



SERMON STUDY GUIDE

Mark 3:1–6

Questions for the Week: What makes you angry? What makes Jesus angry?

READ THE TEXT – Mark 3:1–6

The Structure

1. Setting: Extended Sabbath Conflict (Mark 3:1–2)
 - 1.1. Jesus again enters a Synagogue (3:1; see 1:21, 39; 6:1–2)
 - 1.2. There was a man with a withered hand (3:1; see 1 Kgs 13:1–10; Ps 102:4, 11; Zech 11:17; Isa 40:7, 24)
 - 1.3. They [Pharisees] were watching him closely (3:2; see 2:24)
 - 1.3.1. if he will heal him on the Sabbath,
 - 1.3.2. To accuse him (3:2; see Mark 15:3–4)
2. Jesus Heals on the Sabbath (Mark 3:3–5)
 - 2.1. Jesus speaks to the man, “Rise in the Middle” (3:3)
 - 2.2. Jesus speaks to the [Pharisees] (3:4; see 2:24)
 - 2.2.1. “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm? To save a life or to kill?” (see Luke 13:10–17; 14:1–6; James 4:17)
 - 2.2.2. They were silent (Mark 3:4; see Mark 9:34; 14:61)
 - 2.3. Jesus speaks to the man (3:5)
 - 2.3.1. After looking at them [Pharisees] with anger, grieved over the dullness of their heart (3:5)
 - 2.3.1.1. Looking around (see also Mark 3:34; 5:32; 10:23)
 - 2.3.1.2. Anger or “Wrath” (see also Matt 3:7 // Luke 3:7; John 3:36; Rom 1:18; 1 Thess 1:10; 5:9)
 - 2.3.1.3. Dullness of heart (Mark 4:10–12; Exod 4:21; 8:15; 9:34–10:1; Isa 6:9–10; Jer 5:20–31; Ezek 12:2)
 - 2.3.1.3.1. Pharisees (Mark 3:5; 10:5)
 - 2.3.1.3.2. Disciples (Mark 6:52; 8:17)
 - 2.3.2. “Stretch out the hand” (3:5)
 - 2.4. He stretched out and the hand was restored (3:5)
3. The Pharisees React by Plotting Jesus’s Destruction (Mark 3:6)
 - 3.1. Went out immediately with the Herodians (Mark 3:6; 8:5; 12:13 // Matt 22:16)
 - 3.2. They were giving counsel against him so that they might destroy him

Activities and Questions this Week:

- The word for “anger” in Mark 3:5 is usually translated elsewhere in the New Testament as “wrath” referring to the wrath of God to punish evil and hypocrisy. Read some examples
 - Words of John the Baptist to the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matt 3:7 // Luke 3:7)
 - Gospel of John on the necessity of obedience to the Son (John 3:36)
 - Paul’s Teaching about “Wrath”
 - Wrath as God’s righteous judgement (Rom 1:18; 2:5; 5:9)
 - Wrath as the consequence of sin (Eph 2:1–3; 5:6; Col 3:6;
 - Wrath as a human vice contrasted with forgiveness (Eph 4:31; Col 3:8; see also James 1:19–21)
 - Jesus delivers from wrath (Rom 5:9; 1 Thess 1:10; 5:9)
 - Wrath instead of Rest for the Unfaithful (Heb 3:11; 4:3 citing Ps 95:11)
 - The wrath of God is righteous judgment, but human wrath is a destructive force of division.

- Read the stories about Jesus healing on the Sabbath
 - Man with a Withered Hand (Matt 12:9–14 // Mark 3:1–7 // Luke 6:6–11)
 - Woman Bent for Eighteen Years (Luke 13:10–17)
 - Man with Dropsy (Luke 14:1–6)
 - Paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1–17)
 - Man born Blind (John 9:1–41)
 - What do you notice about these healings?
 - What explanations does Jesus give for healing on the Sabbath?

- Read some of the legal logic in Jewish literature about when it is appropriate to profane the Sabbath:

8:5 A A pregnant woman who smelled food [and grew faint]— they feed her until her spirits are restored.
 B A sick person—they feed him on the instruction of experts.
 C If there are no experts available, they feed him on his own instructions,
 D until he says, “Enough.”

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.”

8:7 A He upon whom a building fell down—
 B it is a matter of doubt whether or not he is there,

- C it is a matter of doubt whether [if he is there], he is alive or dead,
- D it is a matter of doubt whether [if he is there and alive] he is a gentile or an Israelite—
- E they clear away the ruin from above him.
- F [If] they found him alive, they remove the [remaining] ruins from above him.
- G But if they found him dead, they leave him be [until after the Sabbath]. (Mishnah, *Yoma* 8:5–7).

²⁹ At that time many who were seeking righteousness and justice went down to the wilderness to live there, ³⁰ they, their sons, their wives, and their livestock, because troubles pressed heavily upon them. ³¹ And it was reported to the king’s officers, and to the troops in Jerusalem the city of David, that those who had rejected the king’s command had gone down to the hiding places in the wilderness. ³² Many pursued them, and overtook them; they encamped opposite them and prepared for battle against them on the sabbath day. ³³ They said to them, “Enough of this! Come out and do what the king commands, and you will live.” ³⁴ But they said, “We will not come out, nor will we do what the king commands and so profane the sabbath day.” ³⁵ Then the enemy quickly attacked them. ³⁶ But they did not answer them or hurl a stone at them or block up their hiding places, ³⁷ for they said, “Let us all die in our innocence; heaven and earth testify for us that you are killing us unjustly.” ³⁸ So they attacked them on the sabbath, and they died, with their wives and children and livestock, to the number of a thousand persons.

³⁹ When Mattathias and his friends learned of it, they mourned for them deeply. ⁴⁰ And all said to their neighbors: “If we all do as our kindred have done and refuse to fight with the Gentiles for our lives and for our ordinances, they will quickly destroy us from the earth.” ⁴¹ So they made this decision that day: “Let us fight against anyone who comes to attack us on the sabbath day; let us not all die as our kindred died in their hiding places.” (1 Macc 2:29–41, NRSV)

- Jesus, like other Jewish teachers in his time, argued that there are legitimate reasons to profane the Sabbath. The reasons do not undermine the Sabbath. The reasons are meant to honor the meaning of the Sabbath, celebrating creation and salvation by practicing rest, in complex situations.
 - How do you practice Sabbath, celebrating creation and salvation?
 - How can we practice radical obedience to the teaching of Jesus without missing the point of the teaching to love God and love people? What are some areas where that becomes challenging for you?

Weekly Questions:

- What does this passage say about God?
- What stood out to you from the text this week?
- What does this text say about the Lord’s reign and what it means to be his set apart people?
- Who are the characters of this story?
- What does this passage invite us to:
 - Do?
 - Think?
 - Feel?
- How did the sermon or passage encourage you to Love God and Love People?
- Which characters do you identify with most in the story? Why?