

Mark 3:23-35 – Removal of Hindrances to Kingdom Building

Clarke, TSK, GreekLexicon, Handfuls, INT, Poole, Geneva, Barnes, Calvin, Rienecker, Gill, Henry, Maclaren, Alexander, Trapp, Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Jesus' mission was hindered 受阻 by 3 things. He was hindered by many people coming to hear the Gospel and see it confirmed by miracles that he and his disciples **hardly had time to eat**. But they simply had to endure some hardships. There was no way around some sufferings. The other 2 hindrances were severer.

First, the Pharisees **accused Jesus of working for the Devil**. That was a serious threat that could put his ministry and life in danger. Second, **Jesus' own blood relatives tried to stop him from doing the work** he came to do by pulling him away from the crowd.

How Jesus removed these 2 hindrances is the subject of God's Word today.

Our headings are:

Responding to the Insinuation 暗讽 of the Pharisees

Responding to the Accusation 指控 of his Family

Our goals are: **That seeing the victory the Lord accomplished over the Devil to free you, that you will then work with diligence to spread his kingdom.**

Responding to the Insinuation of the Pharisees

23 So He called them to Himself and said to them in parables: "**How can Satan cast out Satan?**

1. The Jewish leaders accused Jesus of being able to cast out demons by the power of Satan. In other words, they were accusing him of being under the dominion of the Devil. Now **many of their own people testified of Christ words and miracles.** And those leaders could see the effect of Christ's work – how the demon possessed were freed and lived better lives and how they were praising God. (The healed were doing the same thing.) But they still made the false charge.

2. Why were the Pharisees making this type of charge? These wicked leaders were trying to poison the people against the Lord – the one who had the only hope of their salvation 救恩 – so they would stop following him. **And notice this common ploy of wicked people:** Accuse others of doing the same thing they were doing to put the innocent on the defensive.

3. This accusation was so striking that it was recorded by all the Synoptic Gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

4. Jesus responded and showed the wicked leaders the error of their arguments – and strengthened the faith of his people at the same time. The Pharisees should have known from all the other evidence who he was, but he graciously corrected them. (1 Peter 3:12-15) He could have left them in their ignorance! So what did he say? **Jesus said: Satan would not cast out Satan!** Satan would not cast out his own. And Satan and he were distinctly different. They did not have the same occupation. One was to heal and the other was to hurt. 'Hawks do not pick out hawks' eyes.' But Jesus went farther.

24 "If a kingdom is divided against itself, **that kingdom cannot stand.** 25 "And if a house is divided against itself, **that house cannot stand.** 26 "And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end.

5. Jesus pointed out that the Pharisaic accusation was illogical. The Devil would not act subversively 颠覆性 to his power and dominion – no normal person does!

a. Satan will not fight against Satan otherwise his kingdom would be destroyed. V24 The Devil is not a fool. He will not work against his own interests. You probably have heard of the militias that took over a government building in the US...for they claim that the government is working against the people. If that spreads, the country could fall. Islamists kill Islamists.

b. A divided family cannot stand. V25 Families can take a licking if they are united...but not if they are divided.

c. A divided person can't survive. V26 If the white blood cells start attacking other cells...you die.

27 "No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And then he will plunder 搶劫 his house.

6. Christ affirms that because the Devil was strong he would not allow his house (the human body) to be plundered without the strongest possible resistance. The Devil is a tyrant 专治 and **would never cede his authority willingly.** He is not called the "god of this world," or "the prince of the power of the air" for nothing. So Jesus pointed out that he would enter into the Devil's territory, tie up the Devil, and clean out his house. Jesus would bring light and hope to those dispossessed.

7. And the leaders should have known who Jesus was-and what he would do-as this was prophesied. They **should have known that he was the Christ,** that he would **preach the way of God,** and that he would do **miracles like Moses and Elijah, to confirm his words.** These leaders should have **known the hundreds of prophecy which testified** in whole or in part about who Jesus would be and what he would do. They should have known that the **scepter 权杖 had departed from Israel** and it was the time for Christ's coming (Genesis 49). The **place was right -where Jesus worked.** The **family line was correct.**

Isaiah 61:1 "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, **To proclaim liberty to the captives,** And the opening of the prison to *those who are bound*;

Jesus' purpose was to free the soul of men captured by sin and shame and free their bodies infected with evil spirits.

Colossians 1:13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

So it was an abominable blasphemy 亵渎 for them to accuse Jesus of being possessed by the Devil and working for him.

But because they so wanted to destroy him and return his followers as their slaves, **they ignored the obvious.**

28 "Assuredly, I say to you, **all sins will be forgiven the sons of men,** and whatever blasphemies they may utter; 29 "but he who **blasphemes against the Holy Spirit** never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation" —30 because they said, "He has an unclean spirit."

8. Jesus pointed out the dangers of what the Pharisees were asserting by blaspheming him (like those who mocked him on the cross) and then he warned them not to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit – as that was not a sin that could ever be pardoned.

9. So what is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and why is this sin so unique?

It is knowledgeable sacrilege 亵渎 against the Holy Spirit by speaking evil of his person and work. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is a sin then of people who know who the Holy Spirit is and know how he works, but yet speak evil about him. In this case, the Pharisees, who knew the Holy Spirit, were literally saying that the Spirit that was casting out evil spirits was evil. Jesus would take their hostility, but he did not want the Pharisees to sin the sin that guarantees death.

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is unpardonable because the Spirit of God is much closer...he is the one in you.

10. This warning against blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is recorded in all three Synoptic Gospels.

11. Lessons:

a. Know that there will always be people who are hostile 敌对 to the kingdom of God. They will accuse of hate (which is what they are doing) when you try to preach the Gospel of love. Confidently reassure them that you are working from love to save people from hell. Be bold. If you are not, they will never be confronted by their sins.

b. Know. Know doctrine. Know how to argue. Know when people are making a circular argument 循环论证, or making a strawman argument. Know what to argue.

c. But don't panic, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is not a sin easily committed and it cannot be committed by those who don't know him. And the truly regenerate cannot fall into this death assured sin!

Responding to the False Accusation of his Family

31 Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him.

1. For a 2nd time Jesus' family came and tried to get him to stop from preaching. They probably thought he was mad. (From another account!) They were probably influenced by the accusation made by the Pharisees that he was demon possessed, or that he was having some kind of nervous breakdown on account of the busy-ness of his life. In addition, they were likely concerned about the open way he was criticizing the Jewish rulers of his day was evidence he was out of his mind. These Pharisees expelled those who were following Jesus from being members of the synagogue.

32 And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside seeking You."

2. The people around, who were listening to his words, as honey dripping 滴落 for the hungry, told him that his mother and brothers wanted him to come to them so they could talk to him privately.

33 But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?" 34 And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! 35 "For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother."

3. Jesus response was clear: "I give mind to those who love me and my kingdom work." He was not trapped by blood relations. Earlier, in Cana, he rebuked his mother for trying to hurry him in his work, when she requested that he turn the water into wine at the wedding.

John 2:3 And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." 4 Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."

Even earlier as a child, he said to his parents:

Luke 2:49 And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"

Now don't think that Christ was minimizing blood relations. He cared for his mother even while on the cross. But what he was doing was elevating spiritual brothers.

Consider some of the words that Jesus used to describe non-blood relations...but yet trusted in him: 'Your Maker is your husband'; 'He that has the Bride is the bridegroom'; 'Go tell My brothers'; 'I have not called you servants, but friends.'

Look at the Apostle Paul's teaching on this: All those who believed in Jesus were considered his sons.

Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

4. This account is recorded in all 3 of the Synoptic Gospels because of its importance.

5. Lessons:

a. Blood relations, in the end, is not enough to please God. So being in a covenant family isn't enough. You can't tell the Lord that you have access to heaven when you die because you were baptized...or that you were a member of New Horizon URC. You have to trust the Lord for yourself. You have to be in true spiritual blood relationship with the Lord.

b. Faith is the root, and obedience is the fruit of every child of God.

c. The Lord must determine whom and how we honor, not Mary.

d. You must honor those who fear the Lord...more than anyone else: Sports star...movie stars...or other famous people. And you must defend those who are your spiritual brothers.

e. What blessedness to be close to Jesus in spirit.

Conclusion:

There were 3 hindrances to the expansion of the kingdom. First, Jesus and his disciples faced **tiredness and inconvenience**. But they simply had to endure some challenges. Second **was the false insinuation of the Pharisees about working for the Devil**. Jesus corrected their fallacious 谬误 reasoning, and in fact, warned them about jeopardizing 危害 their own souls. Third, **Jesus' family accused him of being insane** and wanted to take him away from his Gospel ministry. Jesus didn't even attempt to correct their charge, as it was so ridiculous, but he simply pointed out their weak character – how they bowed to the dictates 支配 of the Pharisees, and he exposed their lack of knowledge of God and his plan.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Jesus has all power over demons. And he bound demons, limiting their activity...when he died on the cross...so you can progress in your worship of God and in your work for him. Demons can't overpower you. Continue the work of announcing redemption to those who have sold themselves to these weakened enemies.

2. Don't let false accusations (which may even come from close family and friends) hinder you from your work of expanding God's kingdom. You will face accusation because you homeschool or discipline your children. You will be teased because you submit to your spouse...or because you are a stay at home Mom. You

will be treated as brainwashed because you go to church and tithe 十一奉献. You will be called unscientific because you reject the evolutionary theory. You will be viewed as a prude 假正经 because you want to keep yourself pure until you are married. But because you are a true child of God, obedience will mark your life.

Finally, if you are not under the dominion of Christ, you are under the dominion of the Devil and will go to hell. If you want to move to the eternal, safe, and blessed kingdom, ask God to free you because Jesus paid for man's freedom by his blood on the cross.