



THE BOOK OF MARK

Mark 3:13-35

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MATTHEW 10:1-4; 12:22-32

LUKE 6:13-16; 11:14-26

- Calling of the 12 disciples (v. 14)
- By the prince of the devils casteth he out devils (v. 22)
- Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost (v. 29)
- The same is my brother, my sister, and my mother.
(v. 35)

THE TWELVE DISCIPLES

(V.13)

For the carrying on of His work, Christ did not choose the learning or eloquence of the Jewish Sanhedrin or the power of Rome. Passing by the self-righteous Jewish teachers, the Master Worker chose humble, unlearned men to proclaim the truths that were to move the world. These men He purposed to train and educate as the leaders of His church. They in turn were to educate others and send them out with the gospel message. That they might have success in their work they were to be given the power of the Holy Spirit. Not by human might or human wisdom was the gospel to be proclaimed, but by the power of God.

(AA 17.1)

Look upon the touching scene. Behold the Majesty of heaven surrounded by the Twelve whom He has chosen. He is about to set them apart for their work.

By these feeble agencies, through His word and Spirit, He designs to place salvation within the reach of all.

With gladness and rejoicing, God and the angels beheld this scene. The Father knew that from these men the light of heaven would shine forth; that the words spoken by them as they witnessed for His Son, would echo from generation to generation till the close of time. (AA 18.2, .3)

In these first disciples was presented a marked diversity.

They were to be the world's teachers, and they represented widely varied types of character. There were Levi Matthew the publican, called from a life of business activity, and subservience to Rome; the zealot Simon, the uncompromising foe of the imperial authority; the impulsive, self-sufficient, warm-hearted Peter, with Andrew his brother; Judas the Judean, polished, capable, and mean-spirited; Philip and Thomas, faithful and earnest, yet slow of heart to believe; James the less and Jude, of less prominence among the brethren, but men of force, positive both in their faults and in their virtues; Nathanael, a child in sincerity and trust; and the ambitious, loving-hearted sons of Zebedee.... (CC 288.2)

Of the twelve disciples, four were to act a leading part, each in a distinct line. In preparation for this, Christ taught them, foreseeing all. James, destined to swift-coming death by the sword; John, longest of the brethren to follow his Master in labor and persecution; Peter, the pioneer in breaking through the barriers of ages, and teaching the heathen world; and Judas, in service capable of pre-eminence above his brethren, yet brooding in his soul purposes of whose ripening he little dreamed. (CC 288.3)

In order successfully to carry forward the work to which they had been called, these disciples, differing so widely in natural characteristics, in training, and in habits of life, needed to come into unity of feeling, thought, and action. This unity it was Christ's object to secure.... The burden of His labor for them is expressed in His prayer to the Father, "that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us" (John 17:21). (CC 288.4)

In the apostles of our Lord there was nothing to bring glory to themselves. It was evident that the success of their labors was due only to God. The lives of these men, the characters they developed, and the mighty work that God wrought through them, are a testimony to what He will do for all who are teachable and obedient. (CC 288.5)

These disciples had been for some time associated with Jesus in active labor. John and James, Andrew and Peter, with Philip, Nathanael, and Matthew, had been more closely connected with Him than the others, and had witnessed more of His miracles. Peter, James, and John stood in still nearer relationship to Him. They were almost constantly with Him, witnessing His miracles, and hearing His words. John pressed into still closer intimacy with Jesus, so that he is distinguished as the one whom Jesus loved. The Saviour loved them all, but John's was the most receptive spirit. He was younger than the others, and with more of the child's confiding trust he opened his heart to Jesus. Thus he came more into sympathy with Christ, and through him the Saviour's deepest spiritual teaching was communicated to His people. (*DA* 292.1)

The children of God are called to be representatives of Christ, showing forth the goodness and mercy of the Lord. As Jesus has revealed to us the true character of the Father, so we are to reveal Christ to a world that does not know His tender, pitying love. “As Thou hast sent Me into the world,” said Jesus, “even so have I also sent them into the world.” “I in them, and Thou in Me; ... that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me.” John 17:18, 23. The apostle Paul says to the disciples of Jesus, “Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ,” “known and read of all men.” 2 Corinthians 3:3, 2. (*SC* 115.1)

In every one of His children, Jesus sends a letter to the world. If you are Christ's follower, He sends in you a letter to the family, the village, the street, where you live. Jesus, dwelling in you, desires to speak to the hearts of those who are not acquainted with Him. Perhaps they do not read the Bible, or do not hear the voice that speaks to them in its pages; they do not see the love of God through His works. But if you are a true representative of Jesus, it may be that through you they will be led to understand something of His goodness and be won to love and serve Him. (SC 115.1)

I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when *there was* no strange *god* among you: therefore ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I *am* God. (Isaiah 43:12)

BY THE PRINCE OF THE DEVILS

(V. 22; MATTHEW 9:34; 12:24)

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

(V. 28) (MATTHEW 12:31; LUKE 12:10)

And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. (Mark 3:11)

And whenever those possessed by evil spirits caught sight of him, the spirits would throw them to the ground in front of him shrieking, “You are the Son of God!” (Mark 3:11 New Living Translation)

Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, those possessed fell down before Him and cried out, “You are the Son of God!” (Mark 3:11 Holman Christian Standard Bible)

And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. (Mark 3:22)

But the teachers of religious law who had arrived from Jerusalem said, “He’s possessed by Satan, the prince of demons.

That’s where he gets the power to cast out demons.” Jesus called them over and responded with an illustration. “How can Satan cast out Satan?” he asked. “A kingdom divided by civil war will collapse. Similarly, a family splintered by feuding will fall apart. And if Satan is divided and fights against himself, how can he stand? He would never survive. Let me illustrate this further. Who is powerful enough to enter the house of a strong man and plunder his goods? Only someone even stronger—someone who could tie him up and then plunder his house. “I tell you the truth, all sin and blasphemy can be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven. This is a sin with eternal consequences.” He told **them this because they were saying, “He’s possessed by an evil spirit.”** (Mark 3:22–30 NLT)

The scribes who had come down from Jerusalem said, “He has Beelzebul in Him!” and, “He drives out demons by the ruler of the demons!” So He summoned them and spoke to them in parables: “How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan rebels against himself and is divided, he cannot stand but is finished! “On the other hand, no one can enter a strong man’s house and rob his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he will rob his house. I assure you: People will be forgiven for all sins and whatever blasphemies they may blaspheme. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin” **because they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.”** (Mark 3:22–30

HCSB)

The Pharisees to whom Jesus spoke this warning [of the unpardonable sin] **did not themselves believe the charge they brought against Him.** There was not one of those dignitaries but had felt drawn toward the Saviour. They had heard the Spirit's voice in their own hearts declaring Him to be the Anointed of Israel, and urging them to confess themselves His disciples. In the light of His presence they had realized their unholiness, and had longed for a righteousness which they could not create. But after their rejection of Him it would be too humiliating to receive Him as the Messiah. Having set their feet in the path of unbelief, they were too proud to confess their error. (*DA 322.1*)

. . . the Pharisees had reiterated the charge, “He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.” Matthew 9:34. Christ told them plainly that in attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan, they were cutting themselves off from the fountain of blessing. Those who had spoken against Jesus Himself, not discerning His divine character, might receive forgiveness; for through the Holy Spirit they might be brought to see their error and repent.

Whatever the sin, if the soul repents and believes, the guilt is washed away in the blood of Christ; but **he who rejects the work of the Holy Spirit is placing himself where repentance and faith cannot come to him.** It is by the Spirit that God works upon the heart; when men willfully reject the Spirit, and declare It to be from Satan, they cut off the channel by which God can communicate with them. When the Spirit is finally rejected, there is no more that God can do for the soul. (*DA* 321.3)

And in order to avoid acknowledging the truth, they tried with desperate violence to dispute the Saviour's teaching. The evidence of His power and mercy exasperated them.

They could not prevent the Saviour from working miracles, they could not silence His teaching; but they did everything in their power to misrepresent Him and to falsify His words. Still the convicting Spirit of God followed them, and they had to build up many barriers in order to withstand its power. The mightiest agency that can be brought to bear upon the human heart was striving with them, but they would not yield. (*DA 322.1*)

What constitutes the sin against the Holy Ghost? It is willfully **attributing to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit**. For example, suppose that one is a witness of the special work of the Spirit of God. He has convincing evidence that the work is in harmony with the Scriptures, and the Spirit witnesses with his spirit that it is of God. Afterward, however, he falls under temptation; pride, self-sufficiency, or some other evil trait, controls him; and rejecting all the evidence of its divine character, he declares that that which he had before acknowledged to be the power of the Holy Spirit was the power of Satan. It is through the medium of His Spirit that God works upon the human heart; and when men **willfully reject the Spirit and declare it to be from Satan**, they cut off the channel by which God can communicate with them. (5T 634.1)

By denying the evidence which God has been pleased to give them, they shut out the light which had been shining in their hearts, and as the result they are left in darkness. Thus the words of Christ are verified: “If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!” For a time, persons who have committed this sin may appear to be children of God; but when circumstances arise to develop character and show what manner of spirit they are of, it will be found that they are on the enemy’s ground, standing under his black banner. (5T 634.1)

The sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit does not lie in any sudden word or deed; it is the firm, determined resistance of truth and evidence
(Manuscript 30, 1890). (*5BC* 1093.1)

MY BROTHER, MY SISTER, MY
MOTHER

(V. 33; MATTHEW 12:43-45; MARK 13:33; PSALM 91:14-16)

All who would receive Christ by faith were united to Him by a tie closer than that of human kinship. They would become one with Him, as He was one with the Father. **As a believer and doer** of His words, His mother was more nearly and savingly related to Him than through her natural relationship. His brothers would receive no benefit from their connection with Him unless they accepted Him **as their personal Saviour**. (*DA* 325.2)

Then He added a warning to those who had been impressed by His words, who had heard Him gladly, but who had not surrendered themselves for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. **It is not only by resistance but by neglect that the soul is destroyed.** “When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man,” said Jesus, “he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there.” (*DA* 323.2)

There were many in Christ's day, as there are today, over whom the control of Satan for the time seemed broken; through the grace of God they were set free from the evil spirits that had held dominion over the soul. They rejoiced in the love of God; but, like the stony-ground hearers of the parable, they did not abide in His love. **They did not surrender themselves to God daily**, that Christ might dwell in the heart; and when the evil spirit returned, with "seven other spirits more wicked than himself," they were wholly dominated by the power of evil.

(DA 323.3)

When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan. But unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world. **It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. (DA 324.1)**

We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light. If we do not co-operate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take possession of the heart, and will make it his abiding place. The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of self-love, self-indulgence, and temptation to sin. We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment, we shall be overcome. **Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and a continual communion,** we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end. (*DA* 324.1)

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not
unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways
acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.
(Proverbs 3:5–6)

Because he hath set his love upon me,
therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on
high, because he hath known my name.

He shall call upon me, and I will answer
him: *I will be* with him in trouble; I will
deliver him, and honour him. With long life
will I satisfy him, and shew him my
salvation. (Psalm 91:14–16)