

⁷ But Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea. And a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judea ⁸ and Jerusalem and Idumea and beyond the Jordan; and those from Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard how many things He was doing, came to Him. ⁹ So He told His disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for Him because of the multitude, lest they should crush Him. ¹⁰ For He healed many, so that as many as had afflictions pressed about Him to touch Him. ¹¹ And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, "You are the Son of God." ¹² But He sternly warned them that they should not make Him known. ¹³ And He went up on the mountain and called to *Him* those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. ¹⁴ Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, ¹⁵ and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons: ¹⁶ Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter; ¹⁷ James the *son* of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, "Sons of Thunder"; ¹⁸ Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the *son* of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite; ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. And they went into a house. ²⁰ Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. ²¹ But when His own people heard *about this*, they went out to lay hold of Him, for they said, "He is out of His mind." ²² And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebub," and, "By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons." ²³ So He called them to *Himself* and said to them in parables: "How can Satan cast out Satan? 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. 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 his house. 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." ³¹ Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him. ³² And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside seeking You." 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."

Introduction

Mark Chapter 3: v. 7 marks the beginning of a major new section in Mark's Gospel.

In this section, which goes up to chapter 10, the main emphasis is about Jesus teaching His disciples.

Jesus no longer has a public ministry on the scale of chapter 1:16 - 3:6.

The priority of Jesus now is to teach His disciples.

The crowds will continue to follow Jesus, but they are no longer His priority.

I will divide these verses into four sections.

1. Chapter 3: v. 7-12 - Jesus is Lord of all Israel

Jesus has now left the "Synagogues" and has to do his teachings in the open air.

People come flocking from all over the area. Many made the 100 mile trip from Jerusalem, others from Idumea which is an ancient city of Edom in the Deep South.

Others came from foreign places, Tyre and Sidon. This was north west of Galilee on the Mediterranean coast.

v. 9 tells us that a small boat had to be made ready, in case the crowd crushed Jesus. There must have been a huge crowd of people following Jesus.

In v. 10-11 we notice that Jesus was becoming very popular.

Jesus healed many people and the evil spirits were subject to Him.

It was very clear that lots of people were coming to satisfy their physical needs, rather than their spiritual needs.

Application here for us – Q. What are we hoping to receive from Jesus ?

Things haven't changed very much in over 2,000 years.

People today are still coming to Jesus to have their needs met, but they are not always interested in dealing with the heart of the matter and that is the matter of their heart.

The most important thing is to have your sins forgiven and walk in a right relationship with God through His Son Jesus.

It is not a question of what you can get from Jesus, it is a question of what you believe about Him.

We need to ask the question, what has Jesus already done for you.?

v. 10 informs us that Jesus healed many people and others just rushed him and touched Him in order to get healed.

v. 11 tells us that even the evil spirits recognised who Jesus was.

However, Jesus silenced the demons.

Jesus on a number of occasions silenced demons and his disciples about His identity.

There were probably a number of reasons for this but I feel that the main one was that the people of the day could so easily misinterpret Jesus as the Messiah King.

They would see the Messiah in terms of Jewish nationalism.

A King and a ruler who would set them free from the Roman empire etc.

Therefore, before any proclamation about Jesus as the Messiah could be made,

the people would really need to understand the spiritual significance of what being their Messiah really meant.

If people picked up the wrong idea, there would be a revolution.

Application:

We really need to understand the full picture of Jesus, as it is presented to us in the whole Bible.

It is about a "Saviour from all sin" not about getting what we want to satisfy our own flesh desires whatever they may be.

It is possible to miss the whole point about who Jesus is and why He came.

Sadly, today many people are preaching a different gospel.

It is often referred to as the prosperity gospel.

As a result of the prosperity gospel many professing Christians think that it is their right to be healthy and wealthy.

Bible verses are used out of context and twisted in their meaning.

I do not have time today to fully expose the errors of the prosperity gospel, however there is one aspect of their teaching that is creeping into the mainstream Church today.

Sometimes this happens through visiting speakers who appeal for money for their particular organisation.

The speakers will appeal for money from Christians on the basis that God will compensate them 10 times more than they actually give.

So Christians give in order to obtain material compensation from God.

They miss-use Mark 10: v. 30 to prove that Jesus gives back 100 fold from all your giving.

Gloria Copeland in her 2012 book called "God's will is prosperity"

says "Give \$10.00 and you will receive \$1,000 dollars.

If you give \$1,000 dollars you will receive \$100,000 dollars.

People give to the Copeland organisation expecting to get rich.

However, the only thing that happens is that the Copeland organisation gets rich.

This type of false teaching filters through to Christians who are trying to raise money for their own organisations or their own needs.

This is NOT the gospel that Jesus preached.

When we give money for God's work on top of our tithes and offerings we should make sure that God's work is being done with that money.

God's work is firstly, to present the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

If you feel that as a Christian it is your right to be healthy and wealthy, then you are going to be very disappointed when you get sick or are poor.

As a Christian, who we are "In Christ" is the most wonderful thing. Lack of money and poor health will never take away these spiritual benefits.

We are told in Matthew Chapter 6: v. 33 to "seek first the kingdom of God, and HIS righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

In other words, God will take care of your needs, if you focus upon His Gospel and His Holiness.

2. v. 13-19 - Jesus calls the 12 disciples.

The established Jewish Scribes and teachers of God's Law had rejected the teaching of Jesus, and now Jesus was to appoint people to be heralds of his message.

There are parallels between this situation and that of the establishing of Israel as a nation.

Both happened on a mountain, it was Mt. Sinai for Moses and a small hill near Lake Galilee for the disciples of Jesus.

12 tribes were called together in Gen. 49, and here Jesus calls 12 men.

The disciples were first of all appointed to be WITH Jesus and then to be sent out to preach.

They were to be given delegated powers to heal sicknesses and cast out demons.

Application

Spending time with Jesus is the most important thing that you can do before you can begin to serve Him.

Reading your Bible every day, reflecting and meditating on the words and actually listening to Jesus is really important.

Our discipleship course at OIC is designed to help you spend time with Jesus.

The course is also designed to benefit from all that Jesus taught His disciples.

As you reflect on the 21 character traits of a disciple, you can, as it were, engage in the conversation that Jesus had with His disciples.

The amount of time that we spend with Jesus and God's word will reflect in the growth and development of our Christian maturity.

3. Jesus is rejected fully by Judaism v. 22-30.

The teachers of the law cannot dispute the fact that Jesus has power to produce miracles, however the only thing left for them to do is to question the source of Jesus' power.

In order to undermine the authority of Jesus they needed to discredit his miracles.

They said that His power was satanic.

Jesus answers their charge in 3 ways.

1. Jesus is driving out demons - so his power can't be demonic.

2. Jesus has a greater power than Satan. Satan is powerless against Jesus.

3. Jesus warns the teachers of the Law against rejecting Him. They will never be forgiven if they continue in their fixed idea of refusing to acknowledge who Jesus is.

Please note verse 29.: The idea of the "unforgiveable" sin has haunted the minds of sensitive Christians for generations.

Dr. Colin Peckham, who is now in Heaven, once put a gun to his head because he thought that he might

have committed the unpardonable sin.

Suddenly a verse of scripture came to him just in time and he did not pull the trigger. He was a young man at the time, struggling with spiritual issues.

So how do we understand this warning in v.28-29.?

The first thing we need to do is to look at these verses in their context.

Jesus here is warning against disregarding his message as "satanic"

This is a specific deed.

They accused Jesus of working His miracles by the power of Satan and not the Holy Spirit of God.

A person doing such a thing would have no concern about the forgiveness of their sins.

There is only one condition in order to receive forgiveness of your sins.

Recognise who Jesus is – God in Human form

Understand why He came – To die on the cross to take the punishment for your sins.

Therefore you must recognise you are a sinner needing forgiveness.

So if the Holy Spirit of God comes and convinces you of these things and you reject them, then there is NO FORGIVENESS.

The only people who can't be forgiven for their sins are the people who reject the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Only Jesus can forgive SIN. There is nobody else.

Jesus does His work through the Holy Spirit.

John Chapter 16: v. 5-11.

⁵ "But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' ⁶ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁷ Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. ⁸ And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹ of sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰ of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; ¹¹ of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

4. Jesus states that you can have a personal relationship with Him and it is like being in His family. (v. 31-35)

Jesus's mother and brothers were looking for Jesus amongst the crowd of people.

He was told that his Mother and his brothers were looking for Him.

The reply that Jesus gave to the crowd was quite strange.

Jesus looked around and pointed to people nearby Him and said, "Here are my Mother and my brothers!"

Then Jesus qualifies His statement by saying that "Whoever does the will of God is my brother and my sister and my Mother"

Q. The question we need to ask is what did Jesus mean by that statement?

Clearly Jesus is telling the crowd that a personal relationship with Jesus is more important and deeper than a family relationship.

In other words, Jesus puts a relationship with himself on a different level than personal family relationships. This might be hard to understand if you don't fully realize that becoming a Christians means that you are born again into the family of God.

This makes God your heavenly father and all his other children related to you.

So when you become a Christian you enter into a very big family and that is the family of God.

You share the same Father and you are united by the same Holy Spirit.

You also have the same identity in Christ and you belong in the household of "Faith"

I will always be truly thankful for the family of God.

Over the last 37 years, the family of God have loved me with a love that has not been judgemental.

The family of God have prayed for me and my family and the family of God has fed our family and provided for them.

Some of that family I did not know personally, and some I got to know and love.

It is a wonderful thing to know that our relationship with brothers and sisters in Christ is stronger and

deeper than the blood ties that we might have in our natural family.

If you are privileged to have been brought up in a Christian family then you have a double bonus, but your spiritual relationship with your family is still more important.

Q. Are you related to Jesus?

Q. Have you been born again into the family of God?

Q. Are you doing God's will in obedience to His word?

Q. What is the will of God?

Answer – The will of God is to believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

To believe that God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through Him might be saved.

To believe that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

If you want a relationship with Jesus, you need to know who He is, why He came.

He came to deal with YOUR sin and MINE.

The big issue is always SIN and the answer is always JESUS.

This is why we have "Communion" once a month.

It is the main point of our ministry at Osaka International Church, never to forget that the main point is Jesus and the offer of "forgiveness" through Him.

I hope that celebrating Communion today means that you appreciate Jesus.

You appreciate that Jesus died for YOUR sin.

It is an act of Thanksgiving to be at this table today.

Today is a day for saying THANK YOU to Jesus.