

Mark 3:7-12 The Confession of Demons

We are in Mark chapter 3 verses 7 through 12 this morning. Ever since chapter 2 verse 1 we have seen opposition to the Lord's ministry. He was called a blasphemer because He forgave someone their sins and they said, "Only God can forgive sins," and they got it right. Only God can forgive sins and that is why Jesus forgave the man his sins. He healed on the Sabbath day and the religious leaders and the religious people were focused on Him, watching Him, as to if He would heal on the Sabbath day. And many of the Lord's healings on the Sabbath took place at the synagogue where the religious people are.

And so last time we saw in chapter 3 verses 1 through 6, at the synagogue there was a man with a withered hand. And they set Him up knowing that He ministers to people, and heals people, and helps people; to see if He would work on the Sabbath day by healing this man and making him work, making him walk, or stretch out his arm. And so Jesus made him stand in the midst of it all. He wanted people to see. He was not about to back down and He healed the man of his withered hand.

And after having gone out, verse 6 tells us, **the Pharisees immediately were taking counsel with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.** Interesting you are not supposed to work on the Sabbath day, they decided to hold counsel on the Sabbath day and plot and plan to destroy. Religion contradicts itself. Religion is man's way of reaching up to God and reaching favor in the Lord, rather than just receiving His grace. And Jesus came to help people and to minister to people.

But in verses 7 through 12 for today we have more on the reception of Christ, people receiving Christ but in a different way than the religious leaders and religious people. And the title of this section is The Confession of Demons. We have taken this subject before; we are reviewing today in some instances; we are revisiting some of the things about the seriousness of demonic forces. And the reason why we are spending time on it is because Paul told Timothy in I Timothy chapter 4 verse 1, **In the latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons.** So it is very serious.

People are going to be pulled away and drawn away from Christ, from the faith. And be seduced by experiences, which are not spiritual, but they have stimulation to them. Many are following emotionally stimulated experiences under the guise that it is the power of the Holy Spirit. We have to be careful. We have to be careful to see that demonic forces are in and around the church ready to deceive us and produce doctrines of demons. The false doctrines always follow the experience because the doctrine is made to justify any emotional experience that we might have as being spiritual. So it is important to see in that order: seducing spirits and doctrines of demons; the seducing comes first and then the doctrines of demons come second.

But we have more of others that are receiving Christ and how they are responding. Notice verses 7 and 8. **And Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea; this would be the Sea of Galilee, and a great multitude from Galilee followed Him and from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan, and the ones around Tyre and Sidon,**

a great multitude, having heard how much He was doing, they came to Him. So He is pulling in multitudes of people now from the North, South, East, and West. People are beginning to hear about Christ.

What a response by the people in contrast to the religious leaders. It is interesting that the religious leaders and the religious people rejected Him because He did not fit into their system, and He did not submit to keeping the rules and regulations which God never placed on people. The problem of religion has always been burdening people with guilt because they do not perform correctly. When Jesus came He came to set people free. Not free to do whatever they want, but free to follow Jesus Christ; released from the bonds of both sin and Satan in order to follow Jesus.

But notice these two verses, verses 7 and 8, the multitudes - thousands upon thousands of people came to Him. We know at one time that He fed almost twenty thousand people because they were with Him, and they came to Him because they heard how much He was doing. Now you see, some people will stay away from Jesus because of what He is doing and other people will come to Christ because of what He is doing.

You know what Jesus said in Matthew chapter 11 verse 28, **Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.** He is talking about carrying the burdens of life and sin on our shoulders, wearing us down, tearing life apart. But Jesus said, **Come unto Me.** That is what the multitudes were doing, they were coming to Jesus. They were not coming to a religion, or a religious practice, or a religious system. The Lord carries our burdens for us. For us to go the way that He would have us to go, He becomes our strength.

But Jesus said to the religious leaders in Luke chapter 11 verse 46, **You load people down with burdens that are just too heavy to carry.** And so they loaded the people down with all these rules and all these regulations, which God never gave, and the people's lives were being destroyed.

Let us move in to verses 9 and 10. Verse 9 says, **And He spoke to His disciples, in order that a boat might wait for Him on account of the crowd, in order that they might not press upon Him.** (verse 10) **For He healed many; so as to fall upon Him in order that they might touch Him, as many as were having diseases.** Very graphic in the literal translation. They were falling on Him, just to touch Him, many that were having diseases.

Jesus came to set the captives free. And Jesus has come to set you and me free; and set us free to follow Him and to not be burdened down with the load and the guilt of religious practice that has been placed upon us by man. But to be free to follow Jesus Christ.

Now concerning the Sabbath day, that was the big catch the religious leaders were using to catch Jesus working on the Sabbath. Do you know why Christians in the book of Acts began to meet on Sunday instead of Saturday the Sabbath? It is because Sunday is the day in which the Lord rose from the dead. Every time that Christians get together on Sunday it is the celebration that Jesus Christ is alive. It is a celebration. It is a proclamation that Jesus Christ is alive, He

rose on Sunday. And that is why Christians meet on Sunday and the Jewish people, their Sabbath is on Saturday.

Jesus Christ is not just an idea or religious belief in a Man that lived two thousand years ago. But it is all about the living Spirit of Jesus Christ [that] has come into my heart and He has set me free to walk in His Spirit and to follow His Spirit and to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. But man's religion keeps trying to put all of the restrictions on us so that we have to perform, and we have to feel guilty, and we feel condemned if we do not perform correctly. And Jesus came to set people free. And multitudes were coming to be set free from Satan's grip on their lives.

Look at verse 11, **And whenever the unclean spirits were observing Him, they were falling down before Him, and were crying out, saying, "You Yourself are the Son of God!"** So it is interesting the unclean spirits, they were observing what He was doing. But while they were observing what He was doing they were falling down before Him in obeisance and they were confessing, **"You Yourself are the Son of God!"**

Now I want to take five things of importance as to what is happening here in this scene. The demons were crying out, **"You Yourself are the Son of God!"** That is a good confession except it came from a demon and many demons. The demons know who Jesus is, the demons confess who Jesus is, but that does not save them. Notice that. They know who Jesus is, and they confess who Jesus is, but it does not save them.

Mark in Mark chapter 1, we saw in verses 23 and 24, it says there was a man with an unclean spirit in their synagogue, **And the unclean spirit screamed, saying, "Eah, what do we have to do with You, Jesus, Nazarene? Did You come to destroy us? I know You, who You are, the Holy One of God.** Again confessing, he knows. They know and they confess who Jesus is.

In fact, secondly, not only confession but they believe the truth about Jesus. In James chapter 2 verse 19 tells us that not only can they confess who Jesus is, they also believe the truth about Him. James chapter 2 verse 19 says, **You believe that God is one. You do well. Even the demons are believing and trembling.** They believe the truth about Jesus, but it does not save them.

There are some who teach that a true confession produces salvation. They cite I Corinthians chapter 12 verse 3 which says, **Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking in the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one is able to say that Jesus is Lord except in the Holy Spirit.** So there are those that say if you just confess Jesus is Lord you are saved, just reciting the words. But the problem is, as is most problems, that the text does not literally say *Jesus is Lord*. The text in the Greek text says say, "Lord Jesus." You see, it is personal. You cannot call Jesus your Lord personally, without the Holy Spirit. It is not a man's effort. It is not a man's performance. You cannot call Jesus your Lord without the Holy Spirit. The demons cannot respond to Jesus as their Lord. They can confess who He is, they can believe the truth about Him, but they cannot submit. They are not able to be submissive to Him. They are in rebellion even though they believed and can confess the truth about Him.

So first of all demons can confess the truth about Jesus. That is scary. There are people who confess the truth about who Jesus is, but they are not saved. It is the presence of Christ. It is being born again and having the Spirit of Christ in you that saves you. But the Bible tells us that it is possible under the influence of even demons, let alone just the human flesh, but under the influence of demons, a person can confess the truth about Jesus and believe the truth without submitting themselves to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and receiving Him into their life.

But the third thing is that demons can also witness. Demons can also witness. There is an incident that is recorded for us that happened during Paul's second missionary journey. He came into Philippi. It says in Acts chapter 16 verses 16 through 18, **Now it happened, while we were going to prayer, that a certain slave girl having a spirit of Python** - the English texts use *divination*, but it is a spirit of Python, a snake. **A certain slave girl having a spirit of Python met us, who was bringing much business to her masters by telling fortunes.** I submit something else to you for you to notice before we go on and keep reading, is that Satan himself can tell people's futures and their fortunes. So you have to be very careful with people who claim to have certain gifts to tell the future, or to tell your future, or to have a message from God, and it might not be because Satan is able to produce that.

She having followed Paul and us, was crying, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to us the way of salvation." Now that is what she said. The demon in her witnessed to the truth summoning people over to hear Paul preach, because they have been sent having the message of salvation, the way of salvation.

And this she was doing over many days. But Paul, having become annoyed, and having turned to the spirit, said, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out from her." And it came out that very same hour. So Paul was irritated, annoyed, because it was not the Holy Spirit. Even though it was the truth they came to proclaim the way of salvation, but it was spoken by a demon, not the Holy Spirit. So it does not so much make a difference as to what is been said but who is saying it. Please notice that Satan can witness.

Then fourthly, and the Scriptures also teach us that Satan can and will perform signs and wonders. You have to understand that the Bible actually comes right out and says it. In II Thessalonians chapter 2 verse 9, it is what will happen when the lawless one, the antichrist, is revealed. It says, **The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, in all power, and signs, and lying wonders.** Satan is going to come through the antichrist and perform signs, miracles, and lying wonders. We learn from our study of the last days the Satan can and will perform these signs and wonders with power. He is and will be a miracle worker and many people, Paul says in first Timothy chapter 4 verse 1, some people are going to be deceived and drawn away because the miracles seemingly are proof to them.

But fifthly, making mention to the text and I Timothy chapter 4 verse 1 which says, **Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith** - depart from trusting in Jesus - **paying attention to deceiving spirits and teachings of demons.** The fifth thing about demons is that they have teachings and doctrines that go along with the false experiences that people have in order to try to prove a point. That is why with some of these false doctrines you go straight to the text itself and show the text and explain the text. Some

people cannot accept it because it makes the experience wrong, it makes their belief and the doctrine about their experience wrong if you can show that the Scripture says, "That is not true."

So very important, five important points:

- (1) Demons can confess the truth about who Jesus is.
- (2) Demons believe who Jesus is.
- (3) Demons witness about Christ and the truth about the proclamation of the gospel.
- (4) Satan and the demons can perform signs and wonders, and there can be stimulating emotional experiences.
- (5) Demons can form teachings and doctrines that are not done by God's Spirit.

So we have to be aware. Not all that is presented to be religious and Christian religious is all true according to the Holy Spirit and God's Word.

Verse 12, Jesus in response, **And often He was rebuking them** (that is *the demons*) **in order that they might not make him known.** Often and many times He was rebuking. *Rebuking* is what is called the imperfect tense in the Greek text, which shows continuous action in the past. He was often, many times, continuously, rebuking the demons to be quiet so as to not make Him known. In fact, the term *rebuke* is there instead of *quiet*. He was rebuking them and He would not receive their testimony. But you know the testimony is really Christ's. It is the testimony of Jesus Christ and who He is and what He has done. The Lord will not receive testimony from anybody actually. He will not receive testimony from anybody.

Jesus said in John chapter 5 verses 33 and 34, "**You have sent to John, (that would be John the baptizer) and he has borne witness to the truth. Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved.**" So the only testimony that is right and acceptable is the testimony of Jesus Christ not the testimony of man. We have a tendency to bring our old religious practices and all of our religious background into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. And it is like dead weight weighing us down, hindering us, causing our hearts to respond and reject what God's word says.

God has His testimony. He has given us His testimony right here about Jesus Christ. And Jesus Christ will not receive even the truth if demons should speak the truth about Him. He will not receive that. It must be the testimony of the Holy Spirit. That is the true testimony of Christ is by the Holy Spirit about Jesus Christ and His truth. And the testimony of Jesus Christ is of His love for us.

We are seeing here a contrast between people who are caught in the religious trap, even religious leaders trying to catch Jesus at doing something wrong when He came to set people free. Religion puts people in bondage, but in Jesus - a relationship with Jesus Christ sets people

free. He does not approach us by trying to put some kind of guilt trip on us. He wants to help us.

The writer of the book of Hebrews in Hebrews chapter 4 verses 14 and 15 says Jesus Christ has become our great High Priest and He sympathizes with our weaknesses. Therefore the writer of Hebrews goes on to say in Hebrews chapter 4 verse 16, **Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.** Come boldly to the throne of grace. Do not have to be afraid of Him. He sympathizes with our weaknesses as our High Priest and intercedes for us. So the writer of Hebrews is encouraging us to come, to find grace to help in time of need. There is nothing to hinder us from coming to God's throne and receiving His grace to help. Jesus sympathizes with our weaknesses. Yet sometimes we picture Him as somebody who is going to reject us, and condemn us, and hold things against us; when the Bible says that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Well, if He died for us while still being sinners do you think He is going to reject me now that He has saved me? The answer is no.

In closing, it says in Romans chapter 15 verse 13, **Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, for you to abound in the hope in power of the Holy Spirit.** God has poured out His Spirit upon us to forgive us and to set us free. But Satan continues to try to put us back into prison. Not just by the sins of the world, or the sins of the flesh, but also by religion, instead of a personal relationship with Christ. We must be aware, we must be cautious, we must take heed that in the last days Satan is going to be working, and he is going to working in a religious system as well. We have to be cautious of it and judge everything by God's word and God's Spirit.

Let's close with prayer.