

Mark 3:20-35

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[0 : 00] Mark chapter 3. Our text this morning will be verses 20-35.! That'll get us to the end of the chapter. Mark chapter 3, verses 20-35.

This account can also be found in its parallels in the Gospel of Matthew and even the Gospel of Luke. Some of the events that are contained in these verses are kind of spread out in various places in the other Gospels.

For instance, parts of it can be found in Matthew chapter 8. Other parts of it can be found in Matthew chapter 12. We won't ask you to turn there this morning, but I want you to have those references in the back of your mind because you will understand that some of our context for what we see within the text is not found extra-biblical, but it is found in the other parallel accounts that we find in the Gospels.

Matthew 8, Matthew 12, and Luke chapter 8, I believe, are parallel passages to this one. But if you're physically able and desire to do so, would you join with me as we stand together and we read the Word of God found in Mark chapter 3, starting in verse 20.

This is immediately following Christ's calling and appointing of the twelve apostles. So it's a very pivotal time in His ministry. It says, How can Satan cast out Satan?

[1 : 41] If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished.

But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house. Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter.

But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin, because they were saying he has an unclean spirit.

When his mother and his brothers arrived, and standing outside, they sent word to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, Behold, your mother and your brothers are outside looking for you.

Answering them, he said, Who are my mother and my brothers? Looking about at those who were sitting around him, he said, Behold, my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.

[2 : 52] Let's pray. Father, we thank you for this day. We praise you for the opportunity we have to be together. What a joy it is together with brothers and sisters in Christ.

We pray now, fathers, we have read your word. Lord, give us eyes to see it, ears to hear it, minds to accept it, and lives to apply it for your glory and yours alone.

We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. I want you to see this morning the importance of perspective.

The importance of perspective. That is, how we perceive this person that we encounter in the Gospels, Jesus Christ, is of utmost importance.

At this point in his public ministry, Christ is at the height of his popularity among the crowds. At this point, he cannot go out or in because the crowds continue to follow him.

[3 : 52] By this time, when we reconcile it with the other Gospel accounts, the feeding of the 5,000 has probably already taken place, though Mark records it later on in its writing. But we see here that the crowds are following him and going with him wherever he goes.

We have seen that he has been exhibiting the nearness of the kingdom. John the Baptist came proclaiming the kingdom of heaven is near. Christ came proclaiming the kingdom of heaven is here.

And Christ has been displaying the kingdom. As a matter of fact, the account that we have before us here is tied to a revelation of kingdom reality. We'll see that in just a moment.

Demons have been cast out. They've been told to remain silent. Those who were sick have been healed. Those who were lame are walking. Their paralytic is picking up his bed and going home. The religious leaders are plotting and they're scheming and they're trying to figure it out. In a nutshell, we are at the popularity of Christ because he has confined himself at least up until this point because we can really quantify the life and ministry of Christ depending upon which region he is at.

[5 : 04] And he is in the Galilean region now. He is around the Sea of Galilee in the city of Capernaum. More than likely the home that he goes to here is Peter's home or Simon Peter's home because Jesus has no home.

He has nowhere. The Son of Man has no bed to lay on, no pillow to lay his head upon, no even a rock to use. He has no place to go. We know that he is from Nazareth and he is called out of Capernaum, but then he goes and he hangs out most of the time at Peter's house and that is his kind of hub of ministry.

It was in this house that he was at the very first time in which Peter's mother-in-law was sick and he raised her up and she began to serve him. It was at this house that after that resurrection because the day prior that was on the Sabbath, the man with the withered hand was healed, that the next morning multitudes and multitudes and multitudes of people were coming and everyone was wanting to come see Christ and he was casting out demons.

He was healing the sick. It was also at this place that he departed and they couldn't find him and he went and spent time praying. But yet, not everybody sees him for what he is.

The very first portion of Mark is really there to declare to us that this is the King of kings and Lord of lords. He has come announcing the arrival of the kingdom of heaven.

[6 : 29] Several weeks ago, we looked at that and if you were to go back and listen to it again, you would know that when Jesus announces the arrival of the kingdom of heaven that he is announcing its arrival and its domain and its power and presence throughout the remainder of history until we get to the book of Revelations where Christ comes again and brings his kingdom back to himself.

So the power and the prestige of the king now has a foothold in this world which is under the realm of Satan. And he has come announcing that and he's displaying it without a shadow of a doubt because of his actions and his deeds and everything is there.

Make no mistake about it. Christ is not healing the sick and causing the lame to walk. He's not casting out demons to impress people. Jesus doesn't have a problem wanting to be popular.

We know that because later on when the huge crowd is around him, he disperses the crowd with his tough sayings. He's not a people pleaser.

He doesn't give all of his attention just trying to make sure everybody is... He's doing it to acknowledge who he is so that people will know what he is going to do.

[7 : 49] The theme of Mark is that he came to give his life a ransom for many. So the king of kings and lord of lords who came announcing the arrival of the kingdom will be the very one that will hang up on the cross and pay the price to redeem man from the kingdom in which they are already under subjection to, that is, the kingdom of Satan.

But many denied that because it was dependent upon their perception. And we see within this passage here the importance of perception.

The first thing I want you to notice is the charge against him. It says in verse 20, And he came home, that is, he came to the house where he was staying, which was Peter's house, and the crowd gathered again.

Mark always reminds us that the crowd continues drawing to Christ to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal. The picture here is that the house is getting full, the outside of the house is getting full, and no one could even relax and be at ease.

And I want you to understand that, knowing that when they ate a meal they didn't just grab a plate and walk around eating it, and they didn't just sit down at a table. Rather, meal times were event times in scripture, and they are of utmost importance.

[9 : 09] Our fellowship, we will have in the back table fellowship, in biblical economy, is of grand importance. They would take time. They would be still.

They would eat together. They would sup together, scripture says, leaning upon their side, not in any kind of rush, taking a moment to know one another around the intimate conversation of the table.

But yet they couldn't do that because the crowd was gathered to them because they wanted something from him. The crowd always wants to see his power, but they don't perceive really who he is.

But then look at what it says. Here's the first perception we get. When his own people heard of this. Now Bible scholars are kind of caught between who are his own people.

Clearly it's not his mother and his brothers because they come later on, but it's probably someone connected to his mother and his brothers for that would be why the invitation was extended for them to come.

[10:11] Some have thought maybe it was his apostles or the inner circle of his disciples. But more than likely it seems in scripture that his own people would have been his nearest kin folk.

People of his extended family. For his family was in that region and they come with their perception and when his own people heard of this, they went out to take him custody.

I mean, isn't that amazing? They're going to go take custody of Christ. Why? They want to get him out of this situation where the crowd is pressing in against him for they said he has lost his senses is what the New American Standard puts it.

Some translations say he is out of his mind. The wording in the original language does not necessarily imply something negative towards the individual, but it implies something towards the individual that maybe the stress that is upon them or the pressure of the circumstances is really getting to them a little bit and they need someone to pull them out of that.

We all have met people like that, right? Someone who is so caught up in the circumstances and the situation and the stress of what's going on, someone needs to step in and say, let's take a break for just a moment.

[11:22] So here's the perception of his own family. He can't handle the situation. The pressure is too much. They're neglecting the reality that he is giving himself to the crowds.

He did not come to be served, but to serve. And they look at it and say, this crowd, this popularity is getting to his mind. It's driving him crazy. He needs us to deliver him out of that.

So we're gonna go take him custody. Now that's a misconception of what's going on. Friend, make no mistake about it. Every time you read scripture, there is never a moment when Christ is not in control.

Never. Never. Never. Never. There's never a moment where he needs someone to relieve him of the pressure nor take him out of the circumstances. That is, when he steps into your mess, he is in control of your mess.

And when you are welcomed into his presence because the crowd gathered around him were a crowd of people with problems. Now that brings comfort to our hearts, right? Because when we come to him, guess what?

[12:32] We come to him with problems and they are coming to them needing something. And he did not need someone to relieve the stress or to alleviate the pain or to give him a break for just a moment.

Christ didn't need that. Now when he did seclude himself and they go away, he was not doing it for his sake, but he was doing it to set a standard for us that rest is a good thing.

We need to be reminded of that. But there's the first wrong perception. Christ needs us to help him out. But then it says, we're introduced to a second group, the scribes who came down from Jerusalem, we're saying, now if you know anything at all about the geographical region of the land of Israel, you would know that the Galilean region is to the north of Jerusalem.

And I've told you this is just, I know this is a complete side note, but this is something you need to understand. Even Brother Jamie shared it just a little bit ago, in his prayer video that we played for you last week, and I don't know if you caught it or not, but anytime in scripture someone leaves Jerusalem, it says that they go down from Jerusalem.

Why? Because Jerusalem is a manifested presence of God and the manifest presence of God, anytime you are leaving where God has manifested his presence, you are descending, you're not ascending, even though you may be going north geographically and even in elevation, you may be going to higher regions, but you are always declared in scripture to be going down from Jerusalem.

[13 : 56] Now you say, well, that's just the way they said it. No, they said it that way intentionally because where the presence of God is is the highest point you can get to. So these scribes, which is telling, they come down from Jerusalem, so they have been in the presence of God, or supposedly they have been where God had manifested his presence there, and they were the scribes who looked at the law continuously recording it and transcribing it, and they come to Christ and they have a perception.

Their perception is that he is possessed, that he is possessed by the prince of the demons and that he cast out demons by the ruler of the demons.

Now notice what's going on here because perceptions are based upon realities, but the perception is how you decipher the reality.

I'll say that in a different way. Nobody could argue with the fact that some amazing things were going on. They were just trying to define how it was happening.

If you read the parallel passage to this in Matthew chapter 12, you will notice that what has just happened before these scribes make this accusation is that a demon-possessed man has just entered into the presence of Christ, and Christ has cast the demon out of the man and told the demon to be quiet, and the scribe said the reason he could do that is because he has a demon.

[15 : 24] Now they weren't denying the reality that he just cast the demon out. They were just trying to rationalize it with a wrong perception in their own minds.

Because this is what happens with man. When you read Scripture, I mean, genuinely read Scripture, and you go to it with an open mind, you cannot deny the reality that Christ did some amazing things.

And he declared some wondrous things. Some have said, based upon the reading of it, I believe it was Lee Strobel, when he, being an agnostic, was investigating the claims of Christ, and he was going to it with kind of a lawyer and a journalistic mentality, and he was going at it, and he looked at Scripture, he said, without a doubt, when I perceive Scripture, Christ is either the Savior of man and the Messiah the world has longed for, or he is a madman, because clearly in Scripture, he declares to be Jesus, the Son of God.

There's no denying it, it's just how I rationalize it. And the people now are confronted with the fact that there's an undeniable truth before them. A demon-possessed man has just walked out whole. How did that happen? And the way they rationalize it is that he must have a demon. Now Jesus says that perception is wrong because Satan cannot be cast against Satan.

[16 : 57] And if the house is divided, the house will not stand. And if the kingdom is divided, the kingdom will not stand. And he said, and Satan would not cast out demons because the demons are part of his kingdom. Now it's a little bit more telling because this is why perceptions matter.

It's a little bit more telling in Matthew chapter 12, I believe it's verse 28, that declares, but if I cast out Satan by my own power, then the kingdom of heaven is in your midst.

See, what he is saying is you only have two choices. Either Satan is divided against himself or the kingdom of heaven is in your midst.

But look at the charge that's brought against him. Number two, now I know this is going to mess with you a little bit. Some of you are so faithful note keepers. Some of you have done such good diligence.

I did not alliterate my points today. I'm sorry, I did not mean to mess up your note keeping, but my points are not alliterated today. So look at the charge brought against him. Number two, look at the danger before them.

[18 : 05] Why is it important how we perceive Christ and that we rightfully acknowledge how he does what he does?

Look at the danger before them. Truly I say to you, it says there in verse 28, that is a very common phrase used to introduce a statement of utmost importance.

So when Christ or God says, truly, truly, or truly, I say unto you, it means stand up, pay attention, look at this. This is something of great importance, something that we must acknowledge.

He says, truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men. Let's just stop for a moment right there and just rejoice. And if we want to say hallelujah, you can say hallelujah right there. All sins shall be forgiven the sons of men.

What a wonderful truth. The first truth Christ wants us to accept is that there is forgiveness for every sin. That none has gone too far.

[19:07] None has done too much. That the king is able to redeem and to restore in spite of the mess we've put ourselves in. You say, pastor, this passage is about the unpardonable sin.

Right, but isn't it telling that the unpardonable sin is introduced with the reality that all sins can be forgiven the sons of men? He wants us to hear this first that all sins can be forgiven.

And then he goes a little bit further. And whatever blasphemies, they utter. He says in Matthew, he says, whatever you speak against the son of man, that's who he is in the flesh.

Now, to really get into the meat of this, it would make our brain smoke a little bit because then we're getting into the Trinitarian view of God and you would really kind of get into this, but we won't get too deep on a Sunday morning, but I want you to understand, look at what he's saying.

Any blasphemies, any wording? But then he introduces this. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness.

[20:12] You say, pastor, wait a minute, you just said all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men.

Right, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness. Does that mean that it is unable to be forgiven?

No, it means they will never get it. This is why it's so dangerous and I'll show you in just a minute. It is not that it was not available, it's that they will never obtain it.

Never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin. That is, they continue this sin eternally and eternally and eternally and they can never receive forgiveness. Why?

Because the blaspheme is to speak evil of or to degrade in nature or to put something else in the place of something else. Right? It is to degrade the Holy Spirit.

It is to speak evil of the Holy Spirit. It is to say that the work of the Holy Spirit is the work of Satan.

And he said this because they said he was casting out demons by demons. That's what it says in our text, right?

[21:10] So it is to attribute the work of the Spirit to the work of the demons or the work of Satan.

And the reason forgiveness is never there, stay with me, this is why Scripture is so consistent. The Bible says that no one comes to the Father lest he be drawn.

Right? No one is saved lest he declares that Jesus Christ is Lord. And no one declares that unless he is first drawn to the Father. The whole reason you are forgiven is because you are drawn to the Father.

He draws you through his love and his acceptance and he reassures you that forgiveness is available and you cry out to him and Jesus says I paid for that and he shows you the wonder of the cross and you are washed in the blood of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world but how are you drawn through the Holy Spirit?

And if you deny the existence of the Holy Spirit you have cut off the very thing that God uses to draw you. There's only one way but one way to have forgiveness and redemption.

It's a very narrow path and if you derail the Holy Spirit and you deny the Holy Spirit and you attribute the work of the Holy Spirit to the work of Satan God's not going to draw you any other way my friend.

[22:29] So while every sin may be forgiven you have now cut off the very way he draws you to forgive them and it's an eternal sin.

And people come to me all the time and say Pastor I think that I may have committed the unpardonable sin. About the 19 years I've had I don't know how many people come and say I'm afraid I might have committed the unpardonable sin and I look at them in all seriousness I said the reality that you're coming to me reaffirms to me that you didn't commit it.

You say why? Because no man does what is right no not one. On your natural and in your flesh as you are as a natural man or a natural woman I don't mean this to be degrading at all because I say this about myself there is nothing within you that wants anything to do with a holy God.

You want to please yourself and you want to take care of who you are and you want to look out for number one and you want to be all about you and the reason I know that is because that's exactly what's in me. There is no good no none within me.

All of my righteousness is like filthy rags. It does nothing in the sight of a holy God. The reality of God's holiness is an offense to who I am as a natural human being and I know that I can't belong there and there's nothing that I want other than nothing physically that I want other than to please myself and if I had to be if you had to be honest you would say the same thing your number one desire is to take care of you and the reality that you even care about the things of God is the

testimony that the spirit is still working that the Holy Spirit is still drawing and that the spirit is still putting a concern and a burden because one of the jobs of the Holy Spirit go read it in John is to convict the world of sin and righteousness and if you have no conviction then the spirit is not there but if there's conviction and you know and there's this feeling and you're like something's not right that is the testimony of the spirit to you saying

[24 : 39] I'm drawing you oh I've met people and I know you have too they have no concern for their sins or the consequences they have no conviction whatsoever why?

because they're denying to their eternal doom walking in the danger of the judgment of a holy God the only way in which God could draw them now don't quench the spirit there's the concern don't quench it don't think that Satan is trying to draw you to do what is right Satan will never draw you to do what is right that's the Holy Spirit of God so there's the danger before them third and finally friend look at this look at the relationships that matter we're still looking at the importance of this perception the reason Jesus declares this is because they're walking in dangerous on dangerous ground but look at the relationships that matter it says then his mother and his brothers arrived more than likely I agree with most Bible scholars to say those his own people whoever they were said well we couldn't get him he's still in there doing everything he wants to do he's out of his mind let's go get his mama right so he goes and gets his mother and his brothers and they're going to come and they're going to take him out now by this time you know some things his brothers do not yet acknowledge who he is you know this from the other gospel accounts right his brothers are not believers now Mary knows she treasured all these things in her heart we're told she understands this but she doesn't really know everything that's going on yet because how can the finite grasp the infinite our ways are not his ways so even though this is Mary it's still Mary right she's still flesh and blood and she's a person just like us and so they go get

Mary and his brothers and so they come and notice what they do is they arrived and they're standing outside because the crowd is so vast and the house is so packed and it's spilling out of the house and they can't even get into him so they begin sending word you know tell Jesus he needs to come out here tell Jesus he needs to come out here so they sent word to him and called him and the crowd was sitting around him Mark makes it very personal tells us that everybody's gathered around Christ and they said to him behold your mother and your brothers are outside looking for you Jesus you need to go out to them that's that's that's your mother out there right now in true talk the relationship that should matter the most by the world standards are those parental relationships honor your father and mothers in scripture Jesus grew in wisdom and sature and favor with God and man he honored his parents so what's about to transpire is not to disregard the reality of what God has already declared about familial relationships that parents are important but parents I have a newsflash for you we're not the most important thing he said I don't know about my house you do it because I said so I know that's what happens in my house too but we're not the most important thing no more than likely by this time Joseph is is dead

Mary is with Christ until the end he is the seat of a woman by the way he's not the seat of man if there's anyone in life that can get Jesus to come to the senses surely it's Mary because that's the most important thing right that's the relationship that matters the most but not according to Christ look at what he says Jesus I love this reality by the way when the scribes told Jesus or told the crowds Jesus was casting out demons by demons don't ever notice this I don't ever miss this it says and Jesus called them to himself so Jesus said come here scribes let's talk about this just for a moment and now the crowd says hey Jesus your mother and your brothers are out there looking for you he answers them he says I know you think that's important but look at what he says who are my mother and my brothers now he's not saying I don't know who they are he's saying how would you define them how would you define that that critical relationship in my life who should I submit to most and their answer they would say well that's marrying your brothers there but he says looking about at those who are sitting around him he said behold my mother and my brothers for whoever does the will of God he is my brother and sister and mother again isn't that amazing that the critical relationship is really that relationship of those who are walking in obedience to the father and those who are near

Christ and walking in faithful obedience and living with a proper perception of who he is knowing that's the king and we're going to submit to him that's the relationship that matters how we perceive Christ is of utmost importance because he's not just a wonderful guy who did some great things he is the one worthy of our adoration worship and praise worthy of our obedience who draws us to the

power and presence of the Holy Spirit to be washed in the blood of the lamb and to walk in faithful obedience because that's the relationship that really matters let's pray father we thank you so much for this day we thank you for your faithfulness to us we thank you for your word realizing that you draw us through your love and concern for us and often through the declaration of the word of God so father we stand amazed that you would speak to us may we be responsive even in all our business today we may we take just a moment to be still and say oh Holy Spirit how are you leading us may we respond in obedience knowing that that relationship is the one of greatest importance not how others even in our own family perceive us but how you perceive our obedience and our willingness to do what you call us to do so Lord Jesus we ask lead your people for your glory and yours alone we ask it all in your name amen judgment judgment judgment judgment judgment judgment!

[31 : 37]