

Mark

“Love, Lunacy or in league with the devil”

3:20-35

- I. **Introduction**
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I. **Introduction**

Mark offers another liability to Jesus’ increased popularity: **Misunderstanding the purpose and intentions behind His actions**. This came about as a direct observation of His **preoccupation with the needs of others above His own needs**. Mark further reveals that such misunderstanding was not isolated to those who opposed Him, the scribes. It ran the spectrum, seeing that those who loved Him, His own family, also misunderstood the purpose and intentions behind His actions. Though the diagnoses of the cause of this was different between these two groups they both came from the same observations.

Furthermore these two groups both saw the cause as being something that had “**taken over**” the mental faculties of Jesus. The difference between these two was that the Scribes saw it as coming from the **outside** and Jesus family saw it as coming from the **inside**.

The problem with the diagnoses was they both failed to realize His PURPOSE because they failed to identify His PERSON, the Son of God. When you consider Jesus true identity His actions are not out of the ordinary they are in every way consistent with His character and nature, God. When has God not considered the needs of His creation above His own? He neither sleeps nor slumbers with regards to us, His meals are to do His purposes. He is by nature quintessentially, “*others centered*”! That simple observation

ought to have caused both groups **NOT TO QUESTION** or malign His mental stability but rather to fall down before Him to worship:

- a. The first account is mentioned in verse 21 but won't be fully dealt with until verses 31-35.
- b. The second account in verses 22-30 comes from the scribes who came from Jerusalem.

II. Vs. 22-30 No signs in a morgue to the deceased

Vs.22-27 We shall look at these in order of the priority of the writer Mark, even though he mentions the response of "*His own people*" first he doesn't address it until the end which indicates priority.

The observation of the Scribes to the cause as to why Jesus was no longer concerned with His needs is that "*He has Beelzebub*". Beelzebub means "*lord of the flies*" or god of dung and it is believed that the Jews transferred this name from the Philistine god to satan in contempt. Simply put their observation led them to the conclusion that Jesus had joined forces with the "*dark side*". Here is the first mention of Jesus altering His teaching style to accommodate those that weren't interested in listening by use of the "*parabolic method*". This method was to throw an illustration alongside of truth to explain it and to cause the listener to investigate or search out the truth further.

It is not a very well thought out explanation by the educated class of scribes. Jesus just applies basic logic to debunk it. "*How can satan cast out satan*"? What benefit would satan gain by opposing Himself? He would create anarchy in his underworld as they would be fighting themselves. There would be strife and division amongst his cohorts that would severely cripple their success. One of the reasons evil has such success and power over the world is that it is absolutely 100% united in its aim, ***there is no rebellion in rebellion!*** Satan rules by fear and terror! He never permits anything that causes

division or any revolutionary activity within his realm. “*A kingdom divided against its self, that house cannot stand.*” To this Jesus offers the right analysis saying, “*No one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And he will plunder his house*”. By explanation Jesus is the “*stronger man*” who is doing the plundering!

Vs. 28-30 The word “*blaspheme*” means to “*maliciously misrepresent*”. It is used here specifically of speech that was intentionally designed to show contempt and lack of reverence due to Jesus as God. These scribes knew that Jesus was performing miracles by the power and authority of the word of God but deliberately attributed them to satan, in order to misdirect people’s attention and acceptance of Him.

Jesus says, “*all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; but **he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit NEVER HAS FORGIVENESS, but is subject to ETERNAL CONDEMNATION***”. This has been referred to as the “*unpardonable sin*”. Mark’s comment in verse 30 is that Jesus’ warning came about because they attributed His work as coming from the devil. Questions abound with regard to what Jesus was saying and to whom does this warning and judgment apply.

There are **four points that will clarify this:**

1. First, the simple observation is that **these scribes were being WARNED and not eternally condemned.** Though they had attributed the work of Christ to the devil and this was very serious, they had not yet crossed the point of no return. Had they already committed the “*unpardonable sin*” Jesus would not have issued such a strong warning. **There are never any signs in a morgue to the deceased!** You don’t warn a man who has already drown in deep water because of a rip tide! No, you warn him while he is still alive and before he goes in too deep and is swept away!
2. Secondly, Jesus refers to this as “*blasphemes against the Holy Spirit*” yet Mark tells us that this blasphemy occurred because they concluded and attributed Jesus work as being from “*an unclean spirit*”. The question that we need answered is, “**How is attributing incorrectly the work of Christ to satan blaspheme against the Holy Spirit and not blasphemy against Jesus?**” In John 15:26 Jesus says concerning the

Holy Spirit that His primary responsibility is to “*Testify of Me*”. Then in chapter 16:13-14 Jesus said, “*..when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and declare it to you.*” **It is the work of the Holy Spirit to take what is Christ’s words and works and make it known in hearts, to attribute those words and works as coming from satan is rejection of the Holy Spirits work.**

3. Third, Jesus’ warning is issued at the scribes but not after His family wrongly attributed His actions as being mentally unstable. This observation goes to the heart of the matter: **The scribes had already received and knew Jesus’ true identity according to Jesus stern warning. The Holy Spirit had testified of Jesus and they had been guided into all truth.** Their problem was **NOT** that they hadn’t received all the facts it is having received them they chose to reject Jesus apart from the evidence and conviction brought upon them by the Holy Spirit. Whereas Jesus’ family hadn’t disregarded the Holy Spirit’s testimony.
4. Finally, the only question left is: **“Why has this not yet reached the level of being “beyond forgiveness” and “eternal condemnation”?” The answer is that the scribes were not yet beyond the Holy Spirit’s testimony, as they were still alive.** Oh, to be sure they had waded out into the deep water and were being dragged out deeper but they hadn’t drown yet. To reject Jesus and to die in that state is to be beyond forgiveness. People are forgiven based upon receiving the testimony of the Holy Spirit regarding who Jesus is and what He has done on their behalf. To die apart from having received this testimony is the “*blaspheme against the Holy Spirit*” and places a person in a place to “*never be forgiven*” and subject to “*eternal condemnation*”.

III. Vs. 20, 21-31-35 Unhinged by Love

Vs. 20-21, 31-35 Jesus had hoped that the 10’s of thousands would have disbursed when He went up the mountain with His disciples but they hadn’t as demonstrated that He couldn’t so much as eat bread. The Greek phrase “*His own people*” in verse 21 is further identified by verse 31 as “*His brothers and mother*” which indicate that it was his immediate family. The words “*about this*” in verse 21 are italicized which means that they aren’t in the Greek but were added in an attempt to clarify. In this case they misrepresent Jesus’ families concern as “**only**” being the multitudes with regards to Him eating. Instead the “*having heard*” refers to all the incidents and crowds during Jesus’ ministry in this region. The words “*lay hold*” mean to “*get possession, become master*

over or seize” and indicate that **Jesus immediate family came to take Him by force against His will**. The reason for such a forceful action is that they estimated that He had become mentally unstable do to the demands of the multitudes.

When word came to Jesus from the multitude saying, “*Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside seeking You.*” I’m certain the multitude expected that Jesus would immediately go out and see them. They were concerned enough about His condition to come to where He was at even with thronging multitudes. They had to have let people know loud enough and long enough to garner attention that got word to Him. Jesus didn’t respond to the request but asked the multitude, “*Who is my mother, or brothers*”. Then before they could answer He looked around at those closest to Him and said “*Here are My mother and brothers!*” To clarify what He meant by this revelation as for as closeness Jesus continued, “*For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother.*” His **answer reveals both His identity and others relationship to Him thought it which is a stronger bond then any human bond or need**. His greatest need that superseded all human needs is to “*do the will of God*”. There is a primacy given in relationships that bind us to our brothers and sisters in Christ and to our Lord Jesus, to God the Father and the Holy Spirit above the demands of even our natural family. When there is a conflict between what our relationship with God demands of our life and the advice, demands from the relationship of our relatives, it is the word of God which is primary. That doesn’t mean that we declare our decision without love and compassion but it does mean that our love for the Lord supersedes our love for all others as it is our love for Him that guides, equips and motivates us too love others.

What I find interesting is that there are many who for leisure or labor have not the time to take care of their basic needs, yet no one thinks they are out of their minds. But when our Lord showed such lack of care exhibited in the needs of others suddenly He's unhinged. To make matters worse this assessment is from His own immediate family. I'm certain His whole life had exhibited this others centeredness but the difference now was the sheer volume of it, which was no doubt the cause of His personal needs going on met.

Why wasn't this ascribed to LOVE instead accredited to LUNACY? People can get excited as they wish about anything, sport, fashion, politics, entertainment and such excitement is never seen as insanity. But let a soul, touched by the Spirit of God become enthusiastic about the love of God, let them set aside the cares of this world and be engaged in work that transforms the hurting lives of people and that person or persons are out of their minds! And rightly so, as we all ought to be out of our earthly bound mind for the love of Christ! Better to be thought unhinged as it means I have entered in through the door and left it a jar so other can come and knock to enter in as well!