

Chapter Three

LEGALISM CONFRONTED AND GRACE OFFERED WITH MERCY



WHERE IS JESUS?

1. In a Synagogue
2. Sea of Galilee
3. Hillside near Capernaum
4. In a House

OVERVIEW : As their hatred of Jesus mounted, His enemies searched for every possible chance to attack Him, but He kept evading their traps. On one

occasion, a man with a shriveled hand was in the synagogue. Jesus asked His opponents' opinion on whether or not to help the man, but they refused to reply. Jesus then told him to stretch his hand out. Apparently Jesus neither touched him nor did any other physical thing--He merely asked the man to reach his hand out. When he did, it was healed. Jesus' critics were furious and began plotting to kill Him.

Jesus ignores their challenge and heals the man's shriveled hand, announcing by His act that, rightly understood, no law given by God prevents doing good to a person in need (3:1–6). After this fifth conflict Jesus leaves the area where He has been teaching, but is followed by those eager for healing (vv. 7–12). After Jesus officially appoints the Twelve as His disciples (vv. 13–19), a delegation of experts in the biblical law appear and argue that Christ's powers come from Satan (v. 22). Jesus ridicules their argument (vv. 23–27) but announces that their blasphemy against the Holy Spirit reveals a fixed attitude which condemns them absolutely (vv. 28–30). When His anxious and upset family (vv. 20–21) arrives, Jesus stuns His listeners by identifying Himself with a new family God is creating from those who do the will of God (vv. 31–35).

Read Mark 3:4.

- ? There are three traditional interpretations of Jesus' meaning.
 1. Man must be concerned with relieving the distress of others.

3. In 3:5, we read that Jesus “looked around at them in anger and, (was) deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts.” What do you think is the real issues that has Jesus so angry? How does this show us what role “righteous anger” should play in the life of a believer?

4. Large crowds were coming to Jesus from all around the region (see 3:7-12). What was the primary reason they came? What is it in your life that motivates you to come to Jesus? What does it mean to you to be called by Jesus to “be with him?”
5. Why do you think Jesus chose twelve men? Why did He choose only “simple” or “common” men?

6. In verse, 29, Jesus says there is a sin that cannot be forgiven. How do people blaspheme the Holy Spirit today and what can we do about it?

7. In verses 33-35, Jesus talks about new family relationships. How does your life show evidence of this new type of family love?

2. God’s will is best served by healing rather than plotting to kill, as the Pharisees were doing, v. 6.
 3. Jesus is committed to destroying Satan’s disfiguring works every day.
- ? Rightly understood, no command of God prevents us from doing good to others by meeting crying needs.

Read Mark 3:5.

- ? Jesus’ opponents cared neither about worship or the crippled man. They were in the synagogue to find a new way to attack Jesus (v. 3). Jesus felt anger and deep distress.
- ? But what insight the tenses of the Gk. verbs provide! “Anger” is aorist, viewing this emotion as a point of time, or moment. “Distress” is present, viewing this emotion as a continuing, pervasive thing. We may be momentarily angry at those who reject Christ and choose sin over righteousness. Yet our dominant emotion must be distress over the impact of their choice on them!

Read Mark 3:14.

- ? The Greek word for “apostle” means “one sent on a mission as an envoy.” The word serves as a technical term identifying the twelve men Jesus chose to follow Him during the years of His earthly ministry and to lead the church after His resurrection.

- ? But “apostle” also is used in an extended way in Acts and the epistles, where it seems to be used of those who had an itinerant evangelistic ministry (i.e., missionaries) (cf. Acts 14:14; Rom. 16:7; 1 Cor. 12:28; 2 Cor. 11:13).

FOR YOUR PERSONAL STUDY:

1. People followed Jesus for a variety of reasons. The same is true today. What is your primary reason for following Jesus?
2. In 3:1-6 Jesus has an encounter with the Pharisees but more importantly he had an encounter with legalism. Define what you understand legalism to be in this story?
3. What was it that angered and saddened (distressed) Jesus?
4. Instead of arguing his point verbally, what did Jesus do? Was he trying to be a troublemaker or what was his point?

5. Jesus had the ability to have people follow him because of all the cool and amazing acts he was performing and in fact, many did follow him for that reason, but ultimately what is Jesus emphasizing in his ministry?

6. The Pharisees were interested in what?

7. What was Jesus interested in?

FOR YOUR GROUP STUDY:

1. What observations have you made in your study of Mark this week?
2. Who was (or is) the best “beat cop” in your family, always making sure that everything is done just right?