MARK 3

Mar 3:1 Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand.

Mar 3:2 And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him.

Mar 3:3 And he said to the man with the withered hand, “Come here.”

Mar 3:4 And he said to them, “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?” But they were silent.

Mar 3:5 And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

Mar 3:6 The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

* Immediately following the accusations of the Pharisees regarding picking grain on the Sabbath Day, Jesus enters the synagogue.
* Don’t allow the chapter break to disconnect the context. These stories flow together just as they do in Matthew’s account.
* While Jesus is in the synagogue, a man with a withered hand comes in.
  + This was probably a type of paralysis or deformity of the hand.
* Notice where the attention of the Pharisees is directed in verse 2.
  + Mar 3:2 And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him.
  + They aren’t interested in helping a handicapped man.
  + They want to catch Jesus doing something wrong so they can accuse Him.
  + APPLICATION:
    - Christians and Non-Christians can fall into this same error.
    - Sometimes we are zealous at catching and calling out “doctrine breakers” but unconcerned with helping those in need, whether physical or spiritual.
    - Sometimes we are focused on the negative (what people are doing wrong) instead of what we could be doing right.
* Jesus, unconcerned with their critical stares, calls the man to Him.
* He then speaks a bold and blatant challenge to His religious opponents.
  + “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?
  + Is it ok to do good on the Sabbath day?
  + Jesus just answered this question for them in the last part of chapter 2 (why context is important).
  + Yes, it was right to do good on the Sabbath.
  + Jesus had decreed it as Lord of the Sabbath.
  + God would have mercy over sacrifice.
* They are waiting and watching to accuse Jesus, but before Jesus performs the miracle they are anticipating, He turns to them and shatters the foundation of their accusation.
  + They didn’t have anything to say in response.
* The text says, Jesus was angry and grieved with the hardness of their hearts.
  + They took God’s law, twisted it, and used it as an excuse not to treat people well.
  + They looked down on someone (Jesus) who used God’s law to treat others well.
    - Why would God bother giving a law to people if He didn’t care about them?
    - He wouldn’t have.
    - So, the law was a clear indication that God cared for people, how then could one interpret the law as permission not to care about those made in God’s image?
* Jesus asks the man to stretch out his hand, he stretched it out, and it was “restored.”
  + Think about the setup of this miracle.
  + Truth #1 - Jesus created this man.
    - Jesus knew when He made this man, he would have a withered hand.
    - Jesus also knew the day would come when He would meet this man in this very synagogue and heal Him.
    - The miracle brought glory to God and was evidence of Jesus’ identity to those who witnessed it.
  + Truth #2 - Jesus created you.
    - Jesus knew when He made you, what deficiencies, struggles, handicaps you would have.
    - What if He intended you to exist with your weaknesses for a similar reason?
    - So that God could be seen overcoming your weaknesses.
    - So that people would look at your life and praise God in His work THROUGH those weaknesses.
    - So your life would evidence His presence to those who witness it.
* Then the Pharisees bowed down and worshipped Jesus and apologized for all the bad things they had said… just kidding.
  + The Pharisees just witnessed the miraculous power of God.
  + How do they respond? They go out and make plans to destroy Jesus!
  + And we ask, how could they possibly respond that way?
    - They had just observed God’s power.
    - But all they were concerned about was what it was going to do to their power.
    - Jesus was stealing their influence and authority and they didn’t like it.
    - Rather than accept Jesus, they plotted they could get rid of Him.
  + It is to be really harsh on the Pharisees here but isn’t their dilemma the same dilemma we all struggle with?
    - The willingness to accept our unimportance in light of God’s importance.
    - The willingness to give up our authority and realize there is something far greater than us running the show.
  + The Pharisees had verifiable evidence right in front of their faces and they still chose to run in the opposite direction.
  + Are we doing the same?
  + What is at the roots of your refusal to come to Christ? Do you have real reasons? Because I assure you there are verifiable evidence for the Christian faith.
  + Or, at the bottom, is it a hesitation to relinquish sovereignty over your own life?
  + At the end of the day, human sovereignty is an illusion. You either serve God willingly or you serve God without knowing it (Pharaoh, Pilate, Judas, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, etc)

Mar 3:7 Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea, and a great crowd followed, from Galilee and Judea

Mar 3:8 and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and Sidon. When the great crowd heard all that he was doing, they came to him.

Mar 3:9 And he told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, lest they crush him,

Mar 3:10 for he had healed many, so that all who had diseases pressed around him to touch him.

Mar 3:11 And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, “You are the Son of God.”

Mar 3:12 And he strictly ordered them not to make him known.

* Jesus’ popularity was growing, and people were coming from all over Palestine to hear Him preach and have their sick healed.
* Idumea was close to 100 miles from Galilee.
* If people were coming from 100 miles away, it gives you some insight into how large these crowds must have been.
* 
* Jesus healed many and cast out many demons.
* As we saw in a previous passage, Jesus forbid the demons from disclosing His identity.
  + Jesus has not yet revealed Himself as the Son of God.
  + His miracles are building the case for an identity to be revealed later in His ministry.
* Evidently, the size and zeal of the crowds were so great that Jesus was being crushed.
* Jesus had His disciples prepare Him a boat to escape the press.
* Other gospel accounts tell us He did this when teaching the people.
* You can imagine the scene.
* All day long people would come flooding in from the countryside pushing their way through the crowd to see Jesus or be healed by Him.
* Probably wasn’t an environment conducive to teaching.

Mar 3:13 And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him.

Mar 3:14 And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach

Mar 3:15 and have authority to cast out demons.

Mar 3:16 He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter);

Mar 3:17 James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder);

Mar 3:18 Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot,

Mar 3:19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

Mar 3:20 Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat.

Mar 3:21 And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.”

* From His multitudes of followers, Jesus selected 12 men to be His Apostles.
* The term apostle means “one who is sent.”
* These 12 men would play a pivotal role in the establishment of the Church (book of Acts).
  + They would have privileged access to Jesus during His time on earth.
  + Jesus would take them with Him to witness signs others didn’t get to see.
  + They would receive insights into Jesus’ work that weren’t made public.
  + Jesus would explain things to them He didn’t explain to others.
  + They would be given miraculous power to preach the gospel and perform miracles after Jesus’ death and resurrection.
* The 12 Apostles:
  + Simon (Jesus gave him the name “Peter,” which means a “stone”).
  + James (Son of Zebedee)
  + John (Son of Zebedee) (Jesus gave these brothers the name “Boanerges,” which means “Sons of Thunder”).
    - Why did Jesus give them this name?
    - It is hard to say.
    - Jesus reasons aren’t explained to us.
    - Some speculations exist but I’ve not heard any convincing enough to buy into.
  + Andrew
  + Philip
  + Bartholomew
  + Matthew
  + Thomas
  + James
  + Thaddaeus
  + Simon the Zealot
    - There was a faction of Jews who resisted the Roman government known as the Zealots.
    - We aren’t told if Simon was that kind of Zealot or bore that name due to zeal for another cause.
  + Judas Iscariot (the one who betrayed Jesus)
* Following the call of the 12 Apostles, Mark records an event not given to us in Matthew’s gospel.
  + Jesus goes home (probably Capernaum) and the crowds begin to form again.
  + Apparently, Jesus and some of His disciples were trying to get something to eat but the crowds were making it impossible.
    - Take a moment to admire the patients of Jesus.
    - He couldn’t leave His house (or be in His house) without being pressed upon by a mob.
    - I’m sure some of the members of the crowd weren’t always respectful and polite.
    - Every once in a while, you will see a celebrity lose their cool because they are tired of being followed around by the paparazzi.
    - But through a multiyear ministry, Jesus never sinned in His interactions with them.
    - If that was the only thing Jesus accomplished in His three year ministry, it would be impressive.
* When Jesus’ family heard about the uproar Jesus was making, they attempted to “seize Him” because they thought He was out of His mind.
  + Admittedly, if one of my brothers started preaching, gained thousands of followers in a matter of weeks, and claimed he could perform miracles, I would think he had lost his mind too.
  + I may not be able to explain everything he is able to do but there is no way the kid I grew up with is now the “Messiah come down from heaven.”
  + It would take a lot to convince me otherwise.
  + In the same way, it took a lot to convince Jesus’ half-brothers.
    - You wonder how much Mary had told them.
  + Although it took them a while, we know they eventually came around and accepted Jesus as the Savior.

Mar 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.”

* Matthew’s gospel tells us the scribes and Pharisees made this accusation immediately following the healing of a demon oppressed man.
* Jesus cast out the demon and the man was healed.
* Matthew tells us, those who surrounded Jesus were amazed at His power and allowed themselves to examine the evidence and consider that Jesus might be the prophesied Son of David who was coming to deliver Israel.
  + The truth was starting to form in the minds of the simple people guided by common sense.
  + But the “educated” told them it wasn’t so!
  + These common Jews were on to something.
  + The Pharisees quickly attempted to shoot them down, stating that Jesus power came from Beelzebul (Satan), the prince of demons.

Mar 3:23 And he called them to him and said to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan?

Mar 3:24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

Mar 3:25 And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.

Mar 3:26 And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end.

* Make no mistake, what the Pharisees were suggesting was nonsense.
* They were suggesting that Jesus was defeating the Devil’s servants with power derived from the Devil. (Insert face-palm).
* Jesus immediately rebukes their ignorance.
  + If a Kingdom goes to war with itself it will destroy itself.
  + If a household is divided it will have no strength.
  + A businessman doesn’t try to sabotage his own start-up.
  + Satan is not ignorant enough to go to war with himself and his mission.

Mar 3:27 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.

* If Satan isn’t destroying himself from the inside, it must be a force from the outside.
* If you are going to take something that belongs to a strong man, you first have to find a way to bind him.
* If this can be done, you will then be able to plunder his house (take what belongs to him).
* What does this have to do with anything?
* Jesus is explaining His power over Satan.
* Satan is the strong man and Jesus has the power to bind him and take what belongs to him.
  + In this case, the demon possessed individual was under Satan’s power
  + Christ came with the Spirit of God to plunder what Satan possessed.
  + In a wider sense, Jesus had come with the Spirit of God to plunder all that Satan possessed and kept by the power of sin.
* If Jesus wasn’t casting demons out with Satan’s power, it must have been through the power of God (Spirit of God).
* And if God’s Spirit is at work in the world, it signifies the coming of the Kingdom.
* And if God had come to overthrow the reign and stranglehold of Satan, the Kingdom of God was on its way.

Mar 3:28 “Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter,

Mar 3:29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”—

Mar 3:30 for they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.”

* Between verse 27 and 28, Matthew records Jesus saying, “Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.”
* Jesus left no middle ground or grey space in which His audience could linger.
* There are only two sides in the universal conflict between good and evil.
  + You either belong to the power of Satan.
  + Or you belong to the power of the Spirit of God.
  + You either gather with Christ or scatter with Satan.
  + You are either in one camp or the other:
* This dichotomy makes clear the seriousness of rejecting the Spirit of God.
* Every sin will be forgiven men except the blasphemy of the Spirit.
* Blasphemy: “the act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God.”
* Is there a greater blasphemy than to attribute the works of God to the power of Satan?
  + The Pharisees, with their own tongues, confessed their loyalty… and it wasn’t to Christ.
  + They chose the side they accused Jesus of drawing power from in order to condemn Him.
  + As long as they persisted in mocking and rejecting the Spirit of God, they would not find forgiveness in this life or the next.
  + Why? Because Satan had them in his possession (as he did all men) and the power they blasphemed was the only power to bind Satan and free them.
* Jesus’ work was not yet complete.
  + He still needed to die on the cross, resurrect from the dead, and ascend into heaven.
  + When that work was accomplished, He would send the Spirit of God to the world.
  + The Spirit would guide men into the truth.
  + He would testify to the truth taught by Jesus.
  + He would explain to men and women what they needed to do to be saved by Jesus’ blood.
  + We know that many Jews who mocked Jesus when He was on earth turned in repentance when the Spirit spoke through Peter on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2).
  + They were forgiven the words they spoke against Christ (namely, “Crucify Him!”)
  + But those who rejected Christ during His life and rejected the messengers of Christ and His Spirit even after His death would not be forgiven until they left off scattering with the Devil and came to gather with Christ.
  + As long as a person is in a state of treating the Spirit of God with contempt or are failing to reverence it, they can’t be forgiven because God’s power is the only power capable of freeing them from their sins.
* The same is true for us.
* If we insult the Spirit of grace and count the blood of Jesus a common and unholy thing, we cannot be forgiven until we stop persisting in blasphemy.

[Mar 3:31](verseid:41.3.31) And his mother and his brothers came and standing outside they sent to him and called him.

[Mar 3:32](verseid:41.3.32) And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you.”

[Mar 3:33](verseid:41.3.33) And he answered them, “Who are my mother and my brothers?”

[Mar 3:34](verseid:41.3.34) And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers!

[Mar 3:35](verseid:41.3.35) For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.”

* Someone came and notified Jesus that His mother and brothers were wanting to see Him.
* This would have been Mary and her other children with Joseph (Jesus’ half-brothers).
  + His brothers are named in Mark 6:3.
  + Mar 6:3 - Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.
* As He did so often, Jesus used this everyday experience to teach a spiritual lesson.
* It does not suggest He was in any way disrespecting His mother.
* He asked, “Who are my mother and my brothers *really*?”
* The true family of God are those who identify with Jesus and accept His heaven-given message.
* 1Jn 3:10 - By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.
* The blood of Christ is a stronger bond than familial blood.
* Our family relationships dissolve when those we love pass-away.
* Don’t you want a relationship that can’t dissolve in death?
* The bond of Christ’s blood is only reaffirmed in death!

https://www.gotquestions.org/sons-of-thunder.html