

“Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save or to kill?” -Mark 3:4

Find a quiet place to begin. Take a few deep breaths. Ball your hands up into a fist and think about all of the frustrations, irritations, and worries of the day. Now take a long slow breath. As you release your fists, ask God to take away your anxiety and frustration of the day, and open your heart and mind to the study of his word.

Read Mark 3:1-6

1. Where was Jesus and what day of the week was this?
2. Why do you believe the Pharisees were watching Jesus?
3. What is Jesus response to the Pharisees regarding the man with a withered hand?
4. After his healing, what do you think the man with the withered hand thought about Jesus?
5. What did the Pharisees think?
6. Who did they go out and take counsel with?

Read Mark 3:7-12

1. Where did Jesus retreat to after the Sabbath showdown with the Pharisees?
2. Who went out with him and where were they from?
3. Why were the crowding around Jesus?
4. When Jesus cast out demons, what did he command them NOT to do?
5. Why do you think this is?

*Author's Note: Many people often say that the bible is a bunch of made up stories, fables, etc. Mark intentionally putting demons in his gospel as character witnesses FOR Jesus builds credibility in my mind that these particular stories actually happened. IF Mark was making up a bunch of stuff, it would be reasonable that he would include testimony about Jesus from famous people, powerful people, and people with influence. Instead Mark chooses to tell us how the demons believed Jesus was the son of God, and that he had power over them. This idea is called **Negative Testimony**. Which helps build a credible case, that this isn't made up or fictional, but that these events actually happened.*

Read Mark 3:13-21

1. Who did Jesus appoint to be apostles?
2. What did he appoint them to do? (three things, per 3:14-15).
3. After they went home, who came to get Jesus?
4. What did they say about him?
5. Why do you believe his family thought he was crazy?

Author's Note: This note about Jesus' family gives me such hope. There is no one more hard on us or unforgiving as our own families. They are the ones who never let you forget that stupid thing you did as a kid, or what trouble you got into.. Jesus family was no different. They grew up with him. When Jesus began his ministry, they were probably fearful of what would happen to him and they didn't understand who he was or why he was doing what he was doing! (just like the average family, right?)

Read Mark 3:22-30

1. Where did the scribes come down from? (recall where the temple/synagogue was earlier in Chapter 3.)
2. What were they saying about Jesus?
3. Paraphrase in your own words how Jesus responded to the Pharisees?
4. Why might Jesus say blasphemy against the Holy Spirit was unforgivable? What does this imply about the Pharisees in this particular instance?

Read Mark 3: 31-36

1. How does Jesus respond to his family calling him? What does he say to the crowds?
2. Earlier in this chapter, Jesus appointed people to be with him. What is he implying about those who are following him? Who are they to Jesus?

Defining the “Bible-y” Words:

Herodians: The Herodians were a group of individuals who held political power during Jesus time. They supported King Herod Antipas, the Roman Empire’s ruler over the land that Jews lived in from 4 BC to 39 AD.

Judea: Modern day region of Palestine. During Jesus time, Judea was the southern part of Israel and Jerusalem (along with the Jewish temple) was situated in Judea.

Jerusalem: The capital and holy city of the Jewish people. The temple was located here. No other city in the world has been more fought over, besieged, captured and recaptured than this special city.

Idumea: During Jesus time, Idumea was located southwest of Judea. The Edomites of the Old Testament established this region.

Tyre and Sidon: Modern day Lebanon on the mediterranean coast.

Zealot: Zealots were a political party fiercely devoted to establishing Jewish rule and Reign over Israel. They were looking to rebel against the roman empire and expel the Romans from the holy lands of Israel during Jesus time.

Beelzebul: Thought to be a Philistine god, which got its origins in the Canaanite god, Baal. Beelzebul literally translated means lord of the flies, but it is often translated as “the Prince of demons.”

Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit: Attributing unholy characteristics to a holy God. in this context, the scribes and Pharisees claimed that Jesus was only able to do his miraculous deeds through demonic forces and powers. They rejected that these healings and miracles were actually the very hand of God. Jesus says this belief- to believe God is bad, is unforgivable.