

A crown of thorns, made of dry, sharp branches, is positioned in the upper left corner of the image. The background is a dark, textured wooden surface. The text 'the GOSPEL of MARK' is written in a stylized font across the middle and right side of the image. The word 'the' is in a smaller, lowercase font, 'GOSPEL' is in large, bold, uppercase letters, 'of' is in a smaller, lowercase font, and 'MARK' is in large, bold, uppercase letters. The text is in a light, golden-brown color.

Mark 3:13-19
Who is Jesus

the **GOSPEL**
of **MARK**

Introduction

People past and present struggle with the question, “who is Jesus?”

Many claim that Jesus was a good teacher or a good man, but they deny that He is God.

This position cannot be defended. Jesus claimed to be God and the only way of salvation. He willingly went to the cross and died refusing to compromise or recant His claim of deity.

If Jesus is not who He claimed to be, then He was a liar and/or a lunatic, but neither a good man or a good teacher.

The choice then is not if Jesus is God or a good teacher. The choice is between is Jesus who He claimed to be – our God and Savior or is He a liar and/or a lunatic!

Mark 3:19b-30

And they went into a house. ²⁰Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. ²¹But when His own people heard *about this*, they went out to lay hold of Him, for they said, “He is out of His mind.”

²²And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, “He has Beelzebub,” and, “By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons.” ²³So He called them to *Himself* and said to them in parables: “How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. ²⁶And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end. ²⁷No 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; ²⁹but 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.”

Lunatic?

Mark 3:19b-20

And they went into a house. ²⁰Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

After Jesus appointed the Twelve (Mark 3:13–19), He came back home to Capernaum, His ministry headquarters. The phrase “And they went into a house” and may refer to the home of Peter and Andrew. As Jesus entered the city, the crowd gathered again, to such an extent that “they” (Jesus and His disciples) could not even eat a meal. Throngs of people pressed into the house where Jesus was staying. The multitudes were drawn to Jesus to witness His supernatural power and hear His extraordinary teaching.

Lunatic?

Mark 3:19b-20

And they went into a house. ²⁰Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

The crowds and their needs became so large and intense that Jesus and His disciples “could not as much as eat bread.” This simply means that they were so busy that they could not eat a meal.

Jesus was always moved with compassion with the needs of His Creation. Many of the people had bodies broken by injury, disease, or defect. They were lost, not having a proper understanding of God, themselves, and this world. They did not properly understand God’s expectations and how to find forgiveness for they sins.

These verses show the heart of Jesus. He put the needs of the people above His own wellbeing. This is the same character trait that led Jesus to the cross to be the ultimate sacrifice for mankind’s sin so they could be restored to Him.

Lunatic?

Mark 3:19b-20

And they went into a house. ²⁰Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

We are often controlled by our physical needs and drives. When we are thirsty – we drink, hungry – we eat, and tired – we lay down and rest.

Jesus would often give up sleep to spend time communing with the Father. He worked and ministered to the point of exhaustion. In the next chapter, we find Jesus sleeping during a storm that threatened to destroy their boat.

He was always dependent upon the Father to meet His needs. We see this in His wilderness temptations, in a boat in the storm, and here where He gives up food to meet the needs of the people. God will meet His needs as He faithfully serves His Father. God will do the same for you!

Lunatic?

Mark 3:21

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.”

When news about the situation reached Nazareth, Jesus’ family was shocked and concerned by what they heard. As Mark explains, “when His own people heard about this, they went out to lay hold of Him.” The phrase “His own people” refers to His mother and His half brothers who feared for His safety and traveled to Capernaum to find Him. The phrase “lay hold of Him” states their intent on rescuing Him, by force from the multitudes that threatened to smother Him, as well as from Himself.

Lunatic?

Mark 3:21

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."

Mary knew who Jesus was as she had been told by the angel (Luke 1:31-33). I am sure Jesus' brother had heard the stories but they will not put their faith in Him until after the resurrection. To them they concluded that "He is out of His mind." The phrase implies that they thought that he had gone insane and was a lunatic.

His brothers, like many today, drew conclusions based in their unbelief. Listening and rejecting to Jesus' claims to be God and one with the Father led to the rational conclusion that He was a lunatic.

Liar?

Mark 3:22

And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebub," and, "By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons."

Scribes also journeyed to Capernaum looking for Jesus. Their short-term strategy was to slander Jesus in order to turn public opinion against Him, but ultimately, they wanted Him dead. Knowing they could not deny the reality of His miraculous and supernatural power, they devised a smear campaign that would call into question the source of it.

Liar?

Mark 3:22

And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebub," and, "By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons."

Matthew 12:22–23, gives additional information to this event.

Matthew writes, "Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed and said, 'Could this be the Son of David?'" Jesus had demonstrated His authority over both the spiritual realm of demons and the physical realm of disease, and the people were wondering if Jesus was the Messiah.

Liar?

Mark 3:22

And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebub," and, "By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons."

The scribes and Pharisees could not deny the power and authenticity of the miracle. They had already rejected Jesus' authority over their traditions and viewed Him as a threat to their power and prestige. In an attempt to discredit Jesus in the eyes of the people and justify their own rejection and hatred, they chose to call into question to source of His power. They claimed, "He has Beelzebub," and, "By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons."

They claimed that Jesus had power because He was possessed by Satan and that was the reason the demons obeyed Him.

Jesus' Response

Mark 3:23-27

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.

Jesus calls these rejectors and confronts them with the absurdity of their accusation. Everything in Jesus' ministry has been to turn people away from sin and to a renewed relationship with God. Satan's goal is the opposite. He wants to entrap people in their sin and rebellion against God.

Jesus confronts the religious leaders with a pointed question and then a parable or analogy. Jesus asks, “How can Satan cast out Satan?”

Jesus' Response

Mark 3:23-27

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He asked rhetorically. **"If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end!"** If Satan were casting out his own agents or destroying his own works, then his kingdom would be hopelessly divided.

Jesus spent His entire ministry casting out demons and destroying Satan's works. In reality it was the religious leaders who were under Satan's control!

Jesus' Response

Mark 3:23-27

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.

The true explanation for Jesus' authority over demons was not that He was empowered by Satan but rather that He had power over Satan. As Jesus told the multitudes, "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."

Only someone stronger than Satan could enter his domain, bind him, disperse his agents, and liberate his captives from the kingdom of darkness.

Jesus' Response

Mark 3:28-30

“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.”

For the Pharisees and scribes to attribute the power of Jesus to Satan rather than the Holy Spirit was the highest form of blasphemy and placed them in eternal jeopardy. Jesus' warning was solemn and severe: **“Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation.”** Any sin is forgivable, including things spoken against God and the Lord Jesus with one notable exception: this blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

Jesus' Response

Mark 3:28-30

“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.”

Though these verses have been the source of much unnecessary confusion, the context makes it clear that Jesus had a specific offense in mind when He warned His listeners about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. In His incarnation, Jesus was perfectly submissive to His Father (John 4:34; 5:19–30) and wholly empowered by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 4:1; Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1, 18; John 3:34; Acts 1:2; 10:38; Rom. 1:4). At every point of Jesus' ministry, the Spirit was actively at work: His birth (Luke 1:35), His baptism (Mark 1:10), His temptation (Mark 1:12), His ministry (Luke 4:14), His miracles (Matt. 12:28; Acts 10:38), His death (Heb. 9:14), and His resurrection (Rom. 1:4). He always operated under the Spirit's full control, as He walked in perfect obedience to His Father.

Jesus' Response

Mark 3:28-30

“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.”

Those who had seen the overwhelming evidence of the Spirit's power in Jesus' ministry, yet remained utterly unwilling to accept Jesus as the Son of God were choosing to attribute the Spirit's empowering work to Satan. These were guilty of blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. Though they had witnessed Him heal all kinds of diseases, cast out scores of demons, and proclaim a gospel of divine forgiveness, Jesus' enemies nonetheless accused Him of being a demon-possessed deceiver.

They were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.” In the face of every possible evidence of the Spirit's working through Jesus, they stubbornly refused to believe. They had permanently hardened their hearts against their own Messiah. Consequently, because their rejection was final in the face of sufficient evidence, there was no possibility of forgiveness.

So What ...

“Blasphemy against the Spirit” is a rejection of the Testimony of the Holy Spirit. Many today live in fear believing that they have committed this sin. Let me make it clear: No one who has accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior can commit this sin.

I believe that the context of this sin was specific to Jesus’ earthy ministry and the rejection of the religious leaders. They were eyewitnesses to the power and ministry of Jesus.

However, there is a modern day application. The only way a person can come to Jesus in salvation is that the Spirit draws them (John 6:44). The Spirit convicts people of their sin, God’s Righteousness, and that there is a coming judgment (John 16:8).

Jesus is the **ONLY WAY** of salvation and He can pardon our sins. If a person rejects the testimony of the Holy Spirit that leads to salvation, then that rejection is unpardonable.