

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for September 11, 2016

Responding to Jesus
Mark 3:20-35

I. Jesus' ashamed family (3:20-21)

Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind."

- This is after the withdrawal from the overwhelming crowd and the appointment of the twelve
- The crowd is probably the same crowd from the preceding context (3:1-7)
- "so that they could not even eat" shows that there are still similar concerns with this crowd pressing in on Jesus
 - Last time, Jesus asked His disciples to prepare a boat for safety purposes (3:9)
- Jesus' family heard of the overwhelming crowd
- Jesus' family responded by desiring to seize Jesus
 - Some think this was a plan to rescue Jesus from the crowd
 - More likely, His family desired to save Him from shaming Himself and family
 - The family was trying to remove Jesus for His own social good
 - The family was more interested in protecting themselves than understanding Jesus
- **John 7:2-5** "Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand. So his brothers said to him, 'Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world.' For not even his brothers believed in him."

II. Jerusalem's accusing scribes (3:22-30)

A. The accusation declared (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."

- What do we know about these scribes who came down from Jerusalem?
 - We have seen the "scribes of the Pharisees" in 2:16

- These scribes seem to be a special delegation sent to investigate Jesus
- Perhaps they had more connections with the Temple and priesthood
- Beelzebul=Satan
 - Beelzebul is also referred to as the “prince of demons”
 - Jesus’ response indicates that Beelzebul is “Satan” (3:23)
- The scribes acknowledge the supernatural work of Jesus
- However, they attribute that work to Satan, not the Holy Spirit

B. The accusation dismantled (3:23-27)

And he called them to him and said to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end.

- Jesus dismantles their accusation/explanation for the supernatural
- Logical response: “How can Satan cast out Satan?”
- Jesus gives some examples as well
 - Divided kingdom does not last like the nation of Israel under the rule of Solomon eventually divided
 - Additionally, a divided household will not last
- Logical conclusion: If casting out demons is the work of Satan, then Satan is done

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.

- Jesus offers the true and correct explanation of the supernatural
- Satan=Strong man
- Jesus is plundering Satan’s house and goods
- Jesus first claims to bind the strong man (Satan)
 - Thus, Jesus is not in league with Satan
- After binding, there can be plundering, which is what Jesus was doing
 - Jesus was setting people free from their enslavement from serving Satan
- **Colossians 1:13-14** “He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”
- **2 Timothy 2:24-26** “And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God

may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will."

C. The accusation's danger (3:28-30)

"Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"-- for they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."

- Jesus is speaking about forgiveness again
 - He already claimed to have authority to forgive sins (2:10)
- "All" sins will be forgiven the children of man
- Even blasphemous words and statements will be forgiven!
- However, there is an exception...
- "but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness"
- This is a troubling statement for many, but what does it really mean?
- First, notice why this exception to forgiveness is addressed
 - Because some were saying, "He has an unclean spirit"
- Now, keep in mind all that has happened leading up to their statement
 - Jesus has done several miracles and has thus provided ample evidence of who He is as the Messiah
 - Scribes are clearly acknowledging the work of the supernatural in all of these evidences
 - Jesus even patiently allows for misconceptions and blasphemies concerning His own identity
 - His own disciples and the Jewish nation would have to wrestle through the concept of Jesus' identity
 - Yet, Jesus states that any observer should be able to see that His ministry is empowered by the Holy Spirit
 - But the scribes were claiming, "He has an unclean spirit"
 - These scribes have been exposed to the light
 - They had the privilege of witnessing the work of the Spirit through God's Son, the Messiah!
 - These scribes were not processing or questioning the power of the Spirit in Jesus' ministry
 - These scribes had turned their back on the light and embraced the darkness as the best option

- Can you be guilty of this unforgivable blasphemy against the Spirit today?
 - The answer is no
 - First, there is a major difference for us since we don't have Christ for the Spirit to work through in our physical presence
 - Second, we don't have Christ to identify when someone has committed such blasphemy!
 - This blasphemy in Jesus' time was a settled condition not a one time statement
 - Thus anyone with any concern today can be comforted that there is high probability you have not committed the blasphemy of the Spirit
 - Or else, you would not care or be concerned!
 - *If this* blasphemy can occur, then several questions remain:
 - How much exposure to the Spirit does this person need?
 - What exactly needs to be done in order to commit such blasphemy?
 - If someone rejects God, how do we know it is not temporary?
 - We are not Jesus and we can't know these things!
 - **However**, there are similar warnings given to the church as we have seen in the book of Hebrews
 - **Hebrews 6:4-6** "For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt."
 - **Hebrews 10:26-27** "For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries."

III. Jesus' actual family (3:31-35)

And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you." And he answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother."

- Mark seems to be resuming the story from verse 21
- Jesus obviously knew what was in the heart/mind of His family
 - They thought He was out of His mind (v. 21)
 - They were potentially embarrassed and desired to uphold the honor of the family rather than be ashamed
 - They thought this would be for His own good
- Instead, Jesus recognizes His true family, that is those who do the will of God
- What does it mean to do the will of God?
 - First, you must be saved!
 - **Hebrews 11:6** "And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him."
 - Second, you must live in such a way that makes Jesus your Lord and King by practicing His Word
 - **Luke 8:21** "But he answered them, 'My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it.'"