

The Rise of the Occult in America

Unclean spirits in the book of Mark

*Five times in the book of Mark Jesus is recorded performing an exorcism.*

*Exorcisms were a regular part of ministry for Jesus.*

Wicca in America

(What is a Ouija board? A tarot card? A crystal? A psychic? A séance? An statuette? An effigy, poppet, or voodoo doll? A magical spell or series of words, or mystical incantation? What is ancestor worship? Idol worship? The occult? Brujeria? Ojo?)

The Main Point of Mark 3:20-35

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| → 3:20-21 | Jesus' family misunderstands him               |
| → 3:22    | The scribes accuse him                         |
| → 3:23-27 | <b>Jesus declares his purpose in a parable</b> |
| → 3:28-30 | Jesus warns the scribes                        |
| → 3:31-35 | Jesus corrects his family                      |

Jesus Declares His Mission

The scribes' accusation

A military analogy – Jesus the conqueror

What did Jesus do on the cross?

Hebrews 2:14-15 “Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.”

Colossians 2:14-15 “[He canceled] the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”

Ephesians 2:1-5 “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience... But God... made us alive together with Christ.”

**The Unforgivable Sin**

Who gets warned? (scribes, ones who are the most knowledgeable and set apart for the task of discernment)

What did they do? (attributed to Satan the healing and miraculous powers of Jesus Christ)

Pastoral note – if you’re worried you committed this sin, you didn’t! Those who commit this sin are not concerned with their sin or what God thinks of them. “No Christian ever has or will commit this sin.” -RC Sproul

**Freedom in Christ**

Ephesians 6:11-13 – “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.”

(Belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of gospel of peace, shield of faith by which you put out the flaming darts of the evil one, helmet of salvation, sword of spirit)

**Questions for Personal Study**

1. How does Jesus describe his mission in this passage?
2. How do you wage spiritual warfare in your life? Read Ephesians 6:10-21...
3. What is the unforgivable sin in this passage? How do you know?
4. Why is the occult on the rise in America? How should Christians respond?

