

Day 68, Mark 3

by David Servant

Jesus' miracles demonstrate His greatness and power, while the Pharisees' hardness of heart and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit reveal their sinful nature.

Scripture: Psalm 111:10, Mark 3:5-6, Mark 3:11, Mark 3:22, Mark 3:29, John 5:19, 1 Corinthians 12:11, Hebrews 2:4, James 2:19

Topics: "Divine Authority", "Holy Spirit"

Description

David Servant delves into the miraculous account of Jesus healing the man with the withered hand, emphasizing it as a creative miracle that showcased the power and authority of Jesus. Despite witnessing such incredible miracles, the Pharisees and scribes displayed hardened hearts, even going as far as attributing Jesus' works to Satan, leading to Jesus warning about the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Mark highlights the contrast between the demons' compelled confession of Jesus as the Son of God and the free will of human beings to accept or reject Him, urging all to fear God and acknowledge His greatness.

Transcript

It would seem that Jesus' healing of the man with the withered hand should be classified, not as a healing, but as a creative miracle. The man's hand was not diseased, but disfigured. Bones and flesh were created as he obeyed Jesus and stretched out his hand, perhaps what was impossible for him to do from a natural standpoint. Meditate on that and let it build your faith in Jesus!

Almost equally amazing as the restoration of that man's hand is the hardness of the hearts of the Pharisees, who, upon seeing that incredible miracle, immediately began conspiring how they might kill Jesus (3:6). The scribes, of equal hard-heartedness, declared that Jesus cast out demons by the power of Satan, an imbecilic statement to be sure, and one that Jesus exposed for its stupidity (3:22-27). It was in the context of those callous religious leaders that Jesus warned of the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and no wonder. Anyone who could witness such miracles, done by the power of the Holy Spirit, and call it the work of Satan, has a heart beyond redemption. More specifically, as Mark points out, the scribes were saying that Jesus was possessed by an unclean spirit (3:30). That is tantamount to calling the Holy Spirit a demon.

You may have heard that there is a website called "The Blasphemy Challenge," where people can receive a free DVD that promotes atheism if they will upload a video to YouTube of themselves blaspheming the

Holy Spirit. It is certainly interesting for a group that doesn't believe in God to be quoting on their website Jesus' warning in Mark 3:29 against blaspheming the Holy Spirit, and challenging people, as their website says, to "damn themselves to hell." Why waste your time recording a video of yourself blaspheming the Holy Spirit if there is no God and no hell?

It reminds me of a story I heard years ago of a young Christian girl who lived in communist Russia. Her school teacher demanded that she stand in front of her class and curse God. Her response was full of simple wisdom: "Teacher, if there is a God, then I dare not curse Him. And if there is no God, there is no reason to curse Him, as there is no one to curse."

Mark certainly conveys to us how overwhelmed Jesus was with people who wanted healing and deliverance (3:7-10, 20). At one point along the Sea of Galilee, the crowd was pressing in to such a degree that Jesus had His disciples make a boat ready. This indicates, as do other scriptures, that Jesus operated in His earthly ministry as a man anointed by the Holy Spirit with gifts of the Holy Spirit. Thus, He could not do a miracle, such as walk on water, any time He desired. Gifts of the Spirit operate as the Spirit wills (1 Cor. 12:11; Heb. 2:4). Jesus Himself testified of His limitations, saying "the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing" (John 5:19). That is why He did no miracles until after He was anointed by the Holy Spirit when baptized by John. Unless the Holy Spirit imparted a gift that made walking on the water possible, Jesus was limited like any other person. He had to use a boat.

I have never understood why the demons would shout through people in Jesus' presence, "You are the Son of God!" (3:11). It would seem that they were defeating their own purpose. Mark says that the demons would fall down before Jesus at such times (3:11). It was almost as if they were compelled, in terror, to do it. Whatever their motivation, to me it is one more revelation of Jesus' greatness. In His presence, demons are compelled to fall before Him and confess who He is. How amazing it is that while demons are so compelled, God has given human beings free wills whereby they can ignore Him or even spit on Him. In this regard, we might advise human beings that they could learn something from demons! Fear God!

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