

Mark 3:7-35

So last week we looked at several narratives that really focused in on the religious leadership and how Jesus attempted to minister to them. If you remember there were several instances that they took issue with what the Lord was doing and each time Jesus would work towards speaking to them.

First we saw that the Lord and His disciples as they went through life together were having a joyous time and the religious folks were up in arms over this because they fasted and refrained from the joys of life while Jesus went on like every day was a festival...They asked the Lord why He and His disciples didn't fast like they did and like John The Baptist's disciples did and the Lord simply told them that while the bridegroom was with them they couldn't possibly fast...So Jesus used the picture of a wedding and the feast of great joy that took place to respond.

Then after this the Lord was walking through the grainfields with the disciples on the Sabbath and the disciples heaven forbid were taking some heads of grain and rubbing them together separating the chaff from the wheat and enjoying a snack as they walked along and the Pharisees came and accused them of breaking the Sabbath...The Lord then used an example from the old testament that spoke of David to demonstrate that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath...It was like Jesus was saying human necessity superceded the religious rules of the day.

And then finally the Lord was seen in the synagogue on the Sabbath and there was a man with a withered hand and if you remember as humans worked to define what a person could and could not do on

the Sabbath they said that you could preserve a person's life if they were bleeding but you couldn't heal the person and make them whole...that would have to wait until the Sabbath was over...And Jesus if you remember was angered at how hard their hearts were as He asked them which should be done on the Sabbath...to do good or to do evil? He then proceeded to once again demonstrate His authority over the Sabbath as he healed the man.

Now let's see what develops here as we move forward in our study if you look with me at chapter 3 verses 7-8 which say ⁷ **But Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea. And a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judea 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.** Jesus is seen here withdrawing to the sea and I just wonder if Jesus really enjoyed being by the water...Perhaps He found it peaceful and enjoyed the waves and the freshness of the environment but what we see here developing in the life of Jesus is that finding a place of rest was becoming nearly impossible as we are told that there was a great multitude that followed Him...I am thinking this group was in the thousands if not 10's of thousands as we are told people from all over followed after Him.

There were those from Judea and Jerusalem which were both in the southern portion of Israel and then there were those from Idumea which was in the country of Jordan. There were even people that crossed over the Jordan River from the east and then finally those from Tyre and Sidon which was from the north in modern day

Lebanon...If you look at a map you will see that people came from all directions to converge where Jesus was.

You might also notice it says that they were hearing of the many things Jesus was doing...We should keep in mind that there were many in the days of Jesus that only wanted to get near to the Lord to get something from Him not so that they might know Him and hear what He taught...Today it is the same as there are many that only want to receive from the Lord the blessings He offers and have no interest in sitting at His feet learning from Him nor honoring Him with their lives.

I would say I was like this before I came to Christ with my whole heart. When things were tough, I would ask the Lord to work in my life and I would make an awful lot of promises, but when I was out of the situation I would simply go my own way.

Take a look at verses 9-12 which say **⁹So He told His disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for Him because of the multitude, lest they should crush Him. ¹⁰For He healed many, so that as many as had afflictions pressed about Him to touch Him. ¹¹And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, "You are the Son of God." ¹²But He sternly warned them that they should not make Him known.**

So many people were present that we are told Jesus was almost crushed so we should have in our minds that this was like a mob of people that are just smashing their way closer to the Lord and it was really almost a scene of chaos.

Jesus though in wisdom told the disciples that a boat should be kept for Him and this would have given Him just a little space so He could teach and speak to them.

As we read the Gospel of Mark I kind of get this picture in my mind that when Jesus was around that things were kind of out of order and chaotic. The people are seen pressing into Him, reaching out to just touch Him and you can imagine the disciples working to keep the crowds in order.

And we are told that He healed many and that the unclean spirits were coming out of people and they were screaming as they came out that Jesus was Son of God and again Jesus did not let them fully declare who He was.

Remember we said that Jesus did not want the enemy representing him to the world...I would say that makes sense for if I had a company that I ran do you really think I would have a competitor come in and begin to represent what our company was about? I don't think so, they might misrepresent or lead others astray.

And we should remember that while the demons know who Jesus is they certainly do not worship the Lord nor serve Him...They instead look to mislead people and they certainly lie to people to pull them away from the truth and I am sure that they were looking for ways to do just that as they called out who Jesus was while exiting those they inhabited.

Paul the apostle went through something similar in his life while he was in the city of Philippi and you can read about this over in Acts 16 but as Paul was walking through the city there was a girl that was

following him and she was calling out and saying “These men are servants of the most high God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation.” And after a time we see Paul turning and rebuking the demon and the girl was set free...Again Paul knew that even though a demon might speak truth that they certainly shouldn’t be representing the kingdom of God.

I might mention that not to long from now in our text the religious leaders are going to begin to try and put Jesus and the kingdom of Satan on the same team and so if Jesus were to accept the testimony of the demons it would very easily have lent to the statements made by those who said He did these things by the power of Satan.

Now while Jesus refused to let demons represent Him we do know that there were some that were to be His representatives to the world and we learn of this in the next verses if you look at verses 13-15 they say ¹³And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. ¹⁴Then He appointed twelve, ^[a]that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, ¹⁵and to have ^[b]power ^[c]to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons: So Jesus goes up on a mountain and we then see him call 12 to Himself and he appoints them in three separate ways.

First He tells these 12 that they are going to be with Him and we should just understand that the idea behind this is that they were going to spend every minute of every day with Him. These 12 would have a front row seat to the incredible ministry of Jesus. Later on in 1 John 1:1-3 listen to what John stated as He thought of His time with Jesus...It says That which was from the beginning, which we have

heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—³ that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. So these men as they spent time with Jesus would later testify of all they had seen and all the Lord had done and notice that their ministry was so that others might join in to the fellowship that is found in the Father and in Jesus Christ.

The second thing we learn is that they were to be sent out to preach and this was their mission to take what they had learned and spread it to the world. We might remember that when initially called the disciples were told they too would become fishers of men. Today this is one of the primary desires that God has for us as His children and over in 2 Corinthians 5:20 we have the following which says ²⁰ Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. It is amazing that the message we carry has been passed along from generation to generation for some 2,000 years.

And then notice the third thing about their ministry and it was that they would have POWER to heal and to cast out demons. I do want to mention to you that this power and authority does not just stop with these 12... Later on we see Jesus send out 70 with this authority, the early church is seen having authority and then in 1 Corinthians 12 we see the gifts of the Spirit continuing to do this work. We ought not

think that the gifts and the power of God are no longer seen as some might teach.

You and I have a similar calling on our lives. We are to be with Jesus and I can't stress that enough. You need to be with Jesus as you go through life, you need to be learning from Him and listening to Him and seeking after Him all the time. We also need to preach the gospel to the world around us and to keep in mind that we have a message that is the only hope that the world will ever know and we need to walk in the authority that God has given us as His children. We ought not be afraid of the works of the enemy or the darts of the enemy but instead we should put on the armor of God and go to battle in His power.

In verses 16-19 we are going to see who these 12 disciples or apostles as they will become known are and today we are not going to do a deep dive on each of them but I do want to highlight a few things that we find in the text. I want you to understand again that these were not the people that the world would ever choose to lead a worldwide ministry. Perhaps it is for this reason that over in the gospel of Luke 6:12-13 we see the following took place before Jesus called these men...it says the following ¹²**Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. ¹³ And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:**

Now I can't project into what Jesus was praying and what He was saying as He spoke with the Father but I kind of have in my mind that this all night prayer marathon was spent saying "really Father, you

want me to have this guy over here who was a tax collector, or really Father you want me to have four fishermen be the ones closest to me"...and perhaps the hardest was the choosing of Judas Iscariot who would become the betrayer and we are told in John 6:64 that Jesus knew this from the beginning.

Let's read through verses 16-19 here and we'll see who these men were it says ^{16[d]}**Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter; ¹⁷ James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, "Sons of Thunder"; ¹⁸ Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite; ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. And they went into a house.**

Now one thing you will notice as you look through the synoptic gospels and remember when we say that it is referring to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke is that they all have the same person listed first being Peter and they have the same person listed last who is Judas Iscariot.

It's very interesting to just think about the simple fact that both of these men are going to have great failures in their lives as Judas will betray Jesus and Peter will deny ever knowing Jesus...the big difference however between these two is how they reacted after they failed. Judas never shows real repentance in his heart while Peter left weeping and was then reunited to the Lord.

Thomas you might remember is always known as the doubter for he was the one that said he would not believe the Lord had risen from the dead unless he put his hand in the side of the Lord...and Jesus did appear to this man and rebuked him for his unbelief.

Simon the Cananite is listed here and he is also listed as Simon the zealot in the other gospels. It is actually thought that he was a part of a group of political revolutionaries. These men desired that the Jews would have independence from the Romans and they actively sought to bring about disruption by inciting the people to rebellion. If this is the case and he was one of these men guess who would have been one of his greatest enemies? Anyone that was a betrayer of the Jewish people and Matthew the tax collector would have fit the bill for sure.

So it's interesting that Matthew and Simon were now on the same team. It amazes me how Jesus can bring together people that have very different ideals as they go through life...Jesus is the great uniter.

One final comment is that if you do some research on these men and what we have given to us in church history you will find that it is believed that 10 of the 12 listed here would one day die a martyr's death as they served Jesus. Many of them would become missionaries taking the gospel to different parts of the world. John the apostle is thought to be the only one that died of old age but this was not without him suffering on multiple occasions as it is believed he was boiled in oil in an attempt to kill him...He then survived this only to be arrested again and sent to the island of Patmos where he received the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

Just for a bit more information about how these men died church history says the following about how some of them left this world. Peter was eventually crucified upside down and the thought is that he refused to be crucified properly as he felt he was unworthy. Thomas was slain with a sword, Bartholomew was actually skinned alive and

Matthias was beheaded. Each of them died having never denied their faith nor the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

These men would be with Jesus and of course the church was really built on the ministry that would come through their lives...It is amazing that Jesus can take just a few people that are willing and use them to change the course of history and the eternal destination of all who accept the message they will proclaim.

Ok let's move on here if you look at verses 20-21 which say ²⁰**Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.** 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."**

So busy was ministry for Jesus that he could not even eat bread and his own people we are told came to Him to try and talk some sense into Him. That word for His own people is translated numerous ways if you look at different translations...Most from the context we grab later in this chapter assume it was his family that came to Him.

If you think about it Jesus was the son of Joseph and we know that the Lord was a carpenter...We don't know for sure what happened to Joseph but it is believed at this point that he has deceased and so Jesus being the oldest in the family would have been the one to assume the family business. When Jesus suddenly left and then became a person that travelled with no home, with no income, with no wife and no kids the family surely would have raised their eyebrows...and now He is so busy He can't even eat.

We know that the siblings of Jesus before the crucifixion were against Jesus meaning they did not believe in who He was...

Look at verse 22 which says ²²And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, “He has Beelzebub,” and, “By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons.”

So here we have some scribes that had come from Jerusalem and we should just understand again that it was the duty of the religious leaders to keep things in check when it came to spiritual matters...So when Jesus was doing miracles and teaching things that were certainly contrary to what they normally taught they needed to do an investigation.

And as they were watching Jesus do so much we are seeing that they instead of embracing the Lord are rejecting His works and His teachings...As they do this understand that the normal every day folks of the community loved the Lord and so the religious leaders had to come up with a reason for the people to disregard Jesus or choose not to follow Him and what they did was they began to attribute the power and the abilities of Jesus to a work of Satan by essentially saying this is dark magic at work, that Jesus is being used by the ruler of the demons to attract attention away from what was normally taught...What a dumb thing to do and a dangerous thing to do we will see as this narrative progresses.

Jesus on hearing what they were saying called them to come to Him and we see the following in verses 23-27 which say ²³So He called them to *Himself* and said to them in parables: “How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. ²⁶ And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end. 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.

Now I want to spend a little time here in these verses and just develop this for a few minutes...Jesus as He calls these men to Himself challenges them by asking how can Satan cast himself out or how can a kingdom that is divided against itself stand? History tells us that when a nation has very opposing ideas that that nation won't stand, that it will be weakened and perhaps our own country should think about this.

Instead Jesus says that only when someone stronger than another comes in and binds the other one is there then a plundering that takes place in that house...In other words Jesus is saying that Yes Satan and his demons are strong and quite powerful but there is one that is stronger than Satan that has come on the scene and that simply said is Jesus.

Jesus is the One that comes in and sets a person free from the kingdom of Satan and I would say that yes Satan does have a kingdom and the Bible speaks about how Satan is actually the ruler of this world that we live in today.

Let me just share a few things with you about Satan's kingdom and how Jesus when He came liberated us from His dominion.

First let's look at the enemies domain...Listen to what John 14:30 says when Jesus said **I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.**

And then listen to 2 Cor. 4:3-4 which says **3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the**

god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

It's a sad and sobering reality when we begin to understand that the enemy of our souls has blinders on the people who live in this world...and yes I would say before we come to Christ we are sold out to that worldly system that Satan runs. We live for the things of the world and our hearts and minds are only focused on how we can advance in this world.

The good news is that Jesus came to liberate us from the kingdom of Satan that Jesus is the strongman that transfers us from one kingdom to another and let me just share a few things with you about that if you listen to Galatians 1:3-5 it says 3 Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

John 12:31-33 says 31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. 32 And I, if I am [e]lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.” 33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die.

And then Colossians 2:13-15 says 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the [i]handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 Having disarmed

principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

Thanks be to God that Jesus has saved us and worked in us and set us free. Today if you don't know Jesus understand that you are part of the kingdom of Satan, you are lost in your sins, you have a price that must be paid for the choices you have made.

Jesus though paid the price to redeem us, only He can pay the fine for your sins, He is our advocate before the Father but listen if you reject your advocate, if you reject what Jesus did on the cross, if you refuse to come to Jesus as He is then there remains no payment for your sins.

You must have Jesus in your life if you want to be forgiven. Without Jesus setting you free you are still bound by the enemy, he still has claim to your life, he still has authority over your life. The only way to freedom is through Jesus Christ the one that disarmed the principalities, the one that died that you might go free. Today I can't encourage you enough to give your life to Jesus and step from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light.

Now remember that these religious leaders had come on to the scene and they were spreading lies about Jesus saying that He was representing the kingdom of Satan and doing what He did by Satan's power and just understand that while Jesus was very popular at this point that the people had engrained in their minds that what a religious person said was really the authority on the matter and so these men I believe were leading people astray as they loudly said Jesus was doing this by the power of Satan.

Jesus had a stern warning to those that would lead others astray when He said this in Luke 17:1-2 which says **Then He said to the disciples, “It is impossible that no [a]offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! 2 It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should [b]offend one of these little ones.** _____ I think this should be a warning to all that they not lead anyone away from Christ but rather work to bring people to Him. Be very careful that you don’t misrepresent the Lord as these men were doing.

Look what else Jesus said to them as this situation is unfolding if you look at verses 28-30 which say ²⁸ **“Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; ²⁹ but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation”— ³⁰ because they said, “He has an unclean spirit.”** If you have been around Christianity for very long there are times that you might run into someone that says I am afraid I have committed the blaspheme of the Holy Spirit and I am in a place that I can no longer receive forgiveness... Sometimes sadly we can make great mistakes and commit some serious sins in our lives and it is then that the enemy likes to throw this in our faces.

I want to stress to you the importance of keeping the scriptures in context and in this case if you just put what is happening into the context of what has been said we can see what the blaspheme of the Holy Spirit actually is.

You might underline verse 30 in your Bible because the key to this is found when it says "BECAUSE THEY SAID "HE HAS AN UNCLEAN SPIRIT"

These men as they were watching Jesus as they were judging what Jesus was doing as they were listening to His teachings and watching the miracles came to a weird conclusion...a deliberately wrong decision in my opinion as they attributed the work of Jesus to the power of Satan.

It's my opinion that the Blaspheme of the Spirit is when a person sees the works of God and they hear the gospel and they know the truth of who Jesus is and yet they refuse to believe that truth...Now a person as they go through life because Jesus is so good and loving is going to be given multiple chances to come to the truth and if that person repeatedly rejects what the Holy Spirit is showing them it is then that they have no hope and salvation escapes them.

These men showed a pattern of rejection in their lives and as a person hardens their heart to the Gospel and as they reject the truth repeatedly there does come a point that Jesus honors that decision in a persons heart and they can come to the place that the Lord turns them over to their sin. When and where that line is you and I don't know and I would say it's best if you and I simply submit to the truth of Jesus Christ.

Now I want to remind you if you are here that the Bible is quite clear in 1 John 1:9 where the Word says **⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** I share this because you need to know the

moment that you at any time in your life turn to Jesus He is going to accept you and forgive you and do a work in your life and in your heart.

I do want to point out to you that one of the works of the Holy Spirit is given to us over in John 16:7-9 which says **7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. 8 And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me;** I am certain that as Jesus ministered there was a clear testimony from the Holy Spirit to these men's hearts that Jesus was the Messiah and yet here in this situation they are not only denying the Lord in their hearts but also pushing that disbelief on others.

Again I would say if you don't know Jesus as your Lord and Savior that you need to be saved and the only way to do that is to submit to the witness of the Holy Spirit in your life and to give your heart to the One that gave His life on the cross that you might be set free.

Let's look at verses 31-32 which say ³¹**Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him. 32 And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers [^e] are outside seeking You."**

So as Jesus is going through ministry we again see his family on the scene and they arrive at the house Jesus was in ministering to the people and you would think that the moment the blood family of Jesus was there that they would get preference.

I do want to point out to you something that the Roman Catholic church teaches that is not accurate as they believe that Mary was a perpetual virgin...I'm not sure where they got that from as right here in the Bible we have a simple statement that Jesus' brothers and mother came to him. Over in Matthew 1:24-25 we have the following which says ²⁴Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, ²⁵and ^[i]did not know her till she had brought forth her^[j] firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.

Matthew 13:55-56 builds further on this when it says ⁵⁵Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, ^[h]Joses, Simon, and Judas? ⁵⁶And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this *Man* get all these things?"

So his family comes to Him and they want to speak with Him and then we have the response of Jesus in verses 33-35 which say ³³But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?" ³⁴And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers!" ³⁵For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother."

Jesus here clearly says to those that are there that while his earthly family was important there was an even greater importance placed on those that followed Him with their hearts...Probably this would have been an astonishing statement to those around Him and especially to His brothers that were there who did not believe in Him.

I think you and I can probably relate to this in some degree or another. Often times as we go through life we become closer to those brothers

and sisters that we have in the Lord than to our own family even. The Bible teaches that when we believe we become a part of the family of God, we become His kids when we put our faith in Him if you just listen to Galatians 4:4-7 which says this of Jesus when it says

4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born^[a] of a woman, born under the law, To redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

If you are a person that chooses to honor the Lord in your life then just understand that the Lord looks on you as part of His family and listen if you refuse to serve Jesus and you have refused to accept Him in your heart then I just want you to understand that you are a captive in the kingdom of Satan, there is just no way around that as sin separates us from God and puts us under the penalty of death and eternal damnation.

However like we talked about earlier Jesus came to rescue you from the clutches of the enemy of our souls...and if you will just come to Him He will save you and establish you in His kingdom...and if you need to do that today I just encourage you to see myself after the service and I would love to pray with you.

Let's pray as we close tonight.

Mark 3:7-35 “Who Is The Strong Man?”

Cross References

Verses 13-15

1 John 1:1-3

2 Corinthians 5:20

Luke 6:12-13

Verses 23-27

John 14:30

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

Galatians 1:3-5

John 12:31-33

Colossians 2:13-15

Luke 17:1-2

Verses 28-30

1 John 1:9

John 16:7-9

Verses 31-32

Matthew 1:24-25

Matthew 13:55-56

Verses 33-35

Galatians 4:4-7