

# The Secret is Out!



## Mark 3:20-35

If you have your bibles, open to Mark chapter 3. Before we stand and read God's Word together, I want you to do something for me really quick. How many of you have already had breakfast this morning? How many have not had breakfast yet? More of you have than hasn't. Think with me for just a moment of your most favorite breakfast sandwich of all. Would it be on toasted wheat, a homemade biscuit, a homemade roll? If you're going to have a sandwich, there has to be bread. What would your meat be? This is breakfast, so would it be country ham, regular ham, bacon, sausage? Just imagine your favorite homemade biscuit. It just breaks in half. You've just put your favorite meat on the bottom of that biscuit. Now you close it and your thumbs are holding the bottom, two or three of your fingers are on the top, and you're just getting ready to bite into your most favorite of breakfast sandwiches. Does everybody have that? It's going to be good, right? Are you ready for your breakfast sandwich? Let's all stand together and read Mark 3:23-35, but get ready because we're going to see one of those Markan sandwiches. We're actually going to read verses 20-35 so that you see what you're going to feast on this morning from the gospel according to Mark. If you were here when we began the introduction of the gospel of Mark, you'll remember this. If this is your first time in our study

of Mark's gospel, you may not know this or may have just forgotten, but Mark has a literary device called a Markan sandwich where he starts telling a story and then he interrupts the story with another story. He finishes that second story, then immediately goes back to the first story that he interrupted, and he finishes that first story. The purpose of the story that he started to tell was just to serve as bread to hold the meat to where you wouldn't miss what he wants you to hear. He knows if you take any one of those stories by themselves, you might miss the truth of God, so Mark had this great technique to where he sandwiched a story within a story. I want you to know what you're going to eat this morning. When we read verses 20-21, it's the top bun, so to speak, the top roll, or the top piece of bread. When we come to verses 22-30, it is the meat of the story. Once he shows us the meat of the story, he goes back to the first story, and that is verses 31-35. These two stories go together because God doesn't want us just to be fed physically; He wants us to be fed spiritually. He's got a great truth for us this morning that He doesn't want us to miss, so Mark packages it in what we call, in the pastoral world, a Markan sandwich. It's going to be good, not the sermon, but the sandwich.

## **Scripture**

***"Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind." And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "by the prince of demons he casts out the demons." And he called them to him and said to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.***

***"Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"— for they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit." And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you." And he answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother."***

(Prayer)

Father, thank You for this wonderful Markan sandwich that You are going to share with us this morning. May it feed us spiritually and soulishly. Father, I just want to pray that You give us the ability that the cow has, and that is to graze, actually take grass into its mouth, its belly, but the way the belly is designed, the cow can regurgitate, re-chew, re-swallow, and that process goes on for hours so that cow can get every ounce of nutrient out of that blade of grass. Father, we don't want to just eat this morning and truth pass through; we want to digest it, we want to meditate on it, not just while we're eating, but perhaps all afternoon. Perhaps at other times during this week, we'll recall into our mind, rethink again, and digest some more of this amazing sandwich that You are going to let us eat from this morning. Anoint us to present it, anoint us to receive it. In the precious name of Your Son, we ask this, to be doers of Your Word, in Jesus name, amen.

I want you to just keep your fingers on this top piece of bread. Jesus comes down off of the mountain where He has chosen twelve to be apostles. He's giving them the privilege of being with Him so that He can send them out to preach, to share, and have authority to cast out demons. Now He comes back down off the mountain, goes back into Capernaum, back home, the headquarters of His ministry, and Mark tells us there are so

many people in the crowd gathering around Him that He is not even able to eat. Get that picture in your mind. Is this meaning that there are so many people crowding into the house of Jesus that He can't even raise His elbows up and can't even stretch out His hands because the house is so crowded that He can't even literally eat? Or, is Mark painting this picture that there are so many people in and around the house, the crowd is so great, there are so many needs Jesus is ministering to that He doesn't even have time to stop and eat? Then His family comes because they've heard about what's going on and their intent of leaving Nazareth and coming to Capernaum is to seize Him. They're not coming to hug Him, not coming to praise Him, they're not bringing Him a meal; they're coming to, literally in the Greek, bind Him. Why? Because His family thinks He's lost His mind. We can identify with that. Have you ever had a family member do something that was so out of character to them that you literally thought they lost their mind? Yes. As a matter of fact, some of you have told your girlfriend, "You're not going to believe what my husband is wanting to do! I think he's lost his mind!" Is it possible that Jesus' family believed that because He, in the context, had called twelve people to Himself who were going to sit with Him, (He wasn't coming back to the family business, He was now going to be one of those rabbis who were going to wander the countryside and He was going to have twelve people with Him at all times, He was going to be pouring Himself into them, and now He's going to send them out to preach because He believes He's the Messiah, and He's going to give them authority over the demons) and they just believe He's lost His mind? So it is for His own good. Because if He keeps this up, having a crowd like this, pretty soon it's going to cost Him His life because Rome is not going to put up with this. They're going to believe there will be an uprising and people are going to follow Him instead of the local government and they're going to deal with Him, so the family is going to bind Him to keep Him from doing what He believes He's supposed to do, but they're doing it for His own good because He's lost His mind. Please keep your fingers on that thought because now Mark interrupts that thought. You've got this great crowd around Jesus, to the point that He can't even eat, but now, Mark zeroes in that some scribes have come down from Jerusalem. They aren't thinking He's lost His mind. What they're

thinking is (and this is the toothpick that holds it together) He is possessed by Beelzebul. That's the name of the prince of demons. That's another way of describing Satan himself. They think is by this prince, Beelzebul, of the demons, that He actually has the power to cast out demons. They aren't saying He's possessed by a demon; they're saying He's possessed by *the* demon of all demons.

Have any of you ever been attacked concerning your personal integrity and who you really are? Can I just be honest with you? That's happened a few times with me, and my first flesh instinct is I want to say as loud as I can, "THAT'S NOT TRUE! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WOULD LISTEN TO SOMETHING LIKE THAT ABOUT ME! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WOULD THINK SOMETHING LIKE THAT ABOUT ME!" Yes, I do have a flesh side. Have you ever noticed that Jesus never did that? He never did that. Can I tell you why? It is because no matter what was happening to Jesus, it was never about Jesus; it was always about the other people. Tell me you see that. Now, can I make this point? We're studying the gospel of Mark because Mark is presenting Jesus, of whom you and I have been called to sit in His presence, be discipled by Him, and to learn of Him so that as we go out we are like Him.

Catch this. Jesus didn't say that's not true because this wasn't about Him; it was about the scribes. So He just does this, and I think this is really cool. He says now let's think about this. Would Satan actually cast out Satan? If there is a civil war going on in a kingdom, and that kingdom starts fighting against itself, that kingdom is going to fall. Then He brings it down to if you have a house and that house starts fighting within itself, guess what's going to happen to that house. It's going to fall through. He comes back to Satan and says if there's a civil war going on with Satan and he's actually casting out other demons, then his kingdom is divided and it's going to fall, and ultimately, Satan is coming to an end. Right? Then He says if you're going to break into a man's house and plunder all of his goods, you've got to first deal with him. You deal with the owner of the house. You deal with the master. You deal with the husband. You deal with the dad, and you bind him.

Now, catch this. In the first story, His family wants to prevent Him from doing what He's doing. They want to bind Him because what He's come to do is bind the strong man. Do you see this? When He tells about breaking into a man's house and stealing from him, you've got to first bind the strong man. What He is saying is in order for Me to cast out demons, it means I have entered into the world of the strong man, Satan, I have bound him, and since I have bound him, I can plunder all his goods, amen. Tell me you see this. He's bound the strong man, He's bound Satan, and He's wanting the scribes to see who He is and what He's come to do. Therefore, it's not right for His family to want to bind Him because He's come to bind Satan himself.

What does this mean if Jesus has bound Satan? Can we look at Matthew chapter 12:28-30? Remember this; Mark's intent of writing his gospel is to give us a narrative about Jesus, but he doesn't give us much detail because he's trying to get us to the cross as quick as he can because he doesn't believe anybody can truly believe who Jesus is until you see Him dying on a cross. Matthew and Luke, writing after Mark, using Mark's outline, if you will. This would be like Kory and Chris, who have been disciplined under me, taking the basics of my thought, but when you hear them preach, you hear the basics of me but see the expanded version of them. That's what Matthew and Luke do; they take Mark's gospel, but Matthew slows down. He's not trying to race to the cross because Mark has already got us to the cross. He's now writing to the Jewish people and he wants to present Jesus as the King of the Jews. So when Matthew records this story, somebody says, could this be the Messiah? The scribes say no, this man is not the Messiah; this man is of Satan, and then Jesus through that kingdom divided thing. Look at verse 28, "But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you. How can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods unless he first binds the strong man, then indeed he may plunder his house." Listen to this last phrase, "Whoever is not with me is against me and whoever does not gather with me scatters." Here's what Jesus says; have you thought about this? What if I'm casting out demons by the Spirit of God? What if I'm not possessed by a demon, but I'm possessed by God? Do you know what that means? The Kingdom of God has come. The

Jewish people are waiting for the coming of the Kingdom of the Messiah and Jesus by casting out demons is getting evidence that He has dealt with the strong man, Satan, and He's bound him, and now He's plundering his house. What that means is the Kingdom of God is here right now because the King is here and has set up His Kingdom. Then He says if you're not with Me, you're against Me. There is no neutral. If you're not with Jesus and His mission, you're against Him. He says if you're not gathering with Me, you're scattering. Whoa!

Now, this is the beginning of the ministry of Jesus. In the beginning of the ministry of Jesus, Mark has Him preaching repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Now He is teaching because He has bound Satan; the Kingdom is here. I ask you this question. Is there any other place in the New Testament where the Bible teaches that Satan has been bound? The answer is yes. It is also written by an apostle, but not in a gospel, in the apocalyptic literature of Revelation chapter 20. In Revelation chapter 20 which everyone believes speaks about the coming Kingdom of God, the chapter opens with Satan bound so that he can't deceive the nations anymore. Remember what I believe...I believe the book of Revelation is not written in chronological order; it is written in a cyclical manner. There are actually seven scenes, seven dramas, seven pictures, if you will, in the book of Revelation. Each one of these pictures starts with the beginning of the church age and it ends with the church age. When the next picture starts, we go back to the beginning of the church age and then it ends with the end of the church age. Then the next picture starts and we just repeat that until we come to the seventh picture. The seventh picture starts in Revelation chapter 20 and goes to Revelation chapter 22. If that's true, then the book of Revelation confirms what Jesus said. What did Jesus say He did when He came? He bound Satan so He could plunder his house, so He could cast out demons, so that people who were possessed, under the influence of a demons, would be set free. So when you come to the book of Revelation, what happens at the beginning of the church age, what happens at the beginning of the kingdom age? Satan is bound so the nations can't receive anymore. What is Christ ultimately going to do? He's going to call these twelve, these apostles, and He's going to disciple them, teach and train them, send them out, and give them authority. When they

go out into the world, they know Satan can't deceive anybody they shared the gospel with. What is the Bible trying to say? We're not looking for the coming of the Kingdom of God; the Kingdom of God is here right now! The enemy has been defeated, and Christ has called us to sit with Him, learn of Him, be like Him, go out into the world and share Him with others. Why? Because the enemy has been defeated and the Kingdom is here. You and I are in the church because the church is the vehicle that carries the message of the Kingdom of God! Wow!

He has given us authority, but in Mark's gospel, He says, "Truly I say to you." I looked this up; I do this from time to time. This church gave me a great education at Midcontinent Bible College and gave me the ability to study Greek. I just feel like sometimes to earn what you did for me that I need to check it out. When I checked this out in the original language, the best description of this word, truly, is the word, verily. If you grew up like me on the King James Version of the Bible, you remember when Jesus says, "Verily I say unto you." Do you remember when He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you"? That's what this means...amen, amen; truly, truly; most assuredly, most assuredly. He's just been teaching and He says something like, wow! I'm not lying! Wow! I'm telling the truth here! We would never doubt the preacher is not telling the truth, right. What is going on there? There's an emphasis of trying to get everybody's attention. Now Jesus is trying to get everybody's attention because we've got one group of people saying He's lost His mind and another saying He's of Beelzebul, but both groups are against what He's trying to do. Now He says I want you to know that every sin you sin against the children of man is forgiven and can be forgiven. Praise the Lord! Do you hear what this says? Anything that someone did to you can be forgiven and is forgivable, and anything you've done to anybody can be forgiven and is forgivable. Is that good news, or is that good news? That's good news...except...if you blaspheme against the Holy Spirit. If you blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, it cannot be forgiven because it's an eternal sin, for they were saying He has an unclean spirit. Let's stop here just for a second, because from time to time, people want to know if I think they have committed the unpardonable sin. Let me tell you what the unpardonable sin is. It is the only sin that can't be forgiven. It's when Jesus shows up and He's doing a work under the influence of the



Holy Spirit and you look at it, you don't recognize it being a work of God, and you say that is Satan doing that. In other words, you can't recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit and the work of the Holy Spirit; you believe it's satanic. You believe it is Satan working. That sin can never be forgiven. Why? Because it's the Holy Spirit of God who opens our eyes to the truth of the gospel and convicts us, so if He is trying to convict us, teach us who Jesus is, and we don't recognize Him but believe He is Satan, you'll never repent. You'll never believe. You'll never be forgiven. Does that make sense? Has any one of us in here done that? No, because Jesus isn't walking on the earth today, so we don't see Him in the flesh. But in His day, there was the real possibility someone would be so opposed to the work of God that they would actually believe it was the work of Satan, and the moment they made that belief, it sealed their destiny forever.

Now He stops that story and goes back to the bread again. Guess who is on the outside of the house. His mother and His brothers. Why are they there? They're wanting to bind Him. They've positioned themselves to be against what He's doing, not for what He's doing. Does everybody see that? Please tell me you see that. They can't get to Him. The crowd is so thick that nobody is going to go, "Oh wow, you're the virgin Mary. I'm sorry, let us let you in the house." Nobody will move. Can I just tell you what I think is going on here? I think there was a group of people that so wanted to be with Jesus that while He was up on the mountain, they just figured surely at some point He will go back home, and they had been at His house for days. Just as soon as He and the twelve got there and went in the house, they went in and tightened in on Him as tight as they could get. Everybody is looking in through the windows, everybody is looking in the doors, and yet His physical family are on the outside, can't get to Him. So they send word...would you tell my son, would you tell my brother that we're out here and we're looking for him. The word gets whispered, and finally, the Bible says there are these people around Jesus and someone hears that His mother and brothers are outside. Someone says, hey Jesus, your mother and brothers are looking for You. Then Jesus asks this question while looking around and seeing those who made a sacrifice to get there. They didn't have the privilege of making a reservation and be able to do what they wanted to do and then just show up at the last

minute; no, they had to make a sacrifice because they wanted to be with Jesus. They didn't want to get caught on the outside and have to hear from somebody else what Jesus was talking about. They wanted to be in the very presence of Jesus to hear it for themselves! They are sitting around Him, He looks around and sees all those sitting around Him, and He asks the question, who is My mother and My brothers? Then He says, these are My brothers and My mother, for whoever does the will of God is My sister, My brother, and My mother. Wow! Do you see what this is about? This is really about whether you're on the outside, or the inside. It doesn't matter what physical claim you have on Jesus. If you're on the outside, you're not His true family. His true family doesn't go back to a physical lineage; it's a spiritual lineage. Here's how you know if you're part of the family of Christ; you're sitting at His feet. It doesn't mean you're sitting at a chair listening to a sermon; it means you're sitting at the feet of Jesus, and you're making whatever sacrifice you need to make because the most important thing in your life is learning of Jesus. The only reason you're building a company or a career is because you want to influence those who God gives you authority over. Whether it's your family, your business, employees, work associates, students, teacher, coach, or your team, you desire to sit with Jesus and learn so you can be like Him as a dad, a husband, a mother, a wife, a grandparent, an owner of a company, or an employee. You don't just sit, you're learning because you know you've been commissioned to go and share, and have authority, authority over the demonic world. You understand that the moment you share Christ, Satan cannot prevent salvation from taking place because he can't deceive them anymore.

So here's the question, and here's Mark's purpose. It's the purpose of this sandwich. You either get it or you don't. You're either for Him or you're against Him. You're either gathering or you're scattering. You're either on the inside or you're on the outside, and you can be on the inside. The moment you decide to repent of your sin and believe the gospel, the crowd parts and you find yourself in the presence of Jesus. You don't need to tell somebody to tell Jesus you're looking for Him. Why don't you just tell Him yourself? The Kingdom is here. Right now doesn't just count right now; right now counts forever.