

Commentary on Mark Chapter 3, by Chuck Smith 11.28.21

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November memory verse, Romans 3:23 (NKJV) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

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And he entered again into the synagogue([Mar 3:1](#));

This was on the Sabbath day.

and there was a man there which had a withered hand. And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the Sabbath day; that they might accuse him. And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other ([Mar 3:1-5](#)).

Sabbath day, Jesus came to the synagogue. There was a man there with a withered hand, and so immediately it created a stir as the Pharisees watched Him to see if He would violate their traditional interpretation of the Sabbath day law. For according to their interpretation of the law, it was unlawful to heal a person on the Sabbath day. You could save a person's life, do what was necessary to save the life, but do nothing towards healing. Apply a tourniquet, stop the flow of blood to save his life, but don't put a band-aid on or don't wrap it up, don't wash it, don't put any sab on, because that's ministering towards his healing. And you can't do that until the sun goes down. You can't do that until the Sabbath day is over. Nothing to heal a person on the Sabbath day; only to save the life.

Now, they understood Jesus even better than His own disciples, because they knew that Jesus would immediately be interested in the man with the withered hand. They knew that Jesus could never face any crippling area in a person's life without desiring to minister to that person and to help them. They knew instinctively that Jesus always sought to heal the blight of man when he came face to face with it. And they knew that He would be interested in the man in the synagogue with the greatest need. And so, they watched Him to see if He would heal Him, because it was the Sabbath day.

So many times we feel that Jesus isn't interested in us because our needs are too great. Jesus only likes to chum with the beautiful people, with the successful, with the prosperous. But the person that Jesus is always most interested in is the person who has the greatest need. And so it was when He came into the synagogue. They were correct in their assessment of Jesus. They were absolutely correct. He was immediately

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interested in that man in the synagogue who had the greatest need. He was immediately interested in that man with the withered hand.

And Jesus said to Him, "Stand up." The man stood up. And Jesus then asked them two questions, "Is it lawful to do good or to do evil on the Sabbath day?" Naturally, it's lawful to do good. They could not answer Him. He had them trapped. They could not say, "It's lawful to do evil," and yet, it would be evil not to help this man if you had the capacity to do so. Is it lawful to heal or to kill? Well, it's never lawful to kill a person. And so, again they're trapped. They can't answer and they don't answer. And He looks upon them with anger because of the hardness of their hearts. They, because of their religious traditions, would keep this man from experiencing the power of God in his life. They would keep him from the work that God wanted to do in setting him free, because it was not according to their religious traditions, or their theological positions.

Jesus said to Him, "Stretch forth your hand." It's impossible. The man knew it was impossible; Jesus knew it was impossible when He told him to do it. And because it was impossible, the man can do one of two things: he can either argue with Jesus and tell him that he can't and tell him why he can't, and tell him how many times he's tried and failed, and tell him of all his past failures, rehearse his life story of failure. Or he can obey Jesus and stretch forth his hand. He has a choice. He chose to stretch forth his hand, and immediately, as he did, it was made whole just like the other. For a basic law, the moment you choose to will, to obey the command of Christ, in that very moment He will give you everything necessary for you to obey.

The Lord, many times, says to us things that to us are impossible. As He faces that blighted area in our life, that thing that has been destroying us and keeping us from real victory: that attitude, that temper, that weakness of our flesh, that area of our failure; and that's the thing that Jesus wants to address Himself to in our lives. Jesus didn't talk to him about his good hand and how well he was able to use the good hand. He was interested in the hand that wasn't working. He's interested in your life those things that aren't working properly. That's the thing that He wants to address Himself to. And He says to you, "Now be free and be delivered from that character and that part of your nature." You say, "Oh, but Lord, you don't know how hard I've tried and you don't know how long, and you don't know..." Hey, He's not looking for an argument or looking for an excuse. He's telling you to do something. Don't argue with Him. Don't rehearse your past failures. Do it. You say, "But I can't." Of course you can't, but do it anyhow. For if you will to obey the command of Christ, He'll give you everything necessary. And the moment that you will to do it, you'll say, "I won't do that any more." Because He said, "Now don't do that again." "Oh, but Lord, I don't want to do it again, but you don't know, Lord." No. He said, "Don't do it again. Will to obey!" "All right, Lord, I won't do it again." And the moment you will to obey, He will give you the capacity and the ability to obey. He will never command you to do anything but what He will give to you the power to obey that command. And He commands all of us to be victorious. He commands all of us to overcome. He commands all of us to be free. He commands all of us to be filled

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with His Spirit and to live that new life. And if you will will to do it, "Yes, Lord, I will," He'll give you the capacity.

And the Pharisees went forth [after that] ([Mar 3:6](#)),

That was enough, they'd had it.

and straightway [they] took council with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him ([Mar 3:6](#)).

Look how blind religion can make people. When God works, they want to destroy it. They can't stand to see God work outside of their boundaries, outside of their prescribed borders. And when God begins to work outside of their little prescribed boundaries, they get upset and want to crush it. "Let's destroy it!"

But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about [that were around] Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, [they] came unto him. And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him. For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had [the various] plagues ([Mar 3:7-10](#)).

And so, this great surge of people, wanting to get near Jesus, wanting to touch Him. And, of course, if you were there and you had a problem, a disease, a plague, you would be pushing too. You'd be trying to get up close enough just to touch Him. And so, it became difficult for Jesus to move around. So they took this little boat and they just dropped anchor a little ways off shore.

And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and [they] cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known ([Mar 3:11-12](#)).

Now, the demons were crying out, "Thou art the Son of God." "Quiet. Don't tell anybody." Now,

And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils: and Simon he surnamed Peter; and James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder ([Mar 3:13-17](#)):

So, Jesus had His own little nicknames for these fellows.

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And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alpheus, and Thaddeus [which is also known as Judas, not Iscariot, that's Thadaeus], and Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into a house. And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread ([Mar 3:18-20](#)).

The crowds were getting around Him so much.

And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He's beside himself ([Mar 3:21](#)).

They'd figured He had flipped. He didn't even have time to eat bread, because He was just giving Himself so completely, so completely to the needs of the people. They thought, "Oh, He's flipped; He's beside Himself." *Beside himself* is a term sort of used for the schizophrenia who talks to himself. So, "All right, quit it. Okay, wait a minute, I'll be with you. All right." And you're talking back and forth to yourself. So, he's beside himself, conversing with himself. And they actually thought He had flipped, probably under the pressure of all of these people gathering around, His friends, His family and all.

And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house. Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: [and this was] because they said, He hath an unclean spirit ([Mar 3:22-30](#)).

Now, their declaration, "He has an unclean spirit; He's doing this by the power of the devil," they were attributing the works of God's Holy Spirit to Satan. This was not the unpardonable sin. This was a sign that they were getting close to the unpardonable sin. The unpardonable sin, the sin for which there is no forgiveness, is the sin of rejecting Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believed in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. And he that believes is not condemned. But he that believes not is condemned already, seeing he hath not believed on the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light came into the world, but men would not come to the light" ([John 3:16-19](#)). That's the unpardonable sin. A man's failure to come to the light, to receive God's provision for his sins. God has made only one provision for man's sins, and that is the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son. If you refuse to come to that, then you

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are committing the unpardonable sin. If you do not receive Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, there's no other forgiveness in this world or in the world to come. God has provided one way for man to be saved. For you to reject that, there's no other way. That's unpardonable.

Now, when a person has rejected Jesus over and over and over again, and he is faced with the indisputable evidence that Jesus is indeed the Son of God, you have to somehow explain away the miracles and the power in the life of Jesus Christ. And so, people in explaining it away, say, "Ah, He's doing that by hypnosis or something else." And that's just as bad as anything else, you see. That is an indication that you are trying now to rationalize against the plain facts that you can see. You're trying to, with irrational arguments, destroy the evidence concerning Jesus Christ. And that you are doing because you have set your position and your heart against Jesus, "I will not believe in Him; I will not receive Him." And you set your heart and your position, but now you've got to explain away the evidence. And any time a man starts to, by irrational argument, set aside Jesus Christ, that man is close to committing the unpardonable sin, because he's not even believing his own intellect at this point.

And so, when they began to try to explain away this evidence of His power by saying, "He's doing it through the lord of devils," they are now irrationally rejecting that evidence that is right there before them, because they have set in their heart the position of, "We're not going to believe in Him." And you're getting close to the unpardonable sin when you set yourself in such a way that you refuse the obvious evidence before you.

There came then his brethren and his mother, and, [they were] standing without, [and they] sent unto him, calling him ([Mar 3:31](#)).

Now, there's a huge crowd of people, and outside they said, "He's beside Himself; He's gone crazy. Let's go down and save Him." And so, His brothers, James, Jude and Simon, and His mother were outside. They sent a message in and they said, "Tell Jesus we're out here. Come on out."

And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without [are outside and they] seek for thee. And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold, my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother ([Mar 3:32,34-35](#)).

What Jesus is saying is that there is a bond that comes in the family of God that is deeper than the bond in the human family. When we are followers of Jesus Christ, we come into this deep beautiful inner relationship with each other. So that a person can have a closer relationship with some native in New Guinea, who a few years ago was a cannibal, than you can have with your own blood brothers or sisters, or maybe even an identical twin who isn't saved, if that native is saved.

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I was over in New Guinea and I had this native chieftain come up to me. He had to speak to me through an interpreter. And he had these spears in his hand. He said, "I used these to kill men. But," he said, "now that they have brought me this," holding up his Bible, "I don't need these any more, and I want to give them to you." And there came an instant bonding between this chieftain and myself. My brother in Jesus. Though we could not communicate linguistically, we communicated spiritually, as he grabbed hold of me and I grabbed hold of him and we began to embrace each other in the love of Jesus Christ. And how I felt God's love just pouring out from that man to me. And how I was bonded to him in the Spirit, as I realized, "This man's my brother in Jesus." It was a tremendous spiritual experience for me, being bonded by the Spirit to this native who just not too many years ago was a cannibal. But now, because of the work of God's grace in his life, he's a brother in Christ. And though we are culturally worlds apart, though linguistically we cannot communicate, yet there was such a spiritual communication and a spiritual bond that I've never felt quite that experience of bonding before as I did with that native chieftain as we stood there in the village and embraced each other. My brother in Jesus Christ.

And that's what Jesus is saying, "Hey, these are My brothers, these are My sisters, these are My mothers. Whoever does the will of My Father, whoever is walking with Me, the same is My mother, My sister, My brother." We're the family of God. We've been bonded to each other through that common relationship with Jesus Christ. We're one, together in Him, the body of Christ. Oh, may God help us to realize this beautiful bond that exists, as we are one in Jesus, bonded together in the family of God by His love of us.

Now, inasmuch as Jesus took this attitude towards Mary, for another gospel said He said, "Who is My mother? Who are My brothers?" And this He did here also, "Who is My mother? Who is My brother?" I think it's rather chancy to ask Mary to do favors for you. "Holy, Mary, mother of God, have mercy on us sinners, in this our hour of death." Wait a minute. "Who is My mother?" Hey, why not go directly to the source? Therefore, let us come boldly to the throne of grace to make our requests known, seeing that Jesus has opened the door and laid the way. Oh, how glorious it is, that we can come directly to God through Jesus Christ.

So, next week we'll begin with chapter four. May the Lord be with you, watch over and keep you in His love. May the Spirit of God just take the word of God and continue to refresh our minds and our hearts in God's truth. This week, may the Lord bring back to us in our times of need that word that we have put in our hearts and have studied together. And may we grow together in the family of God into that fullness, into that completeness, that He would have us to experience and know in Jesus Christ. God bless you; God keep you. And may He use you this week to spread abroad through all the land that work of Jesus Christ that He has wrought in your life.