

The Gospel of Mark

Ministry Expansion with Growing Pains: Lesson 7

- I. Broad Overview of Jesus' Ministry
 - a. Unclear what "withdrew" means
 - i. His exact destination is unclear
 - ii. Reasonable to want to get away
 - b. Crowds are drawn to Jesus
 - i. From a wide geographical area
 - ii. From diverse ethnic backgrounds
 - iii. Jesus would be a "light for the Gentiles"
 - iv. Fame reaches far and wide
 - v. Remarkable given social cleavage of the day
 - c. Crowd is ambivalent
 - i. Offer an opportunity
 - ii. Provide an impediment
 - d. People who are needy often flock to Jesus
 - i. The sick are healed of their illnesses and injuries
 - ii. The possessed are delivered of their unclean spirits
 - iii. Jesus is compassionate but He does not respond to the faith of the crowd
 - e. Unclean spirits knew Jesus' real identity
 - i. Fall before Jesus
 1. Indicate prostrating themselves before a superior
 2. Declare Jesus fully divine identity
 3. Jesus authority is total
 - a. Demons must confess His sovereignty by subjection
 - ii. Father and demons declare His Sonship
 1. Disciples have an incomplete knowledge
 - iii. These spirits were forbidden by him to speak
 1. Because of pragmatism
 - a. Jesus' work would be hindered by public knowledge of his real identity
 2. Because of appropriateness
 - a. Not appropriate that the good news be announced by the forces of darkness
 3. Because of timing.
 - a. The gospel is not yet ready to be proclaimed until all is accomplished in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus
- II. A Preview of the Call of the Disciples
 - a. Themes
 - i. Divine Sonship
 - ii. Authority of Jesus
 - iii. Following Jesus
 - b. Authority of Jesus in public settings
 - c. Authority of Jesus with respect to followers

- d. Insiders and Outsiders
 - i. Subtheme of authority
 - ii. Determined by proximity, receptivity to Jesus
 - e. Disciples
 - i. Student
 - ii. Learner in active fellowship
- III. The Call of the Disciples
- a. Jesus goes to the hills
 - i. Site of revelation
 - b. Jesus "summoned" those He "willed"
 - i. His call superseded their will
 - ii. Those he called have nothing in common except His sovereign call
 - c. Rabbis did not call disciples
 - i. Disciples chose a rabbi to help learn the Torah
 - ii. Would not give the impression they were above Torah
 - d. Jesus is the sole subject of the call
 - i. Nothing is more important
 - ii. Jesus is the "final good"
 - iii. Jesus will make something of them
 - e. Appointed or made?
 - i. Verb is the same as for Creation
 - ii. Twelve disciples are a new Creation
 - iii. Disciples are named apostles
 - f. The first priority of an apostle was not working for Jesus, but being with Jesus
 - i. Relationship not a job
 - ii. He called them to "him[self]"
 - iii. They came "to him"
 - iv. He called them "to be with him"
 - v. Becoming attached to Jesus brings about a change in the deeper levels of the heart
 - vi. Being with Jesus means forsaking human idols and honoring the true God
 - g. The second priority of an apostle was being sent by Jesus
 - i. Sent with a specific purpose
 - ii. Not to separate apostles from disciples
 - 1. Call and commission representative of ALL followers
 - iii. Preach – proclamation of the Gospel public ally
 - 1. Gospel IS the story of Jesus
 - 2. Gospel IS NOT theoretical, beliefs or feelings
 - h. Cast out demons
 - i. Jesus gives His authority to the apostles
 - ii. Sets the apostles as peers not servile followers or doting fans
 - 1. Lays the foundation for their later mission
 - iii. Jews believed that subduing demons would begin the messianic age
 - i. Jesus gave them authority
 - i. Not permanently given to an apostle
 - ii. Results from staying connected to Jesus

- j. Jesus appointed exactly twelve men
 - i. Suggests Jesus' role as king of the twelve tribes of Israel
 - 1. The king is to be a channel of life and blessing to God's people
- k. Jesus appointed exactly twelve men
 - i. Suggests the disciples' role as Israel herself
 - 1. Described in Genesis 12: 1-3
 - 2. Israel was/is to be blessing (a cause of life and salvation)
 - 3. Israel was/is to be God's instrument in salvation for the whole world
 - 4. Israel was/is to be God's beloved son
 - 5. Israel's king was also God's beloved son
 - 6. Israel was/is to be blessing (a cause of life and salvation)
 - 7. Israel was/is to be God's instrument in salvation for the whole world
 - 8. Israel was/is to be God's beloved son
 - 9. Israel's king was also God's beloved son
 - 10. Israel fulfills its destiny only in fellowship and service to Jesus
- l. The list is important
 - i. Simon (always first) – cornerstone of the apostles
 - ii. James and John – “Sons of Thunder”
 - iii. Andrew
 - iv. Phillip
 - ~~v. Bartholomew~~
 - ~~vi. Levi (Matthew)~~
 - vii. Thomas
 - ~~viii. James~~
 - ~~ix. Thaddeus~~
 - ~~x. Simon the Zealot~~
 - xi. Judas Iscariot
 - xii. Significance
 - 1. Many unknown, unmentioned but played an important role
 - a. None were religious leaders or part of the establishment
 - 2. Levi the Tax Collector vs. Simon the Zealot
 - 3. Mark included Judas the betrayer
 - a. Supports historical accuracy
 - b. Shows apostles are not perfect
 - c. Jesus accomplishes His purpose even when they fail
- m. Problem
 - i. Sinfulness of Israel and her kings blocked the flow of life, blessing, and salvation
 - God desired to deliver to the world through Israel
- n. Solution
 - i. Jesus will be installed as the royal son (King Jesus)
 - ii. Jesus will renew the fallen nation through twelve disciples, ready to advance God's mission
 - iii. The flow of life to the world can be resumed through this renewed Israel and her new king
 - iv. The plan of Genesis 12: 1-3 (of Israel blessing the nations) is now being continued and fulfilled through Jesus and his disciples

v. God responds to impediments beautifully and creatively

IV. The Scribes Accuse Jesus

- a. A crowd and a house
 - i. Crowd is an obstacle
 - ii. Interferes with dinner
 - iii. Creates insiders and outsiders
- b. Jesus' "family" moves to seize Him
 - i. Believe He is out of His mind (berserk)
 - ii. Believe His confrontations are a mistake
 - iii. Outsiders – ignorance, false reports
 - iv. Insiders – troubling as they should be advocates
- c. The Accusation
 - i. Scribes and Pharisees come from the Temple
 - ii. Make direct criticisms and confrontations
 - iii. You're on Satan's side! You're one of his representatives!
 1. Be-el'zebul not explained in the scripture
 2. Baalzebul means "Lord of the House," or "Lord of the Height"
 3. Baalzebub means "Lord of the Dung Heap," or "Lord of the Flies"
 - iv. Belief and faith are NOT based on proof, evidence
 1. Scribes and Pharisees saw evidence but did NOT believe
 2. Evidence and acts require a decision as to their source and significance
- d. Jesus' Responses
 - i. In the form of logic and reason
 - ii. First explanation: their accusation makes no sense
 1. Jesus and Satan oppose each other
 2. Jesus cannot be empowered by Satan
 3. Satan would be working against himself
 4. Satan's kingdom is presently standing, and so cannot be at civil war with itself
 - iii. Second explanation
 1. Strongman's house refers to Beelzebul and possessions refer to the demonic spirits
 2. Satan is a "strong man" who has captured human beings and is holding them as prisoners in his house
 3. Jesus is the "stronger man" who has broken into Satan's house, tied him up, and is now liberating Satan's prisoners
 4. There can be no coexistence or compromise between Jesus and Satan
 - iv. "Truly I tell you" – an earnest admonition
 - v. Mark 3:28-29 is in the form of a warning
 1. The good news
 - a. Almost all sins can be forgiven
 - b. Almost all kinds of blasphemies can be forgiven
 2. What is this "unforgivable sin"?
 - a. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit
 - i. An eternal sin with eternal consequences
 - b. Jesus is the Powerful One John prophesied

- c. John said 'He will baptize with the Holy Spirit'
 - d. Scribes accuse Jesus as having an Evil Spirit
 - e. Scribes Have misjudged Jesus
 - i. They are hopelessly lost
 - ii. They cannot distinguish light from dark or good from evil (Isa. 5:20)
 - f. The scribes were highly educated, thoroughly versed in Scripture
 - g. They were repeating their accusation
 - h. They were not just thinking or wondering such a charge, but were declaring it as a final and finished verdict
 - i. They were not just declaring it, but declaring it publicly, apparently to all who would listen
 - j. They intended to speak with their authority and status as scribes to persuade others to accept this charge as true
 - k. They claimed that someone who was perfectly holy (Jesus) was in fact perfectly unholy. That is, they completely reversed the polarity of morality by calling good "bad"
 - l. They intended to slander Jesus, one who was filled and empowered with the Holy Spirit
 - m. They intended to slander Jesus, one who was holiest of all
3. Implications
- a. It would be very difficult to duplicate the sin of the scribes who, in the face of perfect holiness himself and fully armed with the knowledge of the Scriptures, pushed forward to declare publicly, repeatedly, and with an air of final authority, that holiness is unholiness
 - b. These scribes were not immediately damned by Jesus to eternal and irreversible punishment. Even in the face of their behavior, Jesus warned them, implying that even they could still reverse their course of action and be forgiven
 - c. This sin is more likely to be committed by religious people who have pride and self-righteousness
 - d. This was/is a warning to the apostles and to all Christians to truly accept Jesus
 - e. Anyone who is concerned or troubled about possibly having committed this irreversible sin most likely has not. The sense of worry or shame over sin is proof of the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, and proof that God is in fact drawing that person toward forgiveness and renewal