if he was a liar, then he was also a hypocrite because he told others to be honest, whatever the cost, while he himself taught and lived a colossal lie. More than that, he was a demon, because he told others to trust him for their eternal destiny. If he couldn't back up his claims and knew it, then he was unspeakably evil. Last, he would also be a fool because it was his claims to being God that led to his crucifixion.

Many will say that Jesus was a good moral teacher. Let's be realistic. How could he be a great moral teacher and knowingly mislead people at the most important point of his teaching—his own identity?

You would have to conclude logically that he was a deliberate liar. This view of Jesus, however, doesn't coincide with what we know either of him or the results of his life and teachings. Wherever Jesus has been proclaimed, lives have been changed for the good, nations have changed for the better, thieves are made honest, alcoholics are cured, hateful individuals become channels of love, unjust persons become just.

William Lecky, one of Great Britain's most noted historians and a dedicated opponent of organized Christianity, writes: "It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character which through all the changes of eighteen centuries has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love; has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments and conditions;

has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice.... The simple record of these three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists."4

Historian Philip Schaff says: "This testimony, if not true, must be downright blasphemy or madness. The former hypothesis cannot stand a moment before the moral purity and dignity of Jesus, revealed in his every word and work, and acknowledged by universal consent. Self-deception in a matter so momentous, and with an intellect in all respects so clear and so sound, is equally out of the question. How could he be an enthusiast or a madman who never lost the even balance of his mind, who sailed serenely over all the troubles and persecutions, as the sun above the clouds, who always returned the wisest answer to tempting questions, who calmly and deliberately predicted his death on the cross, his resurrection on the third day, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the founding of his Church, the destruction of Jerusalem—predictions which have been literally fulfilled? A character so original, so complete, so uniformly consistent, so perfect, so human and yet so high above all human greatness, can be neither a fraud nor a fiction. The poet, as has been well said, would in this case be greater than the hero. It would take more than a Jesus to invent a Jesus."5

Elsewhere Schaff gives convincing argument against Christ being a liar: "How, in the name of logic, common sense, and experience, could an impostor—that is a deceitful, selfish, depraved man—have invented, and consistently maintained from the beginning to end, the purest and noblest character known in history with the most perfect air of truth and reality? How could he have conceived and successfully carried out a plan of unparalleled beneficence, moral magnitude, and sublimity, and sacrificed his own life for it, in the face of the strongest prejudices of his people and age?"6

If Jesus wanted to get people to follow him and believe in him as God, why did he go to the Jewish nation? Why go as a Nazarene carpenter to a country so small in size and population and so thoroughly adhering to the undivided unity of God? Why didn't he go to Egypt or, even more, to Greece, where they believed in various gods and various manifestations of them?

Someone who lived as Jesus lived, taught as Jesus taught, and died as Jesus died could not have been a liar. What other alternatives are there?

### **WAS HE A LUNATIC?**

If it is inconceivable for Jesus to be a liar, then couldn't he actually have thought himself to be God, but been mistaken? After all, it's possible to be both sincere and wrong. But we must remember that for someone to think himself God, especially in a fiercely monotheistic culture, and then to tell others that their eternal destiny depended on believing in him, is no slight flight of fantasy but the thoughts of a lunatic in the fullest sense. Was Jesus Christ such a person?

Someone who believes he is God sounds like someone today believing himself Napoleon. He would be deluded and self-deceived, and probably he would be locked up so he wouldn't hurt himself or anyone else. Yet in Jesus we don't observe the abnormalities and imbalance that usually go along with being deranged. His poise and composure would certainly be amazing if he were insane.

Noyes and Kolb, in a medical text,<sup>7</sup> describe the schizophrenic as a person who is more autistic than realistic. The schizophrenic desires to escape from the world of reality. Let's face it; claiming to be God would certainly be a retreat from reality.

In light of the other things we know about Jesus, it's hard to imagine that he was mentally disturbed. Here is a man who spoke some of the most profound sayings ever recorded. His instructions have liberated many individuals in mental bondage. Clark H. Pinnock asks: "Was he deluded about his greatness, a paranoid, an unintentional deceiver, a schizophrenic? Again, the skill and depth of his teachings support the case only for his total mental soundness. If only we were as sane as he!"8 A student at a California university told me that his psychology professor had said in class that "all he has to do is pick up the Bible and read portions of Christ's teaching to many of his patients. That's all the counseling they need."

Psychiatrist J. T. Fisher states: "If you were to take the sum total of all authoritative articles ever written by the most qualified of psychologists and psychiatrists on the subject of mental hygiene—if you were to combine them and refine them and cleave out the excess verbiage—if you were to take the whole of the meat and none of the parsley, and if you were to have these unadulterated bits of pure scientific knowledge concisely expressed by the most capable of living poets, you would have an awkward and incomplete summation of the Sermon on the Mount. And it would suffer immeasurably through comparison. For nearly two thousand years the Christian world has been holding in its hands the complete answer to its restless and fruitless yearnings. Here . . . rests the blueprint for successful human life with optimism, mental health, and contentment."9

C. S. Lewis writes: "The historical difficulty of giving for the life, sayings and influence of Jesus any explanation that is not harder than the Christian explanation is very great. The discrepancy between the depth and sanity . . . of His moral teaching and the rampant megalomania which must lie behind His theological teaching unless He is indeed God has never been satisfactorily explained. Hence the non-Christian hypotheses succeed one another with the restless fertility of bewilderment."10

Philip Schaff reasons: "Is such an intellect—clear as the sky, bracing as the mountain air, sharp and penetrating as a sword, thoroughly healthy and vigorous, always ready and always self-possessed—liable to a radical and most serious delusion concerning his own character and mission? Preposterous imagination!"<sup>6</sup>

## WAS HE LORD?

I cannot personally conclude that Jesus was a liar or a lunatic. The only other alternative is that he was the Christ, the Son of God, as he claimed. When I discuss this with most Jewish people, it's interesting how they respond. They usually tell me that Jesus was a moral, upright, religious leader, a good man, or some kind of prophet. I then share with them the claims Jesus made about himself and then the material in this chapter on the trilemma (liar, lunatic, or Lord). When I ask if they believe Jesus was a liar, there is a sharp "No!" Then I ask, "Do you believe he was a lunatic?" The reply is "Of course not." "Do you believe he is God?" Before I can get a breath in edgewise, there is a resounding "Absolutely not." Yet one has only so many choices.

The issue with these three alternatives is not which is possible, for it is obvious that all three are possible. But rather, the question is "Which is more probable?" Who you decide Jesus Christ is must not be an idle intellectual exercise. You cannot put him on the shelf as a great moral teacher. That is not a valid option. He is either a liar, a lunatic, or Lord and God. You must make a choice. "But," as the Apostle John wrote, "these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and"—more important—"that believing you might have life in His name" (John 20:31).

The evidence is clearly in favor of Jesus as Lord. Some people, however, reject this clear evidence because of moral implications involved. They don't want to face up to the responsibility or implications of calling him Lord. (from [More than a Carpenter](#))

## NOTES ON CHAPTER 2

1. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1960), pp. 40-41.
2. F. J. A. Hort, *Way, Truth, and the Life* (New York: MacMillan and Co., 1894), p. 207.
3. Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Harper and Row, 1953), pp. 44, 48.
4. William E. Lecky, *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1903), Vol. 2, pp. 8, 9.
5. Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962). (Re-print from original 1910), p. 109
6. Philip Schaff, *The Person of Christ* (New York: American Tract Society, 1913), pp. 94-95; p. 97.
7. Arthur P. Noyes, and Lawrence C. Kolb, *Modern Clinical Psychiatry* (Philadelphia: Saunders, 1958). (5th ed.)
8. Clark H. Pinnock, *Set Forth Your Case* (New Jersey: The Craig Press, 1967), p. 62.
9. J. T. Fisher, and L. S. Hawley, *A Few Buttons Missing* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1951), p. 273.
10. C. S. Lewis, *Miracles: A Preliminary Study* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1947), p. 113.

## Related Resources:

- [Lewis' Trilemma](#) - Lewis's trilemma is an apologetic argument traditionally used to argue for the divinity of Jesus by arguing that the only alternatives were that he was evil or deluded.[1] One version was popularised by University of Oxford literary scholar and writer C. S. Lewis in a BBC radio talk and in his writings. It is sometimes described as the "Lunatic, Liar, or Lord", or "Mad, Bad, or God" argument. It takes the form of a trilemma — a choice among three options, each of which is in some way difficult to accept. ([Read more...](#))
- C S Lewis 1950 essay, [What Are We to Make of Jesus?](#)
- [Mere Christianity \(Wikipedia article\)](#) excerpt - *Mere Christianity* is a theological book by C. S. Lewis, adapted from a series of BBC radio talks made between 1941 and 1944,[2] while Lewis was at Oxford during the Second World War.[3] Considered a classic of Christian apologetics, the transcripts of the broadcasts originally appeared in print as three separate pamphlets: *The Case for Christianity* (Broadcast Talks in the UK) (1942), *Christian Behaviour* (1943), and *Beyond Personality* (1944).[4]
- [Josh McDowell's classic "More than a Carpenter"](#)

**Mark 3:22** 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."

NET Mark 3:22 The experts in the law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul,"

and, "By the ruler of demons he casts out demons."

GNT Mark 3:22 κα ο γραμματε ς ο π εροσολ μων καταβ ντες λεγον τι Βεελζεβο λ χει κα τι ν τ ρχοντι τ ν δαιμον ων κβ λλει τ δαιμ νια.

NLT Mark 3:22 But the teachers of religious law who had arrived from Jerusalem said, "He's possessed by Satan, the prince of demons. That's where he gets the power to cast out demons."

KJV 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.

ESV Mark 3:22 And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "by the prince of demons he casts out the demons."

NIV Mark 3:22 And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebub! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons."

ASV Mark 3:22 And the scribes that came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and, By the prince of the demons casteth he out the demons.

CSB Mark 3:22 The scribes who had come down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul in Him!" and, "He drives out demons by the ruler of the demons!"

NKJ Mark 3:22 And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebub," and, "By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons."

NRS Mark 3:22 And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons."

YLT Mark 3:22 and the scribes who are from Jerusalem having come down, said -- 'He hath Beelzeboul,' and - - 'By the ruler of the demons he doth cast out the demons.'

NAB Mark 3:22 The scribes who had come from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "By the prince of demons he drives out demons."

NJB Mark 3:22 The scribes who had come down from Jerusalem were saying, 'Beelzebul is in him,' and, 'It is through the prince of devils that he drives devils out.'

GWN Mark 3:22 The scribes who had come from Jerusalem said, "Beelzebul is in him," and "He forces demons out of people with the help of the ruler of demons."

BBE Mark 3:22 And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem, said, He has Beelzebub, and, By the ruler of evil spirits he sends evil spirits out of men.

- **scribes who came:** Mk 7:1 Mt 15:1 Lu 5:17
- **He is possessed:** Ps 22:6 Mt 9:34 10:25 12:24 Lu 11:15 Joh 7:20 8:48,52 10:22
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## CHRIST CHARGED WITH COLLUSION!

**Collusion** is an agreement between two or more parties, sometimes illegal and therefore secretive and often for a deceitful purpose. Now the scribes accuse Jesus of being in collusion with Satan, Beelzebub! So first His **family** attacks His **sanity** (Mk 3:20-21, 31) and now His **enemies** attack His **spirituality**! First **friends** said He was "**mad**" and then **foes** said He was **bad**! But as **MacArthur** says "the testimony of the Holy Spirit in Mk 3:29 is implied and the testimony of the Holy Spirit is He is Lord of all." [Jesus: Liar, Lunatic, or Lord?](#)

Matthew gives us some background omitted by Mark - Matthew 12:22-24+ (see also Luke 11:14+) tells us "Then a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute was brought to Jesus, and He healed him, so that the mute man spoke and saw. 23 All the crowds were amazed, and were saying, "This man cannot be the Son of David (AKA "THE MESSIAH"), can he?" 24 But when the Pharisees **heard this**, they said, "This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons." So the scribes were not present at this combined healing/exorcism miracle, but they **heard** of it. Undoubtedly they also **heard** that the amazed crowd was beginning to wonder if Jesus might be the long expected Messiah. To the scribes this called for action to squelch these "Messianic murmurings." They could not refute what the people had seen, so they sought to refute Jesus by attributing the power to Satan!

**The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying** - Only Mark describes the **scribes** coming 90 miles from Jerusalem

and is a strong indication that the stories of the "Miracle Man" had reached the upper echelons of Jewish leadership! **Come down** reflects the fact that Jerusalem was elevated so one always "goes up" to the city and "comes down" when leaving. The **scribes** had already falsely accused Him of **blasphemy** (Mk 2:6-7+) and of **associating with sinners** (Mk 2:16+). Recall that the **scribes** were the intellectuals of the day and it was their duty to make copies of the Scriptures, so ostensibly they knew the word of God inside and out. Sadly they knew the Word only superficially, because ultimately they did not know the Word, the Word incarnate in their very presence! **Were saying** is in the [imperfect tense](#) indicating they were doing this over and over, seeking to counter the crowd's thoughts that Jesus might be the Messiah. They were saying to the contrary, that not only was He not the Messiah, but was from Satan! They had to explain the miracles which could not be refuted.

**THOUGHT** - What's the greatest miracle Jesus performs today by His Spirit? Regeneration. New birth. And for those who are not born again, they have to devise some way to refute the clean changes that have occurred in our life! They may say things like "They've been brainwashed." Or "they're just going through a religious phase." Etc, etc. This is why it is so important for believers to live supernatural lives, lives enabled by the Spirit of Jesus, that it might stir others to wonder and then even to worry about their own eternal destiny!

**James Edwards** makes an excellent point regarding the fact that the **scribes** clearly recognized Jesus' power to perform miracles writing "The malicious judgment of the **scribes** is evidence that faith and unbelief are not the result of proofs. There is a mistaken view abroad that if only we saw the undisputed miracles of Jesus we would believe—or believe more. The scribes, however, have seen precisely such evidence—but they do not believe. Faith, in other words, is not an automatic, inevitable, or necessary consequence of witnessing the acts of God. The words and deeds of Jesus are indeed evidence of God's presence, but the evidence demands a decision from the beholder as to its source and significance. Faith judges that the person and work of Jesus stand in continuity with the character of God and hence have saving significance; disbelief judges that the person and work of Jesus derive not from God but, as the scribes suggest in this instance, from the devil." (PNTC-Mark)

**Scribes** (1122)([grammateus](#) from [grapho](#) = to write) was one skilled in Jewish law and theology and thus experts in the law of Moses and in traditional Jewish laws and regulations. **MacArthur** notes that "Not all [Pharisees](#) were scribes, but the scribes were primarily [Pharisees](#), who were interpreters and teachers of the law of Moses and the traditional rabbinic writings. Their teaching provided the theological framework for the Pharisees' legalistic system of works-righteousness. The scribes were the dominant force in Judaism, not only theologically, but socially. Their views affected every aspect of life, and they also handled all legal matters, including property, estates, and contracts. They were revered, and given the respectful title of Rabbi (Mt. 23:7). That title was sometimes given to Jesus because He was a teacher (cf. John 1:38, 49; 3:2, 26; 6:25). It was commonly believed that Moses received the law, then gave it to Joshua, who gave it to the elders, who gave it to the prophets, who gave it to the scribes. (Luke Commentary)

**J Vernon McGee** - The convincing nature of Jesus' miracles forced the Pharisees to offer some explanation for them. They could not deny the existence of miracles when they were happening before their eyes. They resorted to the basest and most blasphemous explanation for the miracles of Jesus. They did not deny

**He is possessed by Beelzebul** - This is the first of two distinct charges. Why do they say this? The main reason is because they had a big problem! They could not deny Jesus had manifested manifold expressions of supernatural power over disease and over demons. Crutches had been thrown away by healed paralytics. Deaf persons could hear a pin drop. Seeing eye dogs were now out of business. And in a few situations people were asking for refunds from funeral homes! And because this evidence of the supernatural was irrefutable, they were forced to resort to an irreverent accusation in an attempt to defame Jesus and His miraculous powers. Do not miss the point that these **scribes** could have accepted Jesus as the Messiah, for the evidence was overwhelming, but they remained (to quote Stephen) steadfastly "**stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears...always resisting the Holy Spirit (and) doing just as your fathers did.**" (Acts 7:51+) The **scribes** and other Jewish leaders had a vested interest in unbelief, and that is always the reason people choose to reject Jesus.

**THOUGHT** - I recall sharing Jesus with a doctor friend of mind and he listened carefully and when I had finished I ask him if he would receive Jesus. He answered that he would not because to him that meant he would have to give up working with his hunting dogs which was the joy of his life. Interestingly, his wife was in a former Campus Crusades for Christ worker, but she too clearly refused belief in Jesus. It was a sad evening, but I began to understand that many people refuse to believe in Jesus because the cost is simply too high! Sadly, if they never receive Him, they will find out the sacrifice they may have made in this life pales in comparison to the pain they will experience forever in the next life! Jesus changes a person's life and the Jews did not desire change, but were comfortable in their elevated status in society and their false spirituality. And so in the face of undeniable evidence of His divinity, they resorted to attributing Jesus' power to Satan!

As **Hiebert** says "Instead of recognizing Jesus as the Son of God, the scribes charged that He was the permanent tool of Satan. It

was a vicious attack upon His person." (Ibid)

**Ray Stedman** - Now, Jesus will handle that misapprehension at the end of this account. But first he deals with the accusations of the scribes who came down from Jerusalem and who watched this same activity. Their explanation was, "He is possessed by the devil, by Beelzebub." Beelzebub means "lord of the house." It is a reference to Satan as king of the underworld, head of the demonic "Mafia," if you like. Beelzebub was the "godfather" who gave the orders, and the rest of the demons all followed. These scribes' explanation of the ministry of Jesus was that he was in league with them, that he had joined the Mafia and was casting out these demons by the power of the satanic godfather. ([False Forces Mark 3:7-35](#))

**Expositors "He hath Beelzebub"** (KJV), implying that Beelzebub hath Him, using Him as his agent. The expression points to something more than an alliance [but] to possession, and than on a grand scale."

**William Barclay** writes ""It is by no mean uncommon for people to resort to slander when honest opposition is helpless." So true!

**Guzik** points out "This wasn't the only time Jesus was insulted like this.

- "He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?" (John 10:20)
- "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?" (John 8:48)
- "We were not born of fornication." (John 8:41)
- "A glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!" (Luke 7:34)
- "You have a demon." (John 7:20) ([Mark 3 Commentary](#))

Note that in response to His words in John 10:7-18, 19, "Many of them (THE JEWS) were saying, "He has a demon and is insane ("He is demon-possessed and raving mad"). Why do you listen to Him?" (John 10:20)

**Beelzebub** (sometimes "Beelzebub") ([954](#)) (**beelzeboul**, variant reading Beelzebub after an error in the Latin Vulgate. Transliterated from Hebrew Ba'al Zebub) originally referred to a Philistine deity which in Hebrew meant "Baal (lord) of flies" (2 Ki 1:2, 6), the "fly-baal," or "fly-god," whose office was to protect his worshippers from the torment of the gnats and flies with which that region was infested. In Jesus' day this so-called false god is derisively called Beel-zebul (NIV Beelzebub), "lord of dung." In Jesus' reply to the accusation of the Jews in Mt 12:24 that He cast out demons by Beelzebub, He answers in Mt 12:26 substituting the name Satan which clearly identifies the Jewish references to Beelzebub as another name for Satan."The Jews seem to have applied this appellation to Satan, as being the author of all the pollutions and abominations of idol-worship." ([Am Tract Society](#))

This Greek word is not in the Septuagint. There are 7 NT uses - Matt. 10:25+ = Jesus accused of being the embodiment of Satan!!!; Matt. 12:24+; Matt. 12:27+; Mk. 3:22+; Lk. 11:15+; Lk. 11:18+; Lk. 11:19+. Jesus, rejecting His accuser's false charges, pointed out that the expulsion of demons was Satan's defeat, heralding the arrival of God's kingdom (see Luke 11:20-22+). (See [Got Questions entry below](#)) It is interesting that the name Baalzebub also appears in the [Ras Shamra tablets](#), where it is used of a Canaanite deity and seems to have the meaning "lord of the high place" or "lord of the dwelling."

- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Beelzebub](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Beelzebub](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Beelzebub](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Beelzebub or Beelzeboul](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopaedia [Beelzebub](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Beelzebub](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Beelzebub](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Beelzebub](#) (has a picture of an ancient seal thought to be representation of Beelzebub)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Beelzebub](#)

**Gilbrant** has an in depth discussion of **beelzeboul** -

Beelzeboul was a name Jews gave to "the prince of devils" (Matthew 12:24; Mark 3:22; cf. Luke 11:15), that is, Satan. The term does not appear outside the Synoptic Gospels except in later writings based on them. To show contempt for Jesus the Pharisees called Him this name— along with "gluttonous," "winebibber" (Matthew 11:19; Luke 7:34), and "Samaritan" (John 8:48). According to them not only did Jesus have a demon (Mark 3:30;

John 8:48,49,52; 10:20,21; compare Matthew 11:17; Luke 7:33) that made Him crazy (John 10:20), but He exorcised demons by the power of this prince of demons (Matthew 9:34; 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15).

The Gospels record two, if not three, occasions when the Jews tried to discount Jesus' miracles by saying that He was in league with the devil: (1) Matthew 9:32-34; (2) Matthew 12:22-37 (cf. Mark 3:19-30); (3) Luke 11:14-26 (may parallel number 2). Beelzeboul occurs seven times in the last three passages, plus Matthew 10:24-33 recounts a private discussion with Jesus' disciples about some previous instance of this same slander. The term also appears in the actual episode Matthew 9 refers to and may be what Jesus meant in Matthew 10. At any rate, the religious leaders used this epithet to create sentiment against Jesus.

#### **The word itself has several interesting features.**

Beelzeboul is pronounced almost as a four syllable compound word (the first half has a vowel glide from long to short "e"): Bē-ěl + ze-boul. A number of spellings appear in English versions depending on how the translators decided to represent the Greek sounds with English letters, on what manuscripts they followed, and on whether they chose to represent the name in its Hebrew or Aramaic form. The first half of the word comes from the Canaanite deity **Baal**, spelled "Beel" in Aramaic, the language that largely replaced Hebrew among the Jews after the Babylonian Captivity; consequently, the full designation appears both as Beelzeboul and Baalzeboul. Baal means "lord," or "master."

The last syllable is **zeboul** or **zebul** depending again on how translators represent the Greek vowel sound in English letters. A greater issue lies behind the difference between **Beelzebub** and **Beelzeboul**. In all seven places the ancient Syriac translation, the Latin Vulgate, and a few Greek manuscripts have the latter reading. Most modern textual critics have concluded that the original Greek text, however, carried **-bul**.

Beelzebub was the name of a pagan god worshiped in **Ekron** (2 Kings 1:2,3,6,16). When Ahaziah, king of Israel, severely injured himself in a fall, he tried to consult this deity to see whether he would live (**Ed**: Before we are too hard on Ahaziah, how often is our first reaction to go to sources other than God when confronted with adversity, affliction, etc?). Zebub, the Hebrew word for "fly," is translated in the Septuagint which then reads "Baal muian (**Ed**: muia = fly)" in the four verses of 1 Kings 2. "Lord of the fly," or "Fly-god," might refer to the shape of the idol, to the god's oracles supposedly given by the flight pattern or buzzing of flies, to the swarming of flies around sacrifices offered to him, or to a god that protected from flies and diseases associated with them (for example, the Greek god Zeus Apomyios, "Fly-Averting Zeus"), or to the Roman god Myagros.

If the term for "the prince of demons" has any connection with the god mentioned in 2 Kings, the question is how the shift between Beelzebub and Beelzeboul happened. The least likely conjecture is that since the Ras Shamra literature mentions a Canaanite god Baalzeboul, Baalzebub is an intentional corruption of that name written into the original Old Testament text itself. In that case, zebul may have derived from a Hebrew word root meaning "habitation" (see Psalm 49:15); Baalzeboul could then mean "Lord of the Habitation/Temple" or even "Lord of the High Place." Calling the god of Ekron "Lord of Flies" instead in 2 Kings 1 and later labeling Satan with that name would have been a derogatory shift to Baalzebub. Applying Beelzebub to Jesus would carry a double sting—calling Him the devil and doing so with a derogatory term.

The difficulty here is that the correct reading in the New Testament is almost certainly Beelzeboul. A New Testament textual shift to -bub under the influence of 2 Kings is understandable, but one wonders what could explain the opposite shift during the textual history of Greek Gospels.

Especially in post-Biblical rabbinic writings, the Hebrew root meaning "habitation" had another derived meaning, "manure." It has been frequently suggested that Baalzebub was in fact the name of the god in Ekron and that later Jews caricatured it into a similar sounding name for Satan: "Lord of the Manure Pile" since manure draws flies; so the shift

between Beelzebub and Beelzebul would have taken place in the opposite direction from the first scenario. The “double cut” against Jesus, then, would almost have involved a vulgar name.

One last option has been to dissociate the Gospel accounts from the “Beelzebub” of 2 Kings 2 and to simply say that Beelzebul, “Lord of the Temple/Habitation,” was a name Jews used for Satan, a name not in itself particularly derogatory but one that recalled the pagan practices of ancient Canaanite religion and identified them with “the prince of demons.” The application to Jesus, then, would be derogatory insofar as He was being called the devil. Under this explanation commentators have seen special appropriateness in Jesus’ comments to His disciples in Matthew 10:25, “If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?”

In all this ambiguity the central point is clear. The religious leaders were trying to denigrate Jesus’ miracles by associating them with the power of Satan. Accordingly, in Matthew 12:31,32 and Mark 3:28-30 the Lord warned them that assigning to Satan miracles by which the Spirit bore witness to Jesus is blasphemy of the Spirit, a sin which is not forgiven in this age or in the one to come. ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

**THOUGHT** - Do you recognize the words “**Beelzebub has a devil put aside for me, for me.**” Those words are from the classic rock song by Queen called, “Bohemian Rhapsody.” Here’s the message - be careful regarding the secular songs you listen to. They may well have a message that you should not be hearing!

**And “He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons-** ASV = “By the prince of the demons.” The New Living Translation renders it this way: “He’s possessed by Satan, the prince of demons. That’s where he gets the power to cast out demons.” This is the same accusation made in Mt 9:34+ where “the Pharisees were saying, “He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons.” He refers to this accusation in Matthew 10:25+ declaring ““It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they malign the members of his household!”

Note that **casts out** is in the [present tense](#) which is clear admission by the **scribes** that demons were continually being cast out by Jesus! They did not argue with the evidence of His power, but with the source of His power. Their hand was forced because if it was not demonic, it had to be divine and they would have none of that! This is the second specific charge by the **scribes** against Jesus in which they seek to attribute Jesus work to a satanic source. In essence the **scribes** were saying Jesus was in league with Satan in a sense serving as Satan’s subordinate! Amazingly [absurd](#) and inconsistent with all reason, logic, and common sense!

**MacArthur** asks an interesting question - Now, why don’t they conclude that He’s just insane? Because they have to explain the **supernatural**. Insanity doesn’t explain the **supernatural**. It doesn’t tell you anything....They knew He had power over disease. They had to explain the **supernatural power**. No getting around it. And it was either God or Satan, because those are the only two **supernatural** persons who have that kind of power....And they’re unwilling to say it’s the power of God, which was the logical thing to say, which is what the sort of popular opinion was, and they had to change that, “No man could do this except God be with Him.” But they had to make people think it was satanic, so that was their mantra, “He’s possessed by Beelzebub.” ([The Unforgivable Sin](#))

**THOUGHT-** Have you ever been unjustly accused of something? Take heart, because you are in good company. Jesus was also unjustly accused.

**Casts out** ([present tense](#)) (1544) ([ekbállō](#) from **ek** = out + **bállō** = to cast, throw, drive) means to cast out, drive out, throw out, expel often with the idea of force - ejection by force (Mt. 8:12; 15:17; 25:30; Acts 16:37, 27:38; Lxx - Lev. 14:40). **Ekballo** is used by Mark in Mk 1:34, 39 of Jesus “casting out the demons.” In Mark 3:15 Jesus gave His disciples “authority (the right and the might) to **cast out** the demons.” All of Mark’s uses of **ekballo** - Mk. 1:34; Mk. 1:39; Mk. 1:43; Mk. 3:15; Mk. 3:22; Mk. 3:23; Mk. 5:40; Mk. 6:13; Mk. 7:26; Mk. 9:18; Mk. 9:28; Mk. 9:38; Mk. 9:47; Mk. 11:15; Mk. 12:8; Mk. 16:9; Mk. 16:17;

**Ruler** (758) ([archon](#) from present participle of **archo** = to rule) in context describes Satan as the one who had eminence in a ruling capacity, and exercised authority over the “lower ranked” demons. Mt 9:34 = “But the Pharisees were saying, “He casts out the demons by the **ruler** of the demons.” ” , Lk 11:15 = “He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the **ruler** of the demons.” If Satan is the chief demon the scribes are implying Jesus bows to Beelzebub and serves Satan!

**Demons** (1140) ([daimonion](#) from **daímon** = demon) most often describes demons or evil spirits who have supernatural powers and are neither human nor divine (Mt 7:22). BDAG says **daimonion** is a “transcendent



incorporeal being with status between humans and deities." All used in Mark - Mk. 1:34; Mk. 1:39; Mk. 3:15; Mk. 3:22; Mk. 6:13; Mk. 7:26; Mk. 7:29; Mk. 7:30; Mk. 9:38; Mk. 16:9; Mk. 16:17;

**Alan Carr** introduces his message on this section - Have you ever been misunderstood? Have you ever been misrepresented? Has anyone ever taken your words and motives and twisted them around and used them against you? If you live long enough in this world you are going to face that kind of a personal attack. I can remember an instance in another church when a certain group in that church took my preaching tapes and listened to them to find words and phrases they disagreed with. These disagreeable sayings were brought up in a business meeting and used to attack me personally. It hurt at the time, but it was a good lesson to me. It served to remind me that God's servants will be attacked. It also reminded me to think about my words before I say them because I might be called on to give an account of them. The earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus was surrounded by constant controversy. Nearly everyone He met misunderstood Him and what He came to this world to do. Nearly everyone was guilty of misrepresenting His words and His works. The things He did and said in love were used to attack Him in hate!

## WHO WAS BEELZEBUB?

Probably more accurately "Who **IS** Beelzebub?" because He is still roaming about on the earth and walking around on it wreaking havoc (Job 1:7).

**Answer:** Beelzebub is the Greek form of the name Baal-zebub, a pagan Philistine god worshiped in the ancient Philistine city of Ekron during the Old Testament times. It is a term signifying "the lord of flies" (2 Kings 1:2). Archaeological excavations at ancient Philistine sites have uncovered golden images of flies. After the time of the Philistines, the Jews changed the name to "Beelzeboul," as used in the Greek New Testament, meaning "lord of dung." This name referenced the god of the fly that was worshiped to obtain deliverance from the injuries of that insect. Some biblical scholars believe Beelzebub was also known as the "god of filth," which later became a name of bitter scorn in the mouth of the Pharisees. As a result, Beelzebub was a particularly contemptible deity, and his name was used by the Jews as an epithet for Satan.

The word has two parts: Baal, which was the name for the Canaanite fertility gods in the Old Testament; and Zebul, which means "exalted dwelling." Putting the two parts together, they formed a name for Satan himself, the prince of demons. This term was first used by the Pharisees in describing Jesus in Matthew 10:24-25. Earlier, they had accused Jesus of casting "out the demons by the ruler of the demons" (Matthew 9:34), referencing Beelzebub (Mark 3:22; Matthew 12:24).

In Matthew 12:22 Jesus healed a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute. As a result, "all the people were astonished and said, 'Could this be the Son of David?' But when the Pharisees heard this, they denied that this could be a work of God, but instead declared: 'It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons'" (Matthew 12:23-24).

It is remarkable that the Pharisees reacted to this incredible miracle by Jesus in the very opposite way of that of the multitude, who realized that Jesus was from God. In fact, it was an admission by the Pharisees that Jesus worked miracles or performed deeds beyond the reach of any unaided human power, but they attributed this power to Beelzebub instead of God. Actually, they should have known better: the devil cannot do works of pure goodness. However, in their self-absorbed pride, these Pharisees knew that, if the teachings of Jesus should prevail among the people, their influence over them was at an end. So, the miracle they did not deny, but instead attributed it to an infernal power, "Beelzebub the prince of the demons."

The greater question is this: what relevance does this have to us as Christians today? In Matthew 10, Jesus provides us with the very essence of what it means to be His disciple. Here we learn that He is about to send out His apostles into the world to preach the gospel (Matthew 10:7). He gives them specific instructions on what to do and what not to do. He warns them, "Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. . . . All men will hate you because of me" (Matthew 10:17, 22). Then He adds, "A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebub, how much more the members of his household!" (Matthew 10:24-25).

The point Jesus is making to us today is that, if people are calling Him Satan, as did the Pharisees of His time, they would surely call His disciples the same. In John chapter 15 Jesus declares, "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me" (John 15:18-21). ([Got Questions](#) - highly recommended conservative, Biblically based resource)

## TITLE - ATTACKED WITH FALSE ACCUSATION

### I. THE ACCUSATION OF THE SCRIBES (Mark 3:22)

A. **THE ASSOCIATION SUSPECTED** - And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub.

B. **THE ASSUMPTION MADE** - and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils

II. **THE ADMONITION OF JESUS** - (Mark 3:23-30) - As we continue in our study, Mark recorded Jesus' public rebuke of the scribes regarding their blasphemous accusation. Consider:

A. **THE CHALLENGE** - (Mark 3:23) - And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, **How can Satan cast out Satan?**

B. **THE CONSIDERATION** - (Mark 3:24-26)

C. **THE CONFLICT** (Mark 3:27)

D. **THE CONCERN** (Mark 3:28-30) - In an act of grace, Jesus warned the scribes of the danger of such accusation while revealing the opportunity for repentance and salvation.

- THE PARDONABLE SIN - Mk 3:28
- THE UNPARDONABLE SIN - Mk 3:29

**CONCLUSION** - No doubt we too have faced similar situations in life. We have dealt with false accusations and been misrepresented. Our rejection hurts, but it doesn't have eternal implications for the offender. With Christ, it does however. I am thankful I was given the opportunity for salvation and responded in repentance and faith. If you are saved today, rejoice in your salvation. If the Lord has revealed your need for salvation, He is drawing you to Him in grace. I wouldn't reject His offer. Come while there is time and the good Holy Spirit is leading you ( )

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**David Thompson** - Henry Caswall was a protestant theologian back in the days of [Joseph Smith](#), the immoral heretic and founder of [Mormonism](#). Mr. Caswall was a professor of theology in the 1800's when Joseph Smith was making his fraudulent claims. One of the false claims that Smith made was that he was some Biblical scholar and linguist, who was able to translate languages. So on April 19, 1842, Mr. Caswall took Smith an old copy of a Greek text of the Psalms and asked him to identify it. Anyone who knew Greek would easily be able to do this and Smith was claiming he knew Greek. Not knowing that Mr. Caswall was very skilled in Biblical languages, Smith said it was some old Egyptian writing. Joseph Smith was shown to be what he was, **a religious con artist liar**. There will literally be thousands of people who will end up in hell forever because they followed the lies and the deceptions of Joseph Smith. There will be thousands of people who will end up in hell because they follow the lies and deceptions of [Muhammad](#). There will be thousands of people who will end up in hell because they will follow the lies and deceptions of [Charles Russell](#) ([Jehovah's Witnesses](#)). There will be thousands of people who will end up in hell because they follow the lies and deceptions of some Pope from Rome. These will be people who would rather believe in themselves and their religious systems rather than Jesus Christ. **FALSE RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS TRY TO GET PEOPLE TO FOLLOW THEM BY DEMEANING AND DISCREDITING THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST, AND THOSE WHO FOLLOW THEM WILL END UP IN ETERNAL HELL.** They cannot deny Jesus Christ was actually here on earth, but what they can do is twist the truth about Him in an attempt to get people to believe what isn't accurate.

**Mark 3:23 And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan?"**

Wuest - And having called them to Him, He was speaking to them in parables; How is it possible for Satan to cast out Satan?

NET Mark 3:23 So he called them and spoke to them in parables: "How can Satan cast out Satan?"

GNT Mark 3:23 κα προσκαλεσ μενος α το ς ν παραβολα ς λεγεν α το ς, Π ς δ ναται Σαταν ς Σαταν ν κβ λλειν;

NLT Mark 3:23 Jesus called them over and responded with an illustration. "How can Satan cast out Satan?" he asked.

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

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

NIV Mark 3:23 So Jesus called them and spoke to them in parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan?"

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

CSB Mark 3:23 So He summoned them and spoke to them in parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan?"

NKJ Mark 3:23 So He called them to Himself and said to them in parables: "How can Satan cast out Satan?"

NRS Mark 3:23 And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan?"

YLT Mark 3:23 And, having called them near, in similes he said to them, 'How is the Adversary able to cast out the Adversary?"

NAB Mark 3:23 Summoning them, he began to speak to them in parables, "How can Satan drive out Satan?"

NJB Mark 3:23 So he called them to him and spoke to them in parables,

GWN Mark 3:23 Jesus called them together and used this illustration: "How can Satan force out Satan?"

BBE Mark 3:23 And turning to them, he said to them in the form of a story, How is it possible for Satan to put out Satan?"

- **in parables:** Ps 49:4 Mt 13:34
- **How can Satan:** Mt 12:25-30 Lu 11:17-23
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE ABSURDITY OF THE ACCUSATION

**And He called them to Himself** - **Them** refers to His accusers the **scribes** (most of who were Pharisees) who were repeatedly making the accusations recorded in Mt 12:24+. **He called them** ([proskaleo](#)) is phrase was was a legal technical term like our "[summons](#)" a writ issued by authority of law; usually compels the defendant's attendance in a civil suit; failure to appear results in a default judgment against the defendant. The scribes knew the nuances of proskaleo and you have to believe they became nervous when **He called them to Himself!** He had to call them to Himself because they were not making the charges directly to Jesus, as Mt 12:25+ indicates recording that Jesus knew "**their thoughts.**" These sinister scoundrels were making the charges behind his back! And yet He was fully aware of their plot to slander and discredit His ministry and thus He **called them to Himself.** It was a "divine court order" calling for a confrontation with the Judge of the Universe (which they will discover at their judgement - cf Jn 5:22, 27, Rev 20:11-15)!

**And began speaking to them in parables** - Jesus proceeds to show the absurdity of their accusation by using parables which were commonly used in Jewish teaching. "A **parable** is a concrete illustration thrown alongside of a truth to explain it. Jesus used figures here, kingdom, house, plundering the house of a strong man." (Wuest) The use of **Parables** was Jesus' "picturesque and proverb-like manner of reply. His answer was parabolic in that He used the principle of likeness between well-known facts and the truths to be conveyed." (Hiebert) A simple way to view a parable is that one takes something that is understood to explain something that is not understood.

**Parables** ([3850](#))([parabole](#) from **para** = beside, near + **ballo** = throw, cast; English "parable") is literally a throwing beside or placing of one thing by the side of another (juxtaposition as of ships in battle in classic Greek). The metaphorical meaning is to place or lay something besides something else for the purpose of comparison. (Mt 24:32, Mk 13:28, Mk 3:23, Lk 14:7). **John MacArthur** says **parabole** is "A spiritual or moral truth would often be expressed by laying it alongside, so to speak, a physical example that could be more easily understood. A common, observable object or practice was used to illustrate a subjective truth or principle. That which was well known was laid alongside that which was not known or understood in order to explain it. The known elucidated the unknown....In the series of parables in chapter 13, Jesus uses such familiar figures as soil, seed, birds, thorns, rocks, sun, wheat, tares, mustard seed, leaven, hidden treasure, and a pearl. But in these particular parables themselves the truth is not made clear, because the basic story tells nothing but the literal account, without presenting the moral or spiritual truth. It was only to His disciples that Jesus explained what the soil, the seed, the thorns, and the other figures represent. And an unexplained parable was nothing but an impossible riddle, whose meaning could only be guessed at." (MNTC- Mt).

**How can Satan cast out Satan?** - Jesus begins with a [counter-question](#) which is recorded only by Mark. His question is in a sense a [reductio ad absurdum](#), an argument that attempts to establish a claim by showing that the opposite scenario would lead to

absurdity. The fact is Satan cannot cast out Satan. Satan would love to control every person in the world. The last thing he would do would be to come out of someone he did not have to come out of. That is obvious from the glimpses we get of demon-possessed people in this book. Those demons did not want to leave the people they possessed. Satan would not cast out Satan. Notice that in using the specific name **Satan**, Jesus is identifying Beelzebul as Satan. Stated another way, Jesus acknowledges the existence of a personal being known as **Satan**. Notice the "**How?**" which emphasizes the logical absurdity of Satan casting himself out. The idea is "**How** is this possible?" Jesus' point is that it is impossible! This would be the equivalent of spiritual suicide of Satan.

**Wuest** - Our Lord's argument is briefly;—Granted for the moment that spirits are cast out by the aid of other spirits. More is needed in the latter than superior strength. There must be a motive, and Satan would have no desire to operate against himself.

**A B Bruce** - The argument consists of a triple movement of thought. 1. The absurdity of the theory is broadly asserted. 2. The principle on which the theory is wrecked is set forth in concrete form. 3. The principle is applied to the case in hand.— π ς δύναται, etc., how can Satan cast out Satan? It is not a question of *power*, but of motive, what interest can he have? A stronger spirit casting out a weaker one of the same kind? ([Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

**Satan** (4567) ([satanas](#) transliterated from Hebrew [Satan](#) - see [07854](#) and Aramaic *sātānā*) literally means **Adversary**, the evil antagonist who offers opposition, hostility, resentment, etc. An enemy who that contends with, opposes, resists. An **adversary** is one who hates or opposes another person and tries to harm them or stop them from doing something because of hatred and malice. **Satan** is the [inveterate](#), [implacable](#), relentless, ruthless, remorseless, merciless, heartless, pitiless, cruel, hard, harsh, hardened, incorrigible, dedicated enemy of God and man. Mark's uses of Satan - Mk. 1:13; Mk. 3:23; Mk. 3:26; Mk. 4:15; Mk. 8:33

**Cast out** ([present tense](#)) (1544) see notes above on [ekballō](#)

#### Mark 3:24 "If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand."

NET Mark 3:24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom will not be able to stand.

GNT Mark 3:24 καὶ ἡ βασιλεῖα φραγδαῖσθαι, οὐ δύναται σταθῆναι βασιλεῖα κεκολλημένη.

NLT Mark 3:24 "A kingdom divided by civil war will collapse.

KJV Mark 3:24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

ESV Mark 3:24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

NIV Mark 3:24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

ASV Mark 3:24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

CSB Mark 3:24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

NKJ Mark 3:24 "If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

NRS Mark 3:24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

YLT Mark 3:24 and if a kingdom against itself be divided, that kingdom cannot be made to stand;

NAB Mark 3:24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

NJB Mark 3:24 'How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot last.

GWN Mark 3:24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot last.

BBE Mark 3:24 If there is division in a kingdom, that kingdom will come to destruction;

- Judges 9:23-57 12:1-6 2Sa 20:1,6 1Ki 12:16-20 Isa 9:20,21 19:2,3 Eze 37:22 Zec 11:14 Joh 17:21 1Co 1:10-13 Eph 4:3-6
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### JESUS' FIRST ILLUSTRATION OF THE ABSURDITY OF THE SCRIBES' CHARGE

**If** - The "if" clause is third class conditional (see [Conditional statements](#)), which speaks of future probability. Most of the time the kingdom would not stand, but there could be exceptions to the rule. After beginning with the logical absurdity in Mark 3:23, Jesus

now gives two logical realities, axioms or truisms (here and next verse).

**A kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand**- Jesus' argument is that He had cast out demons. If He were doing it by Satan's power, then Satan would be working against himself, which is absurd. That would be a "civil war" between the demon forces and Satan's kingdom would be destroyed! Here He "throws down" a known truth (para = beside + ballo = throw) that a **kingdom cannot stand** if it opposes **itself**. The obvious conclusion is that if Satan is divided against himself or working against himself, his kingdom could not stand but would be destroyed. Satan clearly would not work to destroy his own kingdom. Some writers suggest that Jesus' listeners may have been reminded of how Israel and Judah split into two parts after the death of Solomon. (1 Ki 11:11-14)

**THOUGHT** - "We are living in a time when there is much talk about division. We have some political divisions in Washington. We have major divisions in morality. We have talk of some racial divisions. Any divided kingdom will not stand. Ultimately what you have in a divided kingdom is civil war." (David Thompson)

**Bruce** says 'Satan may be wicked, He says in effect, but he is not a fool.'

**Spurgeon** adds "'Whatever fault the devils have, they are not at strife with each other; that fault is reserved for the servants of a better Master.'

In Luke 11:19+ (MacArthur thinks this was a different occasion but others think it is a parallel to Mark and Matthew) Jesus added one other piece of logic not found in the events recorded by Mark 3 and Matthew 12 - "And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? So they will be your judges." Here Jesus is saying that He was aware of so-called Jewish exorcists. Were His accusers accusing them also?

### Mark 3:25 "If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.

NET Mark 3:25 If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.

GNT Mark 3:25 καὶ ἡ οἰκία φραγμένη ἑαυτῆς, οὐ δύναται ἵκεν ἵστασθαι.

NLT Mark 3:25 Similarly, a family splintered by feuding will fall apart.

KJV Mark 3:25 And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

ESV Mark 3:25 And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.

NIV Mark 3:25 If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

ASV Mark 3:25 And if a house be divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.

CSB Mark 3:25 If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

NKJ Mark 3:25 "And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

NRS Mark 3:25 And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.

YLT Mark 3:25 and if a house against itself be divided, that house cannot be made to stand;

NAB Mark 3:25 And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.

NJB Mark 3:25 And if a household is divided against itself, that household can never last.

GWN Mark 3:25 And if a household is divided against itself, that household will not last.

BBE Mark 3:25 And if there is division in a house, that house will come to destruction;

- Ge 13:7,8 37:4 Ps 133:1 Ga 5:15 Jas 3:16
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JESUS' SECOND ILLUSTRATION OF THE ABSURDITY OF THE SCRIBES' CHARGE

**If** - The "if" clause is third class conditional ([Conditional statements](#)), which speaks of future probability. Most of the time the house would not stand, but there could be exceptions to the rule.

**A house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand-** As with the situation with a kingdom, the same principle applies to a house. As the NLT paraphrases it "Similarly, a family splintered by feuding will fall apart."

**THOUGHT** - Jesus' statement has practical implications. In America homes are divided because one of the spouses has broken their marriage covenant and those homes are not able to stand, with dire consequences for all the family members. The same could be said for a church when disunity begins to infiltrate the body and members are not "being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph 4:3+) Sadly too often such disunity results in a church split! And guess who is behind the scenes causing and cheering on the division? The devil, for even his name ([diabolos](#) - dia - through + ballo - throw) speaks of his activity to "throw between," or come between, whether it be a husband and wife or a church. He comes to destroy relationships just as he did in the perfect environment in the Garden of Eden, bringing division between Adam and Eve! His methods have not changed!

### Mark 3:26 "If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished!"

NET Mark 3:26 And if Satan rises against himself and is divided, he is not able to stand and his end has come.

GNT Mark 3:26 κα ε Σαταν ς ν στη φ αυτ ν κα μερ σθη, ο δ ναται στ ναι λλ τ λος χει.

NLT Mark 3:26 And if Satan is divided and fights against himself, how can he stand? He would never survive.

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

ESV Mark 3:26 And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end.

NIV Mark 3:26 And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come.

ASV Mark 3:26 And if Satan hath risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

CSB Mark 3:26 And if Satan rebels against himself and is divided, he cannot stand but is finished!

NKJ Mark 3:26 "And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end.

NRS Mark 3:26 And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come.

YLT Mark 3:26 and if the Adversary did rise against himself, and hath been divided, he cannot be made to stand, but hath an end.

NAB Mark 3:26 And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand; that is the end of him.

NJB Mark 3:26 Now if Satan has rebelled against himself and is divided, he cannot last either -- it is the end of him.

GWN Mark 3:26 So if Satan rebels against himself and is divided, he cannot last. That will be the end of him.

BBE Mark 3:26 And if Satan is at war with himself, and there is division in him, he will not keep his place but will come to an end.

**If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided** - Jesus has just given two illustrations of division resulting in fall of a kingdom and a home. Think about this. If Satan were empowering Jesus' to cast out demons, then Satan is in essence casting out demons and he would be divided **against Himself** and would defeat his own purpose! Satan would never act contrary to his own interests. Quite to the contrary, he wants to destroy the work of God, not his own evil, destructive works.

**Stedman** - That is clear argument, isn't it? Satan, Jesus suggests, is clever and resourceful. He would never oppose himself by using Jesus to cast out demons. That would create anarchy in the underworld. It would polarize his whole kingdom and create division and strife among his minions, and Satan would never permit that. He rules by fear. The Satanic kingdom knows nothing of love or loyalty. It is fear, abject terror, which controls it. Satan would never have permitted this kind of revolutionary activity within his kingdom. Jesus knows this and points it out to the scribes. And he says, "No, something else has happened." ([False Forces Mark 3:7-35](#))

**Hiebert** explains this is "the climax of the refuting illustrations. The two verbs, in the aorist tense ("rose up" and "was divided"), are viewed as asserting past realities. On the basis of their logic, Satan had actually risen up against himself, and he and his kingdom had become a divided force." (Ibid)

**He cannot stand - Cannot** (ou = absolute negation + [dunamai](#) = to be able) identifies this as an impossibility! **Hiebert** adds that the assumption of the scribes "means that Satan is under a standing inability to be the head of the kingdom of evil."

**A B Bruce** sums it up - Mark 3:24-25 set forth the principle or *rationale* embodied in two illustrations. The theory in question is futile because it involves suicidal action, which is not gratuitously to be imputed to any rational agents, to a kingdom (Mark 3:24), to a house (Mark 3:25), and *therefore* not to Satan (Mark 3:26)." ([Mark 3 Commentary](#))

**But he is finished** - Or as we might say "It's over!" **NLT** says "He would never survive." Only Mark has this statement which if Satan were divided against himself, ultimately he was doomed as ruler of the demonic world. Jesus' point is that if the charge by the scribes was true, then Satan would be fighting against himself, but in casting out demons, Jesus had clearly demonstrated His opposition to and omnipotence over Satan's realm.

**John MacArthur** - Jesus' point was obvious: though the kingdom of darkness is inherently chaotic and disorderly, the devil does not deploy his agents to fight against each other. The fact that Jesus spent His earthly ministry exposing, confronting, rebuking, and casting out demons (cf. Matt. 8:29; 10:1; 12:22; Mark 3:11; 9:29; Luke 8:2; 11:14) provided self-evident proof that He was not empowered by Satan. Everything Jesus did, from His healing miracles to His gospel preaching, was opposed to Satan's interests—since the very reason He came was to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8; cf. Luke 10:18). Obviously, Satan never would have authorized or empowered such a cataclysmic attack on his own kingdom. For the Pharisees and scribes to make that claim was ridiculous. (MNTC- Mark)

**Mark 3:27 "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.**

NET Mark 3:27 But no one is able to enter a strong man's house and steal his property unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can thoroughly plunder his house.

GNT Mark 3:27 ἄλλο δὲ ναταὶ οὐδεὶς ἐστὶν ὁ κἀν τὸ σχυρὸ ἐσελθὲν τ σκεῆ αὐτοῦ διαρπῆσαι, ἢ μὲν πρὸς τὸν σχυρὸν δῶσ, καὶ τότε τὸ κἀν αὐτὸ διαρπῆσει.

NLT Mark 3:27 Let me illustrate this further. Who is powerful enough to enter the house of a strong man like Satan and plunder his goods? Only someone even stronger-- someone who could tie him up and then plunder his house.

KJV 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.

ESV Mark 3:27 But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.

NIV Mark 3:27 In fact, no one can enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can rob his house.

ASV Mark 3:27 But no one can enter into the house of the strong man, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

CSB Mark 3:27 "On the other hand, no one can enter a strong man's house and rob his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he will rob his house.

NKJ Mark 3:27 "No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And then he will plunder his house.

NRS Mark 3:27 But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

YLT Mark 3:27 'No one is able the vessels of the strong man -- having entered into his house -- to spoil, if first he may not bind the strong man, and then his house he will spoil.

NAB Mark 3:27 But no one can enter a strong man's house to plunder his property unless he first ties up the

strong man. Then he can plunder his house.

NJB Mark 3:27 But no one can make his way into a strong man's house and plunder his property unless he has first tied up the strong man. Only then can he plunder his house.

GWN Mark 3:27 "No one can go into a strong man's house and steal his property. First he must tie up the strong man. Then he can go through the strong man's house and steal his property.

- Ge 3:15 Isa 27:1 49:24-26 53:12 61:1 Mt 12:29 Lu 10:17-20 Lu 11:21-23 Joh 12:31 Ro 16:20 Eph 6:10-13 Col 2:15 Heb 2:14 1Jn 3:8 4:4 Rev 12:7-9 20:1-3
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JESUS HAD POWER OVER THE STRONG MAN!

**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** - If you want to take the property of someone, you must overpower the owner (**the strong man's house**).

In the present context, Jesus is identifying Satan as the **strong man** and clearly implying that He is the stronger Savior! And what does Jesus say the one does who **binds the strong man**? Jesus is indicating He binds Satan and then plunders his possessions, in context by casting demons out of men who are possessed by those demons and in a sense who are "possessions" or **property** of Satan. This "**property**" (people) was held in bondage by Satan's demons. When Jesus cast out demons He liberated once and for all this individual free from Satan's dominion. In the case of the many exorcisms He performed in Israel, the casting out of the demons does not indicate that they became believers but at least they were not in bondage to Satan to the same degree as when they were demon possessed.

**Stedman** - This is what has happened. Jesus is the stronger man, and has entered the house of Satan and bound him. Today we frequently hear about people who go around "binding Satan." But I submit that this is totally unnecessary. There is only One who can bind the devil. And he has already done it. Jesus bound the devil even in the days of his ministry and thus made it possible for himself to cast out these unclean spirits and to plunder the house of Satan and release those he had held captive for so long -- humanity. This is the explanation of what has happened. So today we don't need to go about binding the devil. We may properly exercise the authority to cast out evil spirits. But it is because the devil is already bound that we have that possibility at all. And it is only One who has made that possible -- the Lord Jesus himself. ([False Forces Mark 3:7-35](#))

**Hiebert** has an interesting note on **will plunder** - Jesus established His mastery over the Devil by His victory in the wilderness temptation, but the future tense will spoil, "**will plunder**," looks forward to the coming full overthrow of Satan and his kingdom. Satan is already a defeated foe, but his final immobilization awaits the open establishment of Christ's kingdom in visible manifestation at His return (cf Rev 20:1-3+). (Ibid)

**THOUGHT** - There is an application to our day. All men and women are born in Adam and thus are born slaves of sin (Ro 5:12+, Ro 6:16-19, 20+) and all are subjects of the kingdom of darkness and the "king" of that kingdom Satan (Eph 2:2+). As Jesus declared to Paul "(I, JESUS, AM) rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes (cf 2 Cor 4:4+) so that they may turn **from darkness to light** and from the **dominion (exousia - THE RIGHT AND THE MIGHT) of Satan to God**, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.' (Acts 26:17-18+) As Jesus emphasized in John 8 "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free ([eleutheroo](#))....So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." (Jn 8:31-32, 36). Free of fear of Satan. Free of being his "**property**." Titus 2:14+ says Jesus "gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for **His own possession (periousios)**, zealous for good deeds." We can now all wear T-shirts with the logo "**PROPERTY OF JESUS!**" The writer of Hebrews reiterates this truth writing "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He **might render powerless (katargeo)** him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives." (Heb 2:14-15+)

**Stevenson** - You cannot delegate more than you already have. Satan cannot delegate more power than he already has. If the power that is being used against Satan is greater than what Satan has himself, then he cannot be the source of that power. This is illustrated by a strong man who is about to be robbed. If you want to rob a strong man, you do not go into his house and ask him to help you. He will throw you out on your ear. You must first tie him up. Here is what Jesus is saying. He has been tying up Satan. He has been robbing the kingdom of Satan.



**Brian Bill** - There is no way that the Lord of Lords is in league with the prince of darkness! Jesus has come to conquer the evil one and to destroy the works of the devil. 1 John 3:8+ is quite clear: "the one who practices (present tense - habitually, as their lifestyle) sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to **destroy (luo) the works of the devil.**" Jesus is clearly stronger than Satan as evidenced Mk 3:11+ "Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would **fall down before Him** and shout, "You are the Son of God!"

**Plunder** (1282)(diarpazo from **dia** = intensifies + **harpazo** = seize) means to thoroughly plunder. Plunder, seize as plunder, snatch away from, carry off as plunder. In the Septuagint it is used of looting which occurred in connection with battle (1 Sa 14:36, 22:1, 2 Ki 17:20) even if there was not much of a fight (Ge 34:27, 29, 2 Ki 7:16. Robbery of individuals in (Jer 21:12; 22:3; Ezek 22:29; Mic 2:2). In the end of this age God says "For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses **plundered**, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city." (Zech 14:2+).

Only 2 uses in NT - Mt 12:29, Mk 2:27. 31 uses in the Septuagint - Gen. 34:27; Gen. 34:29; Deut. 28:29; Jdg. 9:25; Jdg. 21:23; 1 Sam. 14:36; 1 Sam. 23:1; 2 Ki. 7:16; 2 Ki. 17:20; Est. 3:13; Est. 9:10; Est. 9:15; Est. 9:16; Ps. 35:10; Ps. 44:10; Ps. 89:41; Ps. 109:11; Isa. 5:17; Isa. 42:22; Jer. 21:12; Jer. 22:3; Jer. 50:11; Ezek. 7:21; Ezek. 22:29; Dan. 2:5; Amos 3:11; Mic. 2:2; Nah. 2:9; Zeph. 2:4; Zeph. 2:9; Zech. 14:2

**Property** (4632)(skeuos) refers to the goods of the strong man. To what does this **property** refer in the context of identification of the **strong man** as Satan? **MacArthur** says Satan's "**property** consists of both the demonic forces and oppressed human beings under his control." (Ibid) Some say it is believers in their **unregenerate state** were the **property** of Satan and subjects of his kingdom, until God "rescued (**thumai**) us from the domain (**exousia**) of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption (**apolutrosis**) (JESUS PAID THE "RANSOM" PRICE TO SET US FREE - THE BLOOD OF JESUS! SEE 1 Pe 1:18-19+), the forgiveness (**aphesis**)(SENDING AWAY FOREVER) of sins (PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE)." (Col 1:13-14+) Satan continues to cast accusations and charges at us (cf Rev 12:10+, Eph 6:16+) but they won't "stick" because we have been forever clothed in the righteousness of Christ (2 Cor 5:21+, 1 Co 1:30, cf Isa 61:3+).

**A T Robertson** - Picture of Satan plundering the demons, the very tools (**skeuē**) by which he carried on his business. A **reductio ad absurdum**. Jesus is the Conqueror of Satan, not in league with him.

**Mark 3:28 "Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter;**

NET Mark 3:28 I tell you the truth, people will be forgiven for all sins, even all the blasphemies they utter.

GNT Mark 3:28 μ ν λ γ ω μ ν τ ι π ν τ α φ ε θ σ ε τ α ι τ ο ς υ ο ς τ ν ν θ ρ π ω ν τ μ α ρ τ μ α τ α κ α α β λ α σ φ η μ α ι σ α ν β λ α σ φ η μ σ ω σ ι ν ·

NLT Mark 3:28 "I tell you the truth, all sin and blasphemy can be forgiven,

KJV 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:

ESV Mark 3:28 "Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter,

NIV Mark 3:28 I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them.

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

CSB Mark 3:28 I assure you: People will be forgiven for all sins and whatever blasphemies they may blaspheme.

NKJ Mark 3:28 "Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter;

NRS Mark 3:28 "Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter;

YLT Mark 3:28 'Verily I say to you, that all the sins shall be forgiven to the sons of men, and evil speakings

with which they might speak evil,

NAB Mark 3:28 Amen, I say to you, all sins and all blasphemies that people utter will be forgiven them.

NJB Mark 3:28 'In truth I tell you, all human sins will be forgiven, and all the blasphemies ever uttered;

GWN Mark 3:28 "I can guarantee this truth: People will be forgiven for any sin or curse.

BBE Mark 3:28 Truly, I say to you, The sons of men will have forgiveness for all their sins and for all the evil words they say:

- Mt 12:31,32 Lu 12:10 Heb 6:4-8 10:26-31 1Jn 5:16
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Parallel Passage:

Matthew 12:31-32+ - "Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. 32 "Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

## GOOD NEWS FORGIVENESS AVAILABLE

One could subtitle this verse "The Pardonable Sin" (or sins).

**NOTE:** For more detailed discussion of the unpardonable sin see commentary on Matthew 12:31-32.

**Truly** (Verily) - In English the adverb **truly** in simple terms is used to emphasize that what one is saying is true and solemn. It emphasizes sincerity and seriousness of what follows. In Greek the word is our well known "[amen](#)" which we usually put at the end of a prayer to emphasize "so be it." But Jesus always puts it at the beginning of the sentence or clause (see 13 uses below in Mark) to emphasize that what He is saying is valid and binding. **Amen** is a strong affirmation emphasizing what Jesus is going to say is solemn, is true, is absolutely authoritative and is reliable. We might also say that Jesus' use of **Truly** is like a call to the audience to "**Listen up! Pay attention!**"

**Truly** (KJV = Verily) ([281](#)) ([amen](#)) is a solemn formula of affirmation, found only in the Gospels, always on the lips of Jesus and always introduces a statement of solemn import. **Hiebert** adds "**Verily**, literally "**amen**," is a Hebrew word meaning truth or verity. It thus means "surely," "of a truth," and "truly." It is always followed by *I say unto you*, indicating that Jesus is speaking from **His own authority**. The formula thus conveys the thoughts of truthfulness and authority, the equivalent of the Old Testament "*As I live, saith the Lord.*" **By its use here Jesus solemnly guaranteed His antagonists of the truth of the profound assertion He was about to make.**" Mark uses **amen** in earnest admonitions by Jesus. Thus the phrase "**Truly** I say" is found 13 times in Mark's Gospel. Mk. 3:28; Mk. 8:12; Mk. 9:1; Mk. 9:41; Mk. 10:15; Mk. 10:29; Mk. 11:23; Mk. 12:43; Mk. 13:30; Mk. 14:9; Mk. 14:18; Mk. 14:25; Mk. 14:30.

**Lenski** adds this note on "amen" - "Amen" is the seal of verity, and "I say to you" the seal of authority. "Amen" is the transliterated Hebrew word for "truth" or "verity," an adverbial accusative in the Greek which is equal to ληθς, "verily." In Hebrew it appears only at the end of a statement or of an obligation much like our liturgical Amen.

**I say** ([present tense](#) - "I am saying") - The words **I say** indicate that Jesus is not about to quote some other authority but is now going to speak based on His Own authority. It reminds us of the OT phrase "Thus saith the Lord." Indeed, Jesus is Lord and He alone has the right to speak divine revelation on the subject of forgiveness something He had done earlier in the synagogue when He declared to the paralytic "**My son, your sins are forgiven,**" to which the scribes objected saying "He is blaspheming; who can forgive sins but God alone." (Mk 2:5, 7+) He is now going to "turn the tables" on the scribes regarding their blasphemy and unforgiveness!

**To you** - This pronoun **to you** emphasizes that this is a personal message directly addressed to the **scribes**. Recall He had "summoned" as one would do in a legal setting (Mk 3:23) for He is going to declare a verdict against them! It was **to you** or for them, right then and there! Jesus surely has their attention! And given the solemn nature of what He speaks to them, they need to give heed!

**Stedman** - Many have been very frightened by that paragraph, and rightly so. It is a serious word that Jesus uttered. Some have

concluded from it that the **unpardonable sin** is suggesting that Jesus had an unclean spirit, or that the works of God are really the works of the devil. But it is important to notice certain things about this account. Notice that these men had **not yet committed the unpardonable sin** when they said Jesus had an unclean spirit. Otherwise Jesus would never have warned them. By his own words, there is no use warning a man who has committed the **unpardonable sin**; he is beyond help. He cannot be forgiven. So, if that is what these men had done, there would have been no point to his warning. But he did warn them, so it is clear that they had not yet committed it. But they are on the verge of it. They are close to it. "You are very close to committing that sin," Jesus says, "when you ascribe the work of God to the devil." That is very close. **What Jesus warned them against was rejecting the witness of the Holy Spirit. And to whom does the Spirit witness? Well, all through the Scriptures the Holy Spirit is given to witness to the Lord Jesus.** "He has come to bear witness to me" (John 15:26), Jesus said later on to his disciples, "and he will take of the things of mine and make them known unto you," (John 16:14). He came into the world "to convict men of sin," (John 16:8); "because they believe not on me," (John 16:9). All the work of the Holy Spirit is designed to exalt and declare and define the work of Jesus. **So to reject the Holy Spirit, to blaspheme the Holy Spirit, is to reject the Spirit's witness of Christ. That is what these men were close to doing. And it is true, therefore, that if in the ultimate there is a rejection of Christ, then there is no hope, because there is no ground of forgiveness other than faith in the Lord Jesus.** Men are forgiven when they believe in his name -- and on no other basis. If that is set aside; ultimately and finally -- this is not a single act of rejection which is in view, it is a process -- if the heart is resistant and rejects the claims of Jesus as set forth by the Holy Spirit, the result is that there can be no forgiveness. This is Scripture's sharp way of underscoring the fact which Jesus himself declared "No man comes unto the Father but by me," (John 14:6). ([False Forces Mark 3:7-35](#))

**All sins shall be forgiven the sons of men** - First, Jesus gives the good news, but one can imagine they are wincing even at this because again Jesus speaks authoritatively about sins which they think is something only God can do (cf Mk 2:7+). So even with this statement Jesus is alluding to His divinity! And so the good news is emphasized by the little adjective "**all**" which [encompasses](#) sins of **all** types, **all** severity, **all** duration. Not only that but **all** your sins past, present and future! Jesus Christ is prepared to forgive any sin committed by any sinner. If a sinner will believe on Jesus Christ, he will be forgiven of any sin, including even blasphemous sins. All Jesus asks of every soul of man to "**Turn to Me, and be saved**, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other." (Isa 45:22, the verse the Spirit used to [save C H Spurgeon!](#))

**Hiebert** comments **All sins shall be forgiven** is "a magnificent assertion of the wideness of God's forgiving mercy. It is not an assertion of universal forgiveness but a declaration that all classes and kinds of sins may be forgiven (with the one exception subsequently stated). **The sons of men**, an Aramaism found only here in the Gospels, means human beings. Men's sins, their acts of disobedience producing a barrier between them and God, may all be forgiven and removed." (Ibid)

**Paul** himself testified to the total forgiveness available writing "even though I was formerly a **blasphemer** and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. 1:13-14)

In Matthew 12:31+ - "Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people."

**Shall be forgiven** (863)([aphiemi](#) from **apo** = prefix speaks of separation, putting some distance between + **hiemi** = put in motion, send) conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation. Literally [aphiemi](#) means to send from one's self, to forsake, to hurl away, to put away, let alone, disregard, put off. It means "to send away," to remove the sin from the sinner so that he is free of it, and so that the sin can never be found and charged against him before the judgment bar of God. In one secular writing we read "[let the pot drop](#)". From this early literal use the word came to mean leave or let go. [Aphiemi](#) in Mark - Mk. 1:18; Mk. 1:20; Mk. 1:31; Mk. 1:34; Mk. 2:5; Mk. 2:7; Mk. 2:9; Mk. 2:10; Mk. 3:28; Mk. 4:12; Mk. 4:36; Mk. 5:19; Mk. 5:37; Mk. 7:8; Mk. 7:12; Mk. 7:27; Mk. 8:13; Mk. 10:14; Mk. 10:28; Mk. 10:29; Mk. 11:6; Mk. 11:16; Mk. 11:25; Mk. 11:26; Mk. 12:12; Mk. 12:19; Mk. 12:20; Mk. 12:22; Mk. 13:2; Mk. 13:34; Mk. 14:6; Mk. 14:50; Mk. 15:36; Mk. 15:37.

**THOUGHT** - Is there someone regarding whom you need to "drop the pot"? Holding on to a smoldering pot can burn your hand! Unforgiveness is destructive and enslaving! Forgiveness is freeing! Forgive means to set free and the wonderful irony is that the person who forgives (sets free the one that needed forgiveness) is also set free. **D L Moody** said that "Those who say they will forgive but can't forget, simply bury the hatchet but leave the handle out for immediate use!" In case you think you have a sin committed against you that you simply cannot forgive, you need to [ponder the convicting illustration](#) of [Corrie ten Boom](#) and her former [Ravensbruck](#) Nazi guard!

**And whatever blasphemies they utter** - In English **whatever** in this context refers to anything or everything that happens or is available, needed, wanted etc. Another English dictionary says we use "**whatever** to refer to anything or everything of a particular type." Matthew 12:32+ describes blasphemy writing "Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him." **Blasphemies** are one sin singled out because of the following context. Here the idea is any type of blasphemy one might

commit, although He will then give one exception in the next verse. **Hiebert** comments that "To blaspheme is to speak reproachfully, to utter malicious, injurious things. When directed against God, it denotes hostile speech that is derogatory of God's honor and power. God's willingness to forgive is amazing indeed!" (Ibid)

This truth of forgiveness of **all** and **whatever** is found in both testaments...for example read...

"**Come** (command) now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool. (Isaiah 1:18±)

if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses** ([present tense](#) = continually! Hallelujah! aka Progressive Sanctification) us from **ALL (HOW MUCH?)** sin.(1 John 1:7±)

Satan would love for people to think that they are beyond God's forgiveness because of the nature of their specific sins. That is a lie from the pit of Hell! Here Jesus says forgiveness is available for ALL our sins and whatever blasphemy we have uttered (with the single exception below).

**Blasphemies** (slanders)([988](#))(**blasphemia** from **blapto** = hinder, injure, hurt + **pheme** = report, rumor, fame from **phemi** = to speak) means literally **to speak to harm** and to verbal abuse against someone which denotes the very worst type of slander, calculated to hurt or smite the reputation of another. It is speech which seeks to wound someone's reputation by evil reports, evil speaking. In Classical Greek **blasphemia/blasphemeo** represented the strongest expression of personal defamation. 17x in NT - Matt. 12:31; Matt. 15:19; Matt. 26:65; Mk. 3:28; Mk. 7:22; Mk. 14:64; Lk. 5:21; Jn. 10:33; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8; 1 Tim. 6:4; Jude 1:9; Rev. 2:9; Rev. 13:1; Rev. 13:5; Rev. 13:6; Rev. 17:3

### Mark 3:29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"--

NET Mark 3:29 But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, but is guilty of an eternal sin"

GNT Mark 3:29 ς δ ν βλασφημ σ ε ς τ πνε μα τ γιον, ο κ χει φεσιν ε ς τ ν α να, λλ νοχ ς σπιν α ων ου μαρτ ματος.

NLT Mark 3:29 but anyone who blasphemes the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven. This is a sin with eternal consequences."

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

ESV Mark 3:29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"--

NIV Mark 3:29 But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin."

ASV Mark 3:29 but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin:

CSB Mark 3:29 But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"--

NKJ Mark 3:29 "but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation "--

NRS Mark 3:29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"--

YLT Mark 3:29 but whoever may speak evil in regard to the Holy Spirit hath not forgiveness -- to the age, but is in danger of age-during judgment;'

NAB Mark 3:29 But whoever blasphemes against the holy Spirit will never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an everlasting sin."

NJB Mark 3:29 but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, but is guilty of an

eternal sin.'

GWN Mark 3:29 But whoever curses the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven. He is guilty of an everlasting sin."

BBE Mark 3:29 But whoever says evil things against the Holy Spirit will never have forgiveness, but the evil he has done will be with him for ever:

- **but is:** Mk 12:40 Mt 25:46 2Th 1:9 Jude 1:7,13
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Parallel Passage:

Matthew 12:31-32+ - "Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. 32 "Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

Note that some writers think the passage in Luke 11:14-23+ refers to a different occasion.

## **BAD NEWS FORGIVENESS UNAVAILABLE**

**But** - This is a strong **term of contrast**, in this case highlighting that there is bad news. Jesus contrasts the fact that all sins can be forgiven, except the one He now describes which cannot ever be forgiven.

**NOTE:** For more detailed discussion of the unpardonable sin see commentary on Matthew 12:31-32.

Jesus warned them that they were on the verge of becoming so hardened in unbelief that forgiveness was impossible. The "unpardonable sin" for which there is no forgiveness must be seen in context. It does not refer to a single action, but rather to a mindful, willful, defiant attitude of antagonism toward the work of God's Spirit. The Pharisees were manifesting this kind of attitude as evidenced in their attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan.

**Whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness - Never** means absolutely **never** and is underscored by the next clause emphasizing that **never** speaks of eternity.

**H A Ironside** says "Mark 3:28-29 was never intended to torment anxious souls honestly desiring to know Christ, but the verses stand out as a blazing beacon warning of the **danger of persisting in the rejection of the Spirit's testimony of Christ until the seared conscience no longer responds to the gospel message.**" ([Mark 3 Commentary](#))

**Gotquestions** comments that "The **blasphemy against the Holy Spirit**, specific as it was to the Pharisees' situation, cannot be duplicated today. Jesus Christ is not on earth, and no one can personally see Jesus perform a miracle and then attribute that power to Satan instead of the Spirit. **The only unpardonable sin today is that of continued unbelief.** There is no pardon for a person who dies in his rejection of Christ. The Holy Spirit is at work in the world, convicting the unsaved of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8). If a person resists that conviction and remains unrepentant, then he is choosing hell over heaven. "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6), and the object of faith is Jesus (Acts 16:31). There is no forgiveness for someone who dies without faith in Christ." ([Note](#))

**John MacArthur** adds "The eternal sin for them was this, "Jesus is demonic." They went to hell for that. You say, "Wait a minute. What if I said that? Would I go to hell for that?" Not necessarily if you said that without full information. That's a blasphemy that's forgivable. Right? But if that's your final conclusion with full revelation, if that's your response to the full understanding of the Gospel, the full revelation of Christ contained on the pages of Scripture, if that's your final conclusion, you could never be forgiven, because you've had full revelation; you've had full light. What else is there? You can't get anymore. If that's your final conclusion, that's an eternal sin.....If you were there (IN JESUS' DAY IN PALESTINE), and you saw it, and you heard it, and your final conclusion was, "He's demonic," you're damned; you can't be saved, because that's your ultimate conclusion with full revelation. So, **this is unique to those people who had that full revelation**. What about today? Could somebody commit this? Right, they could. Look, we've all been forgiven for rejecting Christ, haven't we? We've all been forgiven for rejecting Christ because we weren't born saved. So, we've all been forgiven for that. But the one that won't be forgiven is the one called the apostate who gets full exposure to the truth, full exposure to the Gospel, full revelation, and makes the final conclusion, **"It's not true; I reject Christ. It's a**

deception.” That’s where you end up after full exposure; that’s what’s called apostasy. That’s unforgivable. ([The Unforgivable Sin](#))

Steven Cole does not completely agree with MacArthur about whether this sin can be committed today (I agree with Cole's analysis which is similar to [Ray Stedman's above](#)) - Some argue that since it specifically involved attributing Jesus’ miracles to Satan, it could only be committed during His life on earth. But it seems to me that the warnings of Scripture are applicable today, even if the exact sense cannot be duplicated. In other words, a person today can repeatedly turn his heart away from the witness of the Holy Spirit to Jesus Christ until he reaches a point where he is hardened beyond remedy. God only knows when a person crosses that line, but the point is, unbelief is nothing to fool around with. If the Holy Spirit has been convicting a person of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and has been showing the person that Jesus Christ is God’s anointed Savior, but the person rejects that witness, then he is on the path toward the unpardonable sin. He is in grave danger that God will withdraw the light he has been given and he will be hardened in unbelief. That is the unpardonable sin. **So the lesson for us is, if the Spirit of God is tugging on your heart, do not resist Him!** If He is drawing you toward Jesus Christ, but the lure of sin is drawing you the other direction, yield to Jesus Christ! Otherwise, you may cross the line and your time of opportunity will be lost forever! Thus Jesus’ words here show us that we must beware of hypocrisy because we will stand before God for eternal judgment. ([Confessing or Denying Christ](#)) (See another well reasoned discussion of the unpardonable sin by Steven Cole)

**THOUGHT** - I tend to agree with Pastor Cole. While one may not be able to duplicate the **exact** sin of the scribes because Jesus is not present and we do not see His miracles, there is still a stern warning in Jesus’ words for all Who reject the wooing of His Spirit! (cf Jn 3:5-8+) To say it another way, if a person repeatedly, habitually rejects the truth that Jesus is the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world (and their sins) (Jn 1:29+), then they have for all intents and purposes **made themselves beyond pardon** because there is no other way to the Father in Heaven than through His Son Jesus Christ (Jn 14:6). One other point to consider is that rejectors in our day in a sense have in a sense very likely witnessed "miracles" performed by Jesus. What do I mean? Of course Jesus is not physically present and they have never seen healings or demons cast out by Him. But if they have friends or relatives who have received Christ as Savior and been made new creatures in Christ (2 Cor 5:17+), then the truth is that they have witnessed "**miracles**," and actually in fact a miracle greater than the casting out of a demon or a temporal healing, as dramatic as that must have been, because the new birth results in eternal "healing" from the sin virus. Also the writer of Hebrews alludes in one sense to an "unpardonable" sin in Hebrews 6 writing

For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, **it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.** 7 For ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; 8 but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned. (Hebrews 6:4-9+)

I realize that Hebrews 6 is a controversial passage but I interpret it as those who were given every opportunity to believe and yet chose to willfully reject the Spirit’s wooing them to Jesus to be their Savior, these individuals have crossed the line (see poem below) and can no longer receive pardon for their sins. They have in essence become "unpardonable." (See MacArthur's explanation toward the bottom of the page of his sermon [The Unforgivable Sin](#))

There is a time we know not when,  
A place we know not where;  
Which marks the destiny of men  
To glory or despair.

There is a line, by us unseen,  
Which crosses every path;  
Which marks the boundary between  
God’s mercy and His wrath.  
—JOSEPH ADDISON ALEXANDER

**Brian Bill** - In short, the unforgivable sin is attributing the mighty miracle working power of Jesus to Satan. The scribes witnessed

undeniable exorcisms and instead of giving glory to the Holy Spirit they claimed that He was possessed by Beelzebub. The blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is accusing Jesus of being demon possessed. **Matt Chandler** puts it: "The blasphemy of the Spirit is the knowledgeable, willful and continued rebellion against the ministry of the Holy Spirit." **Sam Storms** adds, "It is not a careless act but a calloused attitude...it is not mere denial, but determined denial; not mere rejection, but wanton, willful, wicked, wide-eyed rejection." **It's a deliberate refusal of the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.** ([Mark 3:20-30 The Unforgivable Sin](#))

**Blasphemes** (987) (**blasphemeo** from **bláptō** = to hurt, injure, harm + **phémē** from **phēmí** = to speak) literally to speak to harm. The idea of **blasphemeo** is that the words spoken hurt or smite the reputation of another. It means to destroy or discredit another's good name by speaking evil against them.

**Never** (3756) (**ou**) speaks of absolute negation! There is another Greek word "**me**" which is not absolute, but that is not the word Jesus uses!

**Forgiveness** (859) (**aphesis** from **aphiemi** = action which causes separation and is in turn derived from **apo** = from + **hiemi** = put in motion, send) literally means to send away. **Aphesis** refers to a remission as when one remits (pardons, cancels) a debt, or releases them from an obligation. (e.g., "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" Mt 6:12+). The absolute negation absolutely no forgiveness thus this is final and forever (which should be frighten any hearer, but did not budge the scribes for their hearts were so hardened to truth!)

**But** (**alla**) is a term of contrast and here introduces a dramatic contrast, ultimately the contrast between sins which can be forgiven in Mk 3:28 and those which cannot and will damn a person to hell for eternity!

**Is guilty of an eternal sin** - KJV has "But is in danger of eternal damnation." Eternal sin begets eternal punishment!

**Guilty** (liable, subject, deserving) (1777) (**enochos** from **enécho** = to hold in, i.e., to ensnare, to be entangled - Gal 5:1) literally means held fast in (in the grasp, held in, contained in). **Enochos** is primarily a legal term - liable to a charge or action at law or in court, in this context at the Great White Throne judgment!

**David Thompson** makes an interesting comment writing that "there are different **"unpardonable sins"** for different times in the program of God. For example, in Eden, the **"unpardonable sin"** was to eat of the fruit of a tree (ED: IN A SENSE IT WAS "PARDONABLE" BECAUSE OF ANOTHER "TREE" THE CROSS, BUT IT DID RESULT IN EJECTION FROM PARADISE.). In Egypt, the **"unpardonable sin"** was not to put the blood on the doorposts so when the death angel looked at the door he would pass over the house and not kill the residents. In the Tribulation the **"unpardonable sin"** will be to take the mark of the Beast (SEE [BELOW](#)). Now the sin here is one when Jesus was specifically here on earth. The blasphemy of the Holy Spirit was to actually see Jesus Christ performing miracles when He was physically here on earth and making up a lie that said He was doing those miracles by the power of Satan. **When the religious leaders witnessed the work of Jesus Christ and said He was satanic, they were looking at the work of the Holy Spirit and giving allegiance to Satan.** If you were a person who saw Jesus Christ preach and teach and do the things He did by the power of the Holy Spirit, and then you said He did those things because He was satanic, when in fact you know He is not, is a blasphemous sin that will put one straight into hell. Now hell is a horrible, real place graphically described in the Bible: 1) It is a place where people burn with actual unquenchable fire (Mk 9:43; Rev. 20:15); 2) It is a place of black darkness (2 Pet. 2:17; Jude 13; Mt. 22:13); 3) It is a place of conscious torturous pain (Rev. 14:11a); 4) It is a place of constant weeping (Mt. 13:42a; 22:13); 5) It is a place of constant gnashing teeth (Mt. 13:42b; 22:13); 6) It is a place of terrible loneliness (2 Th 1:9b); 7) It is a place where one always burns in fire but never burns up (Mt. 25:46). **Now there is one sin that you can commit now that will put you into hell. It is a sin that will guarantee you end up in hell and that sin is to not believe on Jesus Christ.** This is the unpardonable sin for this age. But come to Christ and all your sin will be forgiven. ([Sermon on Mark 3:22-30](#))

**Tony Garland** speaks about the "unpardonable" aspect of taking the **MARK OF THE BEAST** writing "This (Read Rev 13:8, 16+) is a defining moment for the **Earth Dwellers**., much like the **unpardonable sin** of Jesus' day: "Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and **receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand**, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever, and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and **whoever receives the mark of his name.**" (Rev. 14:9-11+) **Those who choose to worship the beast and take his mark are forever lost.** Even though they have not yet died, they are **irredeemable!**"

[Gotquestions](#) has an excellent summary of the "**Unpardonable Sin**" to which Jesus refers here in Mark and again in Matthew 12:31-32 (the following repeats some of what was stated above, but given the confusion concerning this topic, it bears repetition!) - According to Jesus, the unpardonable or unforgivable sin is unique. It is the one iniquity that will never be forgiven ("never" is the meaning of "either in this age or in the age to come" in Matthew 12:32). The unforgivable sin is blasphemy ("defiant irreverence") of the Holy Spirit in the context of the Spirit's work in the world through Christ. In other words, the particular case of blasphemy seen in Matthew 12 and Mark 3 is unique. The guilty party, a group of Pharisees, had witnessed irrefutable evidence that Jesus was working miracles in the power of the Holy Spirit, yet they claimed that He was possessed by the prince of demons, Beelzebul (Matthew 12:24; Mark 3:30).

The Jewish leaders of Jesus' day committed the unpardonable sin by accusing Jesus Christ (in person, on earth) of being demon-possessed. They had no excuse for such an action. They were not speaking out of ignorance or misunderstanding. The Pharisees knew that Jesus was the Messiah sent by God to save Israel. They knew the prophecies were being fulfilled. They saw Jesus' wonderful works, and they heard His clear presentation of truth. Yet they deliberately chose to deny the truth and slander the Holy Spirit. Standing before the Light of the World, bathed in His glory, they defiantly closed their eyes and became willfully blind. Jesus pronounced that sin to be unforgivable.

The blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, specific as it was to the Pharisees' situation, cannot be duplicated today. Jesus Christ is not on earth, and no one can personally see Jesus perform a miracle and then attribute that power to Satan instead of the Spirit. The only unpardonable sin today is that of continued unbelief. There is no pardon for a person who dies in his rejection of Christ. The Holy Spirit is at work in the world, convicting the unsaved of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8). If a person resists that conviction and remains unrepentant, then he is choosing hell over heaven. "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6), and the object of faith is Jesus (Acts 16:31). There is no forgiveness for someone who dies without faith in Christ.

God has provided for our salvation in His Son (John 3:16). Forgiveness is found exclusively in Jesus (John 14:6). To reject the only Savior is to be left with no means of salvation; to reject the only pardon is, obviously, unpardonable.

**Many people fear they have committed some sin that God cannot or will not forgive, and they feel there is no hope for them, no matter what they do. Satan would like nothing more than to keep people laboring under that misconception.** God gives encouragement to the sinner who is convicted of his sin: "Come near to God and he will come near to you" (James 4:8). "Where sin increased, grace increased all the more" (Romans 5:20). And the testimony of Paul is proof positive that God can and will save anyone who comes to Him in faith (1 Timothy 1:12-17). If you are suffering under a load of guilt today, rest assured that you have not committed the unpardonable sin. God is waiting with open arms. Jesus' promise is that "he is able to save completely those who come to God through him" (Hebrews 7:25). Our Lord will never fail. "Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD himself, is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation" (Isaiah 12:2). (Bolding added)

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**ILLUSTRATION** The unpardonable sin

Parable: There was a man who went to the store to buy the perfect gift for his son's birthday. He finds something that he is sure his son will appreciate, but he does not have enough money to buy it. So he sells some of his possessions and even works overtime at his job until he has enough money to purchase the gift. The big day arrives, and he proudly gives his gift to his son. But the gift is not what the son expected, and he rejects it, calling it "junk." No matter how many times the father offers the gift, the son simply will not receive it. This is a picture of the unpardonable sin. (1 John 4:4). (Osborne - Teaching the Text - Mark)

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**Mark 3:30 because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."**

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NET Mark 3:30 (because they said, "He has an unclean spirit").

GNT Mark 3:30 τι λεγον, Πνε μα κ θαρτον χει.

NLT Mark 3:30 He told them this because they were saying, "He's possessed by an evil spirit."

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

ESV Mark 3:30 for they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."

NIV Mark 3:30 He said this because they were saying, "He has an evil spirit."

ASV Mark 3:30 because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

CSB Mark 3:30 because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."



NKJ Mark 3:30 because they said, "He has an unclean spirit."

NRS Mark 3:30 for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit."

YLT Mark 3:30 because they said, 'He hath an unclean spirit.'

NAB Mark 3:30 For they had said, "He has an unclean spirit."

NJB Mark 3:30 This was because they were saying, 'There is an unclean spirit in him.'

GWN Mark 3:30 Jesus said this because the scribes had said that he had an evil spirit.

BBE Mark 3:30 Because they said, He has an unclean spirit.

- Mk 3:22 Joh 10:20
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## WHY ETERNAL UNFORGIVENESS?

**Because** - This is a critically important term of explanation. It serves to qualify Jesus' warning about blasphemy of the Spirit. Jesus explains what it means to blaspheme the Spirit.

**They were saying, "He has an unclean spirit"** - **Saying** is in the [imperfect tense](#) indicating they were saying this over and over, persisting in their malicious charge! In Mark 3:22+ **saying** is also in the [imperfect tense](#). This is exactly what they scribes were doing! First note that pronoun **He** refers not to the Holy Spirit, but to Jesus. The question then is to whom does **they** refer? Clearly in this context it refers to the **scribes** who had accused Jesus of being possessed by Satan declaring "**He is possessed by Beelzebul.**". Secondly they attributed Jesus' miracles performed while He was physically present on earth to the supernatural power of Satan, declaring "**He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons**" (Mk 3:22+). This is the sin which God will not forgive.

**Hiebert** - By persistently attributing Jesus' act of exorcism, wrought in the power of the Holy Spirit, to the agency of the Devil, the scribes were consciously maligning the Spirit's work. Motivated by their hatred for Jesus, they were willing to stamp as satanic the holy power in which He worked. It was a perversion of moral distinctions, ascribing the manifest work of the Spirit of God to Satan. The tense indicates that it was not so much a single act as an attitude of heart which persisted in rejecting the light by calling good evil and evil good. In such a state, the Holy Spirit can no longer work to produce conviction of sin. Many serious souls have been deeply agitated with the thought that they may have committed this sin. Ryle well observed, "Those who are troubled with fears that they have sinned the unpardonable sin, are the very people who have not sinned it." After noting that Jesus' warning was made to the duly accredited theological leaders of the day, Cranfield remarks, "Those who most particularly should heed the warning of this verse today are the theological teachers and the official leaders of the churches." (Mark Commentary)

**Brian Bill** - Christians cannot commit this sin. If you are truly saved, then you are truly secure. When you believe in Jesus Christ for eternal life, then you have eternal life.<sup>1</sup> John 5:11-12: "And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life." If you worry that you've committed the unforgivable sin, you haven't. If you're mourning and grieving and anxious about sin, it means that the Holy Spirit is active in your life. Satan wants to steal your hope and joy. He wants you to think you've gone too far to be saved. He wants you to swim with shame and to be gutted by guilt. This is a warning to those persisting in unbelief. Perhaps you've been languishing under true guilt. Conviction is a good thing if it leads you to commitment. You are a sinner and if you have not repented and received Jesus Christ, you will not be forgiven. The good news is that God is ready to forgive each and every one of your sins. Don't put off a decision to follow Christ. One could say that the only "*unpardonable sin*" today is that of continued unbelief. If you die in a state of disbelief, your sins will not be forgiven and you will pay the price for them forever in a place of everlasting destruction called hell with the devil and all his demons! ([Mark 3:20-30 The Unforgivable Sin](#))

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### **ILLUSTRATION** The battle against demonic powers

**Nature:** A snake can still bite even after its head has been cut off. Snakes have heat-sensitive pits that are capable of detecting a threatening presence even hours after death. Although Satan has already been defeated, he does not act as if he has been defeated and destroyed. The head of the evil one has already been crushed (Gen. 3:15), but he can still create trouble and turmoil in our lives and in the world. We must heed the warnings of Scripture regarding spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:10–20) and at the same time remember that "the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). (Osborne - Teaching the Text - Mark)

**Mark 3:31 Then His mother and His brothers arrived, and standing outside they sent word to Him and called Him.**

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NET Mark 3:31 Then Jesus' mother and his brothers came. Standing outside, they sent word to him, to summon him.

GNT Mark 3:31 Κα ρχεται μ τηρ α το κα ο δελφο α το κα ξω στ κοντες π στειλαν πρ ς α τ ν καλο ντες α τ ν.

NLT Mark 3:31 Then Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him. They stood outside and sent word for him to come out and talk with them.

KJV Mark 3:31 There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him.

ESV Mark 3:31 And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him.

NIV Mark 3:31 Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him.

ASV Mark 3:31 And there come his mother and his brethren; and, standing without, they sent unto him, calling him.

CSB Mark 3:31 Then His mother and His brothers came, and standing outside, they sent word to Him and called Him.

NKJ Mark 3:31 Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him.

NRS Mark 3:31 Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him.

YLT Mark 3:31 Then come do his brethren and mother, and standing without, they sent unto him, calling him,

NAB Mark 3:31 His mother and his brothers arrived. Standing outside they sent word to him and called him.

NJB Mark 3:31 Now his mother and his brothers arrived and, standing outside, sent in a message asking for him.

GWN Mark 3:31 Then his mother and his brothers arrived. They stood outside and sent someone to ask him to come out.

BBE Mark 3:31 And his mother and brothers came and were outside, and sent for him, requesting to see him.

- Mt 12:46-48 Lu 8:19-21
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Parallel Passages:

Mt 12:46-50 While He was still speaking to the crowds, behold, His mother and brothers were standing outside, seeking to speak to Him. 47Someone said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You." 48But Jesus answered the one who was telling Him and said, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" 49 And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "Behold My mother and My brothers! 50"For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother."

Lk 8:19-21+ And His mother and brothers came to Him, and they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd. 20And it was reported to Him, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wishing to see You." 21 But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."

### INTERRUPTION BY HIS FAMILY

Mark now picks up his description from Mark 3:21+ **"When His own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, "He has lost His senses."**

**Then His mother and His brothers arrived - His own** in Mark 3:21 is now identified as **His mother** Mary and **His brothers** (so much for [Mary's perpetual virginity](#) - a false teaching of Catholicism which is clearly refuted by the Word of God!). His brothers are

named in Mark 6:3+ ("James and Joses and Judas and Simon...His sisters") Joseph's was last mentioned in Lk 2:51+ and his absence in all the Gospels during the ministry of Jesus suggests that he had died.

Jesus family arrived after about a 30 mile trip from Nazareth to Capernaum in order **totake custody of Him**. They were going to "rescue" Jesus by force if necessary, not only rescuing Him from the pressing crowds but rescuing Him from Himself for they feared He had lost His senses by making statements that He was God. Mary of course knew that He was indeed God for the angel had plainly told her "**Behold**, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." (Lk 1:31-33+, cf Lk 2:19+, Lk 2:51+) There is no record that Mary ever wavered in her faith that Jesus was the Son of David, the Son of God, the long expected Messiah. **His brothers** were another story for in the Gospel of John we read "**not even His brothers were believing in Him.**" (John 7:5) Keep the context in mind. **His brothers** had lived with Jesus for 30 years and while He clearly had been a model (perfect - cf Heb 4:15+) child, there is no record of His having performed any miracles until after He had began His public ministry (see John 2:11+). The unbelief of **His brothers** proved to be only temporary for after Jesus' ascension, the brothers joined the disciples in the upper room in Jerusalem Luke recording "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and **Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.**" (Acts 1:14+) His brother James in fact became a leader of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13-35+, Gal 1:19+), and both he (James 1:1+) and Jude (Jude 1:1+) wrote epistles included in the New Testament.

**And standing outside they sent word to Him and called Him** - There is a somewhat ironic picture here - His physical family **standing outside** who for years had been on the "inside" (knowing Him in ways only those who lived with Him 30 years could know) were now on the outside and the crowd and the disciples were on inside, nearer to Jesus than His own family (Mk 3:32). The house as noted in Mk 3:20 was so packed, that Jesus and the disciples could not even eat a meal and certainly His family would not be able to get in. So **they sent word to Him**. They did not make known their attention of taking Him home, but only asked for Him to come outside the house. The text does not state but from other passages pointing to His omniscience, He undoubtedly knew they had come to take over and take Him away.

**Mark 3:32 A crowd was sitting around Him, and they \*said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You."**

NET Mark 3:32 A crowd was sitting around him and they said to him, "Look, your mother and your brothers are outside looking for you."

GNT Mark 3:32 κα κθητο περ α τ ν χλος, κα λ γουσιν α τ , δο μτηρ σου κα ο δελφο σου [κα α δελφα σου] ξω ζητο σ ν σε.

NLT Mark 3:32 There was a crowd sitting around Jesus, and someone said, "Your mother and your brothers are outside asking for you."

KJV Mark 3:32 And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.

ESV Mark 3:32 And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you."

NIV Mark 3:32 A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you."

ASV Mark 3:32 And a multitude was sitting about him; and they say unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.

CSB Mark 3:32 A crowd was sitting around Him and told Him, "Look, Your mother, Your brothers, and Your sisters are outside asking for You."

NKJ Mark 3:32 And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside seeking You."

NRS Mark 3:32 A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you."

YLT Mark 3:32 and a multitude was sitting about him, and they said to him, 'Lo, thy mother and thy brethren without do seek thee.'

NAB Mark 3:32 A crowd seated around him told him, "Your mother and your brothers (and your sisters) are outside asking for you."

NJB Mark 3:32 A crowd was sitting round him at the time the message was passed to him, 'Look, your mother and brothers and sisters are outside asking for you.'

GWN Mark 3:32 The crowd sitting around Jesus told him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside looking for you."

BBE Mark 3:32 And a great number were seated round him; and they said to him, See, your mother and your brothers are outside looking for you.

- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Parallel Passage:

Matthew 12:47+ Someone said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You."

**A crowd was sitting around Him, and they said to Him** - The **crowd** is not pressing in on Him here but is **sitting around** in a circle. **Hiebert** suggests "The people were seated cross-legged on the floor or ground in concentric circles around Jesus. His most intimate disciples would be nearest Him." (Ibid) Mark has **they said to Him** but Matthew 12:47+ identifies a single individual recording "**Someone said to Him**."

**"Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You** - **Behold** ([idou](#)) was used by the speaker gain Jesus' attention to the unusual fact that His family had come to see Him.

**TECHNICAL NOTE** - Many MSS read **"and your sisters"** here after "your brothers" (A D G 700 pm it). However, the pedigree of several of the MSS which lack this phrase is considerable (a B C K L W D Q 1, 13 28 33 565 892 1241 1424 2542 pm lat sy). It seems likely that this phrase was added by an early Western scribe to harmonize this statement with Jesus' response in v. 35. NA(27) has the words in brackets, indicating some doubt as to their authenticity. (NET Note) (**Hiebert** adds sisters "is clearly a scribal addition, an inference drawn from Mk 3:35.")

**Looking for** ([present tense](#))([2212](#))([zeteo](#)) implies giving attention and priority to and deliberately pursuing after. All 10 uses in Mark describe an attempt to find Jesus and gain control over Him. See Mk. 1:37; Mk. 3:32; Mk. 8:11; Mk. 8:12; Mk. 11:18; Mk. 12:12; Mk. 14:1; Mk. 14:11; Mk. 14:55; Mk. 16:6;

#### Mark 3:33 Answering them, He said, "Who are My mother and My brothers?"

NET Mark 3:33 He answered them and said, "Who are my mother and my brothers?"

GNT Mark 3:33 καὶ αποκρίθη εἰς αὐτοὺς λέγων, Τίς στίβη μῆτηρ μου καὶ οἱ δέλφοι [μου];

NLT Mark 3:33 Jesus replied, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?"

KJV Mark 3:33 And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren?

ESV Mark 3:33 And he answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?"

NIV Mark 3:33 "Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked.

ASV Mark 3:33 And he answereth them, and saith, Who is my mother and my brethren?

CSB Mark 3:33 He replied to them, "Who are My mother and My brothers?"

NKJ Mark 3:33 But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?"

NRS Mark 3:33 And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?"

YLT Mark 3:33 And he answered them, saying, 'Who is my mother, or my brethren?'

NAB Mark 3:33 But he said to them in reply, "Who are my mother and (my) brothers?"

NJB Mark 3:33 He replied, 'Who are my mother and my brothers?'

GWN Mark 3:33 He replied to them, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?"

BBE Mark 3:33 And he said in answer, Who are my mother and my brothers?

- **Who:** De 33:9 Lu 2:49 Joh 2:4 2Co 5:16
- **Who are...My brothers** Mk 3:21 Mk 6:3 Joh 7:3-5
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Parallel Passage:

Mt 12:48+ But Jesus answered the one who was telling Him and said, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?"

## THE NEW FAMILY OF GOD

**Answering them** - Not speaking of His family but those seated around Him. His response at first sounds somewhat harsh, but that was not His intent. His intent was to introduce a new concept regarding the family of God. You gotta love Jesus! He redeems every second, every accusation, every misunderstanding, and here and interruption of His teaching to launch into another teaching! O, to live like Jesus so filled with His Spirit that while we have an eye on temporal events we can turn them into teaching on eternal truths!

**John Phillips** makes an interesting point observing that "Now He put an eternity of distance between Himself and His natural family. The distance had always been there, of course, given the extraordinary circumstances of His birth, given who He was and who His Father was, and given the fact that, although He was truly human, He was at the same time God. His natural family had now given Him the opportunity to put an end to the mere family connection." (Exploring Mark)

**He said, "Who are My mother and My brothers?"** - Of course Jesus knew who His mother and brothers were and He certainly did not mean to treat them with disrespect. He is not saying He did not love them for even on the Cross when He "saw His Mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son! Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" From that hour the disciple took her into his own household." (John 19:26-27).

**THOUGHT** - Jesus' hearers must ponder its implications for them: those who assume that they are close to Jesus should think again; those who assume that they are far from him should take hope. The question disquiets the comfortable and encourages the dejected. (James Edwards - PNTC-Mark)

**Hiebert** explains that Jesus' "question was intended to call attention to the fact that, in His work, there were ties that were higher than those of flesh and blood." (Ibid)

**Brooks** - The story about Jesus' family redefines who constitutes his family. Jesus' true family consists of those who respond positively to him rather than those who are physically related to him. The story also suggests that being a part of Jesus' family may require adjusting or even severing relationships with an earthly family. (NAC-Mark)

**NET Note** on His **brothers** - The issue of whether Jesus had **brothers** (siblings) has had a long history in the church. Epiphanius, in the 4th century, argued that Mary was a perpetual virgin and had no offspring other than Jesus. Others argued that these brothers were really cousins. Nothing in the text suggests any of this. See also John 7:3 ("Therefore **His brothers** said to Him...")

**Stedman** - When word was brought in that Jesus' mother and brothers were outside, everybody expected him immediately to go out and see them. But Jesus didn't -- deliberately. Instead he looked around and said these strange words: "Here are my mother and my brothers and sisters. Everyone who does the will of God is closer to me than they." Was he beside himself because he seemingly neglected his family and neglected himself? No, he was simply possessed, and held, by a stronger tie. Dearer even than his own earthly family were those who were his brothers and sisters and his mother in the family of God. Thus he makes clear that there is a primacy of relationship in which those ties that bind us to our brothers and sisters in Christ, and to the Lord Jesus and to God our Father, are stronger and make more imperious demands upon us than those of our own natural family.

#### Related Resource:

- [Did Jesus have brothers and sisters \(siblings\)?](#)

Mark 3:34 Looking about at those who were sitting around Him, He said, '**Behold My mother and My brothers!**

NET Mark 3:34 And looking at those who were sitting around him in a circle, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!"

GNT Mark 3:34 κα περιβλεψ μενος το ς περ α τ ν κ κλ καθημ νους λ γει, δε μ τηρ μου κα ο δελφο μου.

NLT Mark 3:34 Then he looked at those around him and said, "Look, these are my mother and brothers."

KJV Mark 3:34 And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

ESV Mark 3:34 And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!"

NIV Mark 3:34 Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!"

ASV Mark 3:34 And looking round on them that sat round about him, he saith, Behold, my mother and my brethren!

CSB Mark 3:34 And looking about at those who were sitting in a circle around Him, He said, "Here are My mother and My brothers!"

NKJ Mark 3:34 And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers!"

NRS Mark 3:34 And looking at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!"

YLT Mark 3:34 And having looked round in a circle to those sitting about him, he saith, 'Lo, my mother and my brethren!

NAB Mark 3:34 And looking around at those seated in the circle he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers."

NJB Mark 3:34 And looking at those sitting in a circle round him, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers.'

GWN Mark 3:34 Then looking at those who sat in a circle around him, he said, "Look, here are my mother and my brothers."

BBE Mark 3:34 And looking round at those who were seated about him, he said, See, my mother and my brothers!

- **Behold:** Ps 22:22 Song 4:9,10 5:1,2 Mt 12:49,50 25:40-45 28:10 Lu 11:27,28 Joh 20:17 Ro 8:29 Heb 2:11,12
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Parallel Passage:

Mt 12:49+ And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "**Behold** My mother and My brothers!"

### JESUS REDEFINES THE ETERNAL FAMILY

**Looking about at those who were sitting around Him** - Literally "having looked round in a circle to those sitting about him." Edwards refers to this as an "authoritative survey!" (Ibid) One can envision the eyes of Jesus scanning around, making sure He encircled the entire room. His piercing gaze swept the crowd in a circle (not in anger as in Mk 3:5), but with a look of compassion (cf Mt 9:36+) and conviction.

**Looking around** (4017)(**periblepo** from **peri** = around + **blepo** = to look) means literally to look around in various directions and in essence to survey the room. All but one of the 7 NT uses describe Jesus looking around. In the NT **periblepo** is found only in the **middle voice** (reflexive voice) meaning to look round about oneself. This is the same verb Mark used earlier recording "after **looking around** at them with anger." (Mk 3:5+)

**He said, "Behold My mother and My brothers!"** - From the Mt 12:49+ passage it is clear that Jesus is addressing this declaration to His twelve **disciples**. Not everyone sitting in that crowded room was "*related*" to Jesus, but only those who truly believed in Him and in this case it was only the **disciples**. who Jesus identified by "stretching out His hand toward His disciples," and then declaring

“**Behold My mother and My brothers!**” Jesus was saying that now **spiritual** ties between Him and His disciples were far closer than **blood** ties. (Compare [The Oneness of Covenant](#); [Covenant: Oneness Notes](#)).

**THOUGHT** - There are only two kinds of people: those who sit on the inside at Jesus’ feet and those who stand on the outside with false assumptions. Discipleship depends on being in Jesus’ presence and doing God’s will, which are the essential characteristics of apostleship outlined in Mk 3:14–15+ (also Luke 11:27–28+!). (Edwards) **Which kind of person are you?**

**Behold** calls attention to what He is getting ready to say. They need to pay careful attention. This is an important truth. Clearly those in the room were not His actual family. His point was that the only relationship to Him was one’s spiritual relationship not their physical relations. While He does not state that the only way to become spiritually related to Him was by being saved by grace through faith in Him and His Gospel (Eph 2:8-9). John explained that “as many as **received** Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who **believe** (THIS IS WHAT IT MEANS TO RECEIVE HIM) in His Name (HIS NAME EQUATES WITH ALL THAT HE IS, ALL HIS ATTRIBUTES, ETC), who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God (I.E., THIS BIRTH WAS SUPERNATURAL AND WROUGHT BY GOD NOT MEN).” (John 1:12-13+, cf JESUS’ TEACHING ON NEW BIRTH IN Jn 3:3-8+). In his first epistle John wrote “See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.” (1 Jn 3:1+)

**Behold** (2396) (ide is the [aorist imperative](#) of [eido](#) = to see) used as a demonstrative particle to prompt attention = pay attention, and followed by a statement to identify who or what is to be given attention. (1) to focus attention; (a) on a significant participant in a narrative, like behold!; here is (are), this in none other than (Mk 3:34; Jn 1:29); (b) on a significant place ( Mk 16:6); (2) to introduce something for special attention; (a) because it is contrary to the hearer’s expectation there now! take note! look! (Jn 3:26); (b) because it requires the hearer’s response listen! see there! pay attention now! (Mk 15:4)

**Ide** - 28x in 27v - behold (18), lo (1), look (4), see (5) - Matt. 25:20; Matt. 25:22; Matt. 25:25; Matt. 26:65; Mk. 2:24; Mk. 3:34; Mk. 11:21; Mk. 13:1; Mk. 13:21; Mk. 15:4; Mk. 15:35; Mk. 16:6; Jn. 1:29; Jn. 1:36; Jn. 1:47; Jn. 3:26; Jn. 5:14; Jn. 7:26; Jn. 11:3; Jn. 11:36; Jn. 12:19; Jn. 16:29; Jn. 19:4; Jn. 19:14; Jn. 19:26; Jn. 19:27; Gal. 5:2

**Henry Morris** has an interesting comment on Jesus’ call “**Behold My mother.**” - This mild rebuke to Mary did not indicate a lack of love or filial respect on Jesus’ part (John 19:27), but does show that she does not hold priority with Him over other believers in the family of God. (Defender’s Study Bible)

**Robertson** says; “One’s heart goes out to Mary who has to go back home without even seeing her wondrous Son. What did it all mean to her at this hour?”

### Mark 3:35 “For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother.”

NET Mark 3:35 For whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

GNT Mark 3:35 ς [γ ρ] ν ποι σ τ θ λημα το θεο , ο το ς δε λφ ς μου κα δε λφ κα μ τηρ σ τ ν.

NLT Mark 3:35 Anyone who does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother."

KJV Mark 3:35 For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

ESV Mark 3:35 For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother."

NIV Mark 3:35 Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother."

ASV Mark 3:35 For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

CSB Mark 3:35 Whoever does the will of God is My brother and sister and mother."

NKJ Mark 3:35 "For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother."

NRS Mark 3:35 Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

YLT Mark 3:35 for whoever may do the will of God, he is my brother, and my sister, and mother.'

NAB Mark 3:35 (For) whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

NJB Mark 3:35 Anyone who does the will of God, that person is my brother and sister and mother.'

GWN Mark 3:35 Whoever does what God wants is my brother and sister and mother."

BBE Mark 3:35 Whoever does God's pleasure, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

- **does:** Mt 7:21 Joh 7:17 Jas 1:25 1Jn 2:17 3:22,23
- Mark 3 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Parallel Passage:

Mt 12:50+ "For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother."

## THE WONDERFUL WORD "WHOEVER"

While Jesus had stretched out His hand toward the disciples to identify them as His true spiritual kin, Jesus now says that His true eternal spiritual family is not limited to the **Twelve** (minus one).

There is a similar passage in (Luke 8:19-21+) - "And His mother and brothers came to Him, and they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd. 20 And it was reported to Him, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wishing to see You." 21 But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who who **hear** the word of God and **do** ([present tense](#) - as their lifestyle) it." Both Mt 12:46-50 and Mk 3:31-35 place this event, before the parable of the soils, but Luke places it in chapter 8 because it fits the theme of the section of his Gospel, especially underscoring the importance of properly hearing the word.

**For whoever does the will of God**, - Jesus presents a striking contrast with the Scribes who not only **did not do the will of God** but **resisted the will of God** and blasphemed the Holy Spirit. One could misuse this passage to teach [works based salvation](#) (which is of course not genuine salvation), but from many other NT passages, the only one who can do **the will of God** is the one who has been born again, born from above by the Spirit of God (Jn 3:3-8+). The key in this passage is **does the will of God**. In other words Jesus is saying that it is not **profession** of being His disciple that identifies one who is truly spiritually related to Him, but it is active obedience ("**possession**" so to speak). Notice the pronoun **whoever** (KJV - whosoever) which flings open the gates of the Gospel to any and all who would come by grace through faith and enter through those gates into the Kingdom of God! As Paul says "for **WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.**" (Ro 10:13+)

At another time Jesus declared "If anyone is willing to **do** ([present tense](#) - not perfectly but habitually a habit which is enabled by [the Holy Spirit](#)) **His will**, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself." (Jn 7:17)

Jesus' half-brother James echoed Jesus' words declaring "But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty (REMEMBERING THAT GOD'S WILL IS FOUND IN GOD'S WORD), and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an **effectual doer**, this man will be blessed in what he does. (Jas 1:25+)

James also gave a command to his readers which was in the form of a warning - "But **prove** ([present imperative](#) - only possible as we rely on [the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves **doers of the word**, and not merely hearers ([akroates](#)) who delude ([paralogizomai](#) in the [present tense](#) indicating one is continually in a state of spiritual deception, a dangerous place because of the truth of James 4:14+) themselves. (James 1:22+)

**THOUGHT** - As **Martin Luther** once said "The world does not need a definition of **religion** as much as it needs a **demonstration.**" **Oswald Chambers** added that "One step forward in obedience is worth years of study about it." This reminds me of the parishioner who met the preacher at the door after the service and said, "Pastor, that was a wonderful sermon." To which the pastor replied, "Well, that remains to be seen, doesn't it?" This should be our approach, not just to learn it but to live it! How are you doing dear follower of Jesus? Are you doing the will of God? Are you Jesus' brother or sister? Have you been born again? **Superficial hearing** without **Spirit enabled doing** is like the breezes that ripple the surface of the ocean, but do not affect the tides or the gulf stream.

**Being an auditor of the Word is dangerous.**

**Being a doer of the Word is a delight.**

An **auditor** is someone who listens attentively, one who attends a course but doesn't take it for credit. Auditor describes a university student registered for a course without credit and without obligation to do work assigned to the class. To audit a class is to attend it and hear but not to do the prescribed work and so to not receive credit for taking the course. Don't **audit** Jesus' course entitled "How to Obtain Eternal Life!" Take it for credit, eternal credit! (Acts 16:31+).



**Hiebert** comments on the KJV version "**For whosoever shall do the will of God**" - *Shall do* sums up the individual's entire life as united in doing God's will. Not a **profession of discipleship** but **active obedience** establishes the relationship. **Whosoever** indicates that the relationship is not limited to natural ties but is open to all alike. All who are His kin are characterized by their obedience to the Father's will. Such "a ministry of servanthood produces offspring for the 'family of God' (Jn 1:12+) far beyond the number of our blood relatives." (Ibid)

**John Phillips** writes that Jesus opens a "breathtaking door of opportunity to one and all. The natural family was being replaced by the new family. Anybody could become related to Him in a family tie that was nearer and dearer than any forged by natural birth. Natural ties would be swallowed up in spiritual ties. Henceforth, He would regard anyone who had the same relationship with His Father as He had as being in the new family. His relationship to the Father, while here on earth as a Man among men, was one of obedience (Heb. 10:7+). All who were willing to accept the yoke of obedience would be kin to Him! By natural birth, we are "children of disobedience." We are children of Adam, of whom it is written that it was by one man's disobedience that sin entered and death by sin. To become, instead, children of obedience calls for a new birth, a spiritual birth (John 1:11-13+), as the Lord explained to Nicodemus (John 3:3+). The Lord did not elaborate to His listeners on the "how," just on the "what." The principle of obedience, which characterizes the new family and its relationships, is illustrated in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. The moment his eyes were opened, he enthroned Jesus as Lord. He said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6+)." (Exploring Acts)

**Warren Wiersbe** - Our Lord was not suggesting that believers ignore or abandon their families in order to serve God, but only that they put God's will above everything else in life. Our love for God should be so great that our love for family would seem like hatred in comparison (Luke 14:26+). Certainly it is God's will that we care for our families and provide for them (see 1 Ti 5:8), but we must not permit even our dearest loved ones to influence us away from the will of God. When you consider the importance of the family in the Jewish society, you can imagine how radical Christ's words must have sounded to those who heard them. (BEC)

**Grant** writes that "In place of broken family relations, ostracism and persecution, was the close and intimate relation to the Son of God." This quote takes on considerable significance in light of Jesus' later warning - "Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather **division**; for from now on five members in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three. "They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." (Lk 12:51- 53+).

**THOUGHT** - Perhaps you can identify with Jesus words about division in physical families. I can and it is one of my more painful memories as a believer. Jesus' words that we are now forever in His family should provide great consolation for our souls.

**He is My brother and sister and mother** - **He** who? **He** who does the will of God. **He** is the one spiritually related to Jesus. **Clarke** has called this "the adoption of the obedient." One is reminded of the old rock song **We Are Family.**" (the [lyrics](#) are not a bad "Christian song") Notice that two of the the three He mentions are women, so clearly Jesus is emphasizing the rightful place of women in the family of God (cf Gal 3:28+). Some have asked why did Jesus not mention father? While the answer is not completely clear, some have suggested that to Jesus no one but God can be called Father and the absence "may further indicate that the role of father cannot be transferred symbolically to others." (Edwards)

**Hiebert** comments on **brother and sister and mother** - The three terms, brother, sister, mother, used without the articles, are figurative, denoting the spiritual family. All true believers constitute the household of God. Jesus did not add "and father," for in the realm of the spiritual, that term marked a position which no human being could fill. Jesus always used the term Father of the heavenly Father." (Ibid)

**Hendriksen** - Loyalty to one's spiritual family—see Eph. 3:15—should transcend all other loyalties (cf. Luke 9:59-61; 14:26). Observing this rule is also the best service we can render to our earthly family.

In the book of Hebrews we read of this new spiritual family - "For both He who sanctifies (CHRIST AND HIS SPIRIT) and those who are sanctified (ALL WHO BELIEVE) are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to **call them brethren**, 12 saying, "I WILL PROCLAIM YOUR NAME **TO MY BRETHREN**, IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE." 13 And again, "I WILL PUT MY TRUST IN HIM." And again, "BEHOLD, I AND **THE CHILDREN WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME.**" (Heb 2:11-13+)

**Warren Wiersbe** - How does one enter into the family of God? By means of a new birth, a spiritual birth from above (John 3:1-7; 1 Peter 1:22-25). When the sinner trusts Jesus Christ as Saviour, he experiences this new birth and enters into God's family. He shares God's divine nature (2 Peter 1:3-4) and can call God "Father" (Rom. 8:15-16). This spiritual birth is not something that we accomplish for ourselves, nor can others do it for us (John 1:11-13). It is God's work of grace; all we can do is believe and receive (Eph. 2:8-9). (Ibid)

**THOUGHT** - If “those around Jesus” (Mk 3:21), even the holy family, are placed under question, then Mark places under question all who grow up amid the trappings of Christianity, whether through baptism, Christian homes, confirmation, church attendance, or charitable giving. Anyone can be an insider who sits at Jesus’ feet and does the will of his Father, and no one can be an insider who does not. (Edwards)

### Who Are Christ’s?

1. THEY WHO HEAR John 10:27
2. THEY WHO KNOW HIM John 10:14
3. THEY WHO BELIEVE John 10:26
4. THEY WHO REPENT Gal. 5:24
5. THEY WHO OBEY Mark 3:35; John 15:14
6. THEY WHO FOLLOW HIM John 10:27
7. THEY WHO HAVE HIS SPIRIT Rom. 8:9

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**Question: "Is Jesus our brother?"** (from [Got Questions](#) - highly recommended conservative resource).

**Answer:** The Bible clearly presents Jesus Christ as being one with the Father (John 10:30), a Member of the triune Godhead who set aside His rights as God and took on human flesh to dwell among us (Philippians 2:5–11<sup>+</sup>; Galatians 4:4–5). Therefore, it is right to call Him Savior and Lord (Luke 2:11<sup>+</sup>; 2 Peter 3:18<sup>+</sup>; Jude 1:25<sup>+</sup>). However, a few passages also refer to Jesus as our brother (Hebrews 2:11<sup>+</sup>; Romans 8:29<sup>+</sup>; Mark 3:34). In order to fully understand the concept of Jesus as our brother, let’s look more closely at each of those passages:

Hebrews 2:11<sup>+</sup> says, “For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them **brothers**” (ESV).

The word translated “**brothers**” is the word used for blood relatives, but it also refers to Christians. The generic term brother in Scripture usually also includes sisters. In this passage, the writer of Hebrews is explaining how the perfect God-Man, Jesus, could call imperfect humans His brothers and sisters.

This is more easily understood in terms of physical relationships. Jesus explained spiritual realities by telling Nicodemus that he must be “born again” (John 3:3<sup>+</sup>). He used this physical term because we all understand birth. When two babies have shared the same womb or the same father, they are of the same family. They carry similar DNA, inherited traits, and rights to claim parentage. When a human being is born into the family of God, through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus, God becomes our Father (Romans 8:15<sup>+</sup>; Galatians 4:4–6<sup>+</sup>). This happens through an act of the Holy Spirit who moves into our spirits and begins to change us (2 Corinthians 5:17<sup>+</sup>). God is also the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we share in that relationship as adopted children. Jesus, our brother, purchased with His blood the right for us to call His Father our Father. He is not ashamed to call us brothers because His righteousness is imputed to us, making us blameless as He is blameless (2 Corinthians 5:21<sup>+</sup>).

Romans 8:29<sup>+</sup> says, “Those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.”

Some cults have misinterpreted this verse to mean that Jesus was only the first of God’s many adopted children. However, in the Bible, the word firstborn does not always refer to physical or even spiritual birth; rather, being “firstborn” implies preeminence and position, as it is used in Psalm 89:27: “I will appoint him to be my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth.” In Jeremiah 31:9<sup>+</sup>, God calls the nation of Israel His “firstborn son.” So when Paul uses the term firstborn in Romans 8:29<sup>+</sup>, he means that Jesus holds the preeminent position of “only begotten Son of God” (John 3:16<sup>+</sup>) and that, through His obedience to the Father, Christ made it possible for His holy Father to adopt unholy human beings as His own children. The resurrection of Christ was the first of many to follow, as God gathers His children home (1 Corinthians 15:20–23).

In Mark 3:34–35, Jesus declares that those who follow Him are His brothers: “He looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, ‘Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.’”

The setting for this statement is a house where Jesus was teaching. His physical family had begun to worry about Him, and they had come to take Him home with them. As they waited outside the packed house, messengers informed Jesus of their presence. Seated around Jesus were the disciples. His statement told everyone that, while earthly relationships are important, spiritual relationships are those that last. From then on, He would be focused upon establishing those eternal relationships with everyone who trusted in Him.

It is important to note that the qualifier for being considered Jesus’ brother or sister is not the mental exercise of “believing,” since

many in the room with Jesus in Mark 3 would have considered themselves believers in Him. The qualifier for being a brother or sister of Christ is “doing the will of the Father.” The ultimate will of the Father is that we love, trust, and obey His Son (John 3:36+; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; Romans 2:7–8+). When we believe in our hearts the gospel of Jesus Christ and surrender our lives to His lordship, God adopts us into His family and considers us “joint heirs” with His Son, Jesus (Romans 8:17+; Ro 10:9–10+). Our heavenly Father wants His children to bear a family resemblance, and He gave us the perfect example in our big Brother, Jesus Christ.

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#### **ILLUSTRATION - Christians rejected by their families**

Biography: There are stories throughout church history of Christians who have been persecuted by their families for their faith. Rev. Khalid Mansoor Soomro is a former Muslim from Pakistan who committed to Christianity in 1985. When he shared his conversion story with his parents, he was turned out of his home and no longer accepted as a family member. Khalid had to choose between Jesus and his family. And he chose Jesus. Khalid reflects, “Even though it is not easy and we face many hardships, we feel like Paul, who went through hardships and suffering for the glory of his Savior, who himself suffered during his walk on earth and his time on the cross.” Would you be willing to identify with Jesus if it meant being rejected by your family? Who really is your first love? (Osborne - Teach the Text Commentary - Mark)