

1. **Introduction:** Last lesson we saw the Pharisee's great concern for making sure the Sabbath was kept according to the rules they had established which they believed were what Scripture required. They continued to "check-up" on Jesus' observance of the Sabbath hoping to catch Him in a violation they could use against Him.
  - The next event is related to the preceding one where Pharisees accused Jesus and His disciples of violating the Sabbath.
  - All 3 synoptic gospels cover the new happening. All 3 report that (1.) on a Sabbath Jesus attended a synagogue and noticed a man with a withered hand.
  - (2.) Pharisees present hoped to witness Jesus violating the Sabbath so they could bring charges against Him.
  - (3.) Jesus told the man to stretch out his hand. (4.) When he did as Jesus commanded, his hand was completely restored.
  - (5.) The Pharisees considered what to do about this man who was violating the Sabbath. The rules the Pharisees had developed about not doing work on the Sabbath dealt with healing. Doing any more than keeping an injury from getting worse was forbidden work unless life was in danger. Restoring the withered hand clearly broke the "no work on the Sabbath" rule.
2. **Mark 3:1-6:** *"Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. <sup>2</sup>And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. <sup>3</sup>And he said to the man with the withered hand, 'Come here.' <sup>4</sup>And he said to them, 'Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?' But they were silent. <sup>5</sup>And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. <sup>6</sup>The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him."*
  - Jesus intends to do good on that Sabbath, but the Pharisees are plotting to do evil against Jesus for Him doing good.
  - Jesus perceived the man's need and knew the pharisees were watching Him to see what He would do.
  - What Jesus does do is use this as a teaching opportunity. He tells the man who needs to be healed to come to Him. Jesus asked the Pharisees a question whose answer exposes their view of theology in general and specifically their view of God's character.
  - Jesus' question is worded to leave no middle ground. *"Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?"* The Pharisees were silent.

- God's truth is that doing good every day is both lawful and mandatory. Doing harm or killing is forbidden.
- Jesus was outwardly angry and inwardly grieved at their hardness of heart and lack of understanding of God's character and His law.
- Notice that Jesus could have avoided the whole issue by waiting until after sundown to heal the man.
- Also notice that the question about lawfulness of "killing" gets to the heart of the issue of the Pharisee's desire to rid themselves of Jesus.
- Jesus turned to the man and told him to stretch out his hand. He did and his hand was completely restored.
- Imagine someone had a withered hand completely restored in our presence. We would rejoice at the miracle, praise God for what He had done in our midst and congratulate the man.
- But not the Pharisees. Hard-hearted and hard-headed, they would not look beyond their hatred for Jesus.
- ***"The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him."***
- That was a strange alliance. The Pharisees were devoted to the law. They shunned Gentiles to remain completely "clean."
- On the other hand, Herodians were supporters of Herod Antipas. The whole Herod family behaved like Gentiles, supported Roman imperial politics, and considered themselves Romans.
- That Pharisees would combine forces with Herodians indicates how determined they were in their opposition to Jesus.
- When Jesus refused to follow their manmade Sabbath rules, refused to compromise the truth of God's Word, the true nature of these religious elites was revealed as they plotted to kill Him.

3. **Mark 3:7-8**: ***"Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea, and a great crowd followed, from Galilee and Judea <sup>8</sup>and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and Sidon. When the great crowd heard all that he was doing, they came to him.***

- Jesus and His disciples withdrew to the Sea of Galilee apparently seeking to be refreshed with some quiet time.
- The fame of Jesus had spread throughout Israel. Mark names several regions from which people came to see Him.

- The regions mentioned comprise all the land Solomon had acquired at Israel's peak. Some would have traveled as much as one hundred miles to see Jesus.
4. **Mark 3:9-10**: *“And he told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, lest they crush him.” for he had healed many, so that all who had diseases pressed around him to touch him.”*
- Jesus continued His compassionate ministry of healing and casting out demons, but His greater purpose was to proclaim the gospel and accomplish the things necessary for our salvation.
  - His compassionate ministry must not infringe on His primary mission.
  - When the crush of people seeking healing became too great, He got into a prepared boat, pushed out a short distance, and used the shoreline as an amphitheater.
5. **Mark 3:11-12**: *“And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, “You are the Son of God.”<sup>12</sup> And he strictly ordered them not to make him known.”*
- It is interesting that people struggled to grasp Jesus' divine identity but were slowly doing so with the mounting evidence of miraculous abilities, authoritative teaching, power over demons, yet demons knew exactly who He was.
  - Jesus was progressively revealing the truth about Himself and could not allow the demons to prematurely identify Him as the Son of God.
6. **Mark 3:13-15**: *“And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him.<sup>14</sup> And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach<sup>15</sup> and have authority to cast out demons.”*
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  - He called to Himself those whom He wanted to be His closest associates in ministry and called them apostles.
  - Jesus went up on the mountain. From Luke 6:12, we know that Jesus spent the entire preceding night in prayer.
  - He called to Himself those whom He wanted to be His closest associates in ministry. They were chosen according to Jesus' sovereign will.
  - On the night He was betrayed, here is what Jesus said in John 15:16a, *“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit.”*

7. **Mark 3:16-19**: *“He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); <sup>17</sup>James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); <sup>18</sup>Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot, <sup>19</sup>and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.”*

- The fact that Jesus appointed exactly twelve men indicated He had in mind the new Israel. Ancient Israel had 12 tribes and twelve patriarchs.
- New Israel would be gathered from all nations, Jews, and Gentiles alike.
- The twelve received from Jesus the authority to carry out their role and duty as His apostles.
- These men Jesus intended to bear witness to His life and ministry and carry on His work after He returned to the Father.
- The twelve were ordinary men, none had impressive credentials. Many of them were fishermen, most from the area around Capernaum.
- They were literate, well-versed in Old Testament Scripture from their Synagogue training.
- By the end of their training under Jesus and being filled with the Holy Spirit, these men were becoming extraordinary apostles.
- Jesus Himself called them, appointed them, empowered them, and prepared them to do the work of ministry with Him and to continue that work after Jesus returned to the Father.
- The authority Jesus gave these men signaled that God’s plan to redeem the world would not come to completion with Jesus’ earthly ministry.
- All accomplishments necessary for salvation of individuals would be completed.
- Spreading the gospel to the world in preparation for the Spirit’s work of applying what Jesus made possible would depend heavily on the work of the apostles and their successors.
- Thank God for Jesus choosing, authorizing, empowering, and training the apostles.

8. **What is Next**: Mark 3:20.