

The Downfall of Division

Mark 3:20 – 30

I. Intro

- A. Timely message for today; Satan's main weapon in the world, in homes, in churches – divide, getting people to turn against one another
- B. Word about Jesus and signs/miracles done spread quickly; everywhere Jesus goes people are following after – at Sea of Galilee, gone up the mountain to get a break and (v. 13) ... *called to Him those whom He desired* – chosen His twelve disciples
- C. **READ Mark 3:20 – 21**; returns home, crowds gather again so fast Jesus and disciples no time to grab a quick bite to eat
- D. Look at contrast – crowds excited, enthusiastic, can't wait to find out more about Jesus; but Jesus' own family, ashamed, embarrassed, try to stop Jesus from making a fool of Himself and making fools of them, their words – *He is out of his mind*
- E. Don't see a lot of enthusiasm for Jesus today, in the world, in communities, in many churches – why?
 - i. People love the world and things of the world too much?
 - ii. People long to satisfy desires of flesh too much?
 - iii. People love recognition, pride, power too much?
 - iv. Has the witness and the impact of the church in society become too weak?
- F. When Christ was pressured by the crowds, when He was unsupported by His own family, when He couldn't get a moment for physical nourishment, He didn't let it stop Him from doing His Father's work
- G. Even though people today have little interest in Christ, little enthusiasm for things of God, the Spirit of God and Christ is still alive and active in communities and in the world and will not be stopped
- H. There comes a time in every person's life when each will have to make a choice and the decision about Jesus
 - i. Is He truly the Son of God, Savior of the world?
 - ii. Was He some evil-possessed lunatic that deceived and still deceives countless numbers of people?
 - iii. Was He the greatest liar, con-man that ever lived?
- I. For those who have believed in Him as God's Son and Savior, is He worth forsaking all, denying self, taking up our cross, and following Him totally and completely?
- J. This decision about Jesus has been a target of Satan to stir up division among people all through history and is still a target today
- K. This same decision faced by the religious leaders of Jesus' day; **READ Mark 3:22 – 30**

L. Look at 3 questions about Jesus

II. Was He Demon-Possessed Lunatic?

- A. Was Jesus such a great deceiver who set out to mislead the whole world into think He was the Son of God?; another way to phrase this question, was Jesus from Satan, or was He truly from God?
- B. The religious leaders of Jesus' day believed He was evil, He was from Satan; (v. 22) *He is possessed by Beelzebul ... by the prince of demons he casts out demons*
- C. Weren't just saying Jesus was in alliance with the devil, but He was actually "possessed", or an incarnation of devil himself
- D. See this same accusation about Jesus in other passages:
 - i. **John 8:48 (ESV)**
48 The Jews answered him, "Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?"
 - ii. **John 10:20 (ESV)**
20 Many of them [*Jews*] said, "He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?"
- E. Notice – religious leaders couldn't deny the power of Jesus, lives were being changed, demons were fleeing at His very words; what they were really trying to disprove was that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, and the only way to do that was to prove Jesus was a fraud
- F. Jesus refutes their claim about Him by stating a plain truth – that internal strife/division leads to destruction; (v. 23) *How can Satan cast out Satan?* - If Satan was evil and the very source of evil in the world, why would he then try to get rid of evil?; makes no sense for Satan to be divided against himself
- G. Jesus uses two illustrations to back up His argument; **REFER v. 24 – 26**
- H. So Jesus can't be a demon-possessed lunatic when His whole mission/ministry was doing good, healing sick, make lame walk, bringing sight to blind, providing meal for thousands of people, proclaiming peace to nations
- I. If Jesus was a demon-possessed lunatic, why would He allow Himself to be executed under the "pretense" of bring salvation to all mankind?
- J. **Jesus' words: John 10:36-38 (ESV)**
36 do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?
37 If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me;
38 but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father."

III. Is Jesus truly God's Son – Savior of the World?

- A. **REFER v. 27; Who is the strong man? Satan; Who is the man who enters and plunders the strong man's possessions? Jesus; What are the strong man's possessions? Unsaved, unrighteous**
- B. **Satan's house, his kingdom, has been breached when Jesus came into the world; the power of Christ is now delivering men from the world (Satan's kingdom) and the entrapment of sin/evil**
- C. **1 John 3:8 (ESV)**

8 Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.
- D. **Colossians 2:13-15 (ESV)**

13 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,
14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.
15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.
- E. **Then Jesus speaks of God's mercy, and God's judgment; REFER v. 28 – 30**
- F. **God's love is universal, not selective; all people's sins will be forgiven if they will believe in Christ as Son of God, turn to Him confessing their sin**
- G. **Jesus' death on the cross shows just how universal God's love is – Jesus' prayer for His executioners and those who had turned against Him –**
Father, forgive them for they know not what they do
- H. **There is no sin that God cannot forgive, but there is one danger (v. 29)**
- I. **Been asked many times about "unforgivable sin", what exactly is it? The answer ...**
 - i. **The person who continues and continues to reject the promptings of the Holy Spirit to surrender their life to Christ**
 - ii. **The person who continues and continues to allow themselves to be blinded to the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit in their life to truly see/ understand who Jesus really is**
 - iii. **The person who continues and continues to willfully sin despite the conviction of the Holy Spirit upon their life**
 - iv. **The person who continues and continues to insist on living their own way**
- J. **blaspheme (Gr.) - to revile, vilify, to speak evil of; person who does this against the Spirit of God commits the *eternal sin***

IV. Close

- A. So, the answer for healing the division in this world is determined by the decision the world makes about Jesus Christ – was He a crazy-man, or is He truly the Son of God**
- B. As long as people refuse to accept Christ as Messiah, and believe on Him as Messiah and Savior of the world, there will always be division and that division will ultimately lead to the world's destruction**
- C. Jesus is the only answer for saving the world from the downfall of division – in the world, in the USA, in Georgia, in Mt. Vernon/Ailey, in our homes, in our church**