

Mark 3

Jesus taught by comparison and contrast. Parables are simple stories about daily life and nature, which are helpful in relating spiritual things. Jesus also taught by contrast when the disingenuous religious leaders (like in this chapter) accuse him of not operating in the religious rules. Jesus uses their interruptions and accusations to show us that this kind of nonsense is demonic and does not represent God's heart. The demonic world is intentioned to kill, steal and destroy, but God gets to turn the tables every time.

Read Mark 3:1-6: I see so many similarities between the opposition to Jesus and the opposition to President Trump. Jesus was dealing with ground level human needs; but the envious religious elite hated him. They wanted notoriety and power. They tried every which way to catch Jesus in any violation of tiny and insignificant protocol issues. They could care less if a cripple or demon-possessed man ever got healed. It was a massive fraud. They got kickbacks from the money changers and the sacrificial sheep inspectors. Like tax fraud and charitable fraud the temple was full of greasy kickbacks. That is why they wanted Jesus out of there. He exposed their wickedness.

They waited to see if Jesus would be compassionate and heal him on the sabbath. He did. Then they accused him of working on the sabbath. In general, Jesus is teaching us that he is into mercy and healing even more than merely keeping protocol rules.

For starters these rules are for men, not God. Mankind will work himself to death if there is no guardrail to his time. The sabbath rules are for men's spiritual and physical, and mental health. This healing accomplished those priorities. In accusing him, they only revealed the hardness of their heart. They were not true priests or scribes or Pharisees, they were opportunists posing as servants.

Read Mark 3:7-12: Jesus needed a certain amount of anonymity to not get mobbed. He could not make a schedule if the line was always around the corner. You might think that the demon-possessed people yelling out that Jesus is the highest God would be great advertising. Demons will play into God's hand, but not voluntarily. Beyond that, demon-possessed people are not the most credible character references for word-of-mouth advertising.

Read Mark 3:13-35: Jesus got away from the crowds to set up some help. We were never supposed to work alone. He prayed about choosing 12 apostles. Those 12 would, in turn, make their own disciples. That alleviates the workload and keeps quality and spirituality in order. We are called to make disciples even more than to evangelize.

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you (Matthew 28)

Jesus was being spied on and set up by the religious leaders. He was also battling Satanic puppets and the forces behind them. His own family thought that he was losing his marbles. They did not really believe that he was God yet.

When the scribes attributed his power to demons, they were possibly committing *blasphemy of the Holy Spirit*. Other than rejecting Christ, it is the only unforgivable sin. They knew that he was good, but they attributed it to evil spirits just to assassinate his character. It is forgivable to say something bad about Jesus; but it is not forgivable to attribute something that you know fully well that it is from God to some other source. Jesus corrects them by pointing out that if he was working for Satan he would not be tearing down that same kingdom. Besides, it makes no sense to say that Satan casts out Satan.

Jesus' family came to see him. Perhaps they wanted him to go back to work and live regularly? Jesus pointed out that believers are his family. Was he implying that his family did not believe in him yet, or was he just being inclusive?