

Daily Bible Study

“Colossal Crowds, Chosen Company, Constraining Clan”

(Part I)

Mark 3:7-21

November 8-14, 2009

THE LORD’S DAY – As we return to our study in The Gospel According to Mark we take for our text this week and Lord willing next, **Mark 3:7-21**. In this passage we see that Jesus leaves the scene of the synagogue where He had just healed the man with the withered hand and the crowds find Him and swarm Him. Mark does several things in this passage. He informs us about the vast multitudes of people who followed Jesus in His ministry despite the hostility from the religious leaders. He also does a bit of a review of the previous three chapters by summarizing some of the great works and miracles performed by Jesus which served as impetus for the people who followed Him. The popularity and buzz created by Christ was so much that Mark also explains that amidst these huge crowds, Christ took necessary precautions for His physical well being and safety to ensure the fulfillment of His work before and until His time, the hour He had come to earth for, had come. As the scene shifts from the sea to the mountain we read that Christ’s selects His twelve Apostles as we read of them by name. Then finally Mark tells us of some more opposition which Jesus received from “*His own people*” which most likely referred to His family. Read **Mark 3:7-21**.

The Word Applied & A Suggestion for Prayer: Prayerfully read the text then ask God to both teach you from His Word this week and then give you opportunity to practice what you learn.

MONDAY – As we left **verse 6** from last weeks study we saw that the Pharisees were going out of the synagogue to plot with the Herodians concerning Jesus and *how they might destroy Him*. In the first line of **verse 7** we read, “*But Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea*”. This was not the first time this happened as Jesus withdrew to the sea earlier in Marks gospel as well; namely in **Mark 2:1-13**. In that incident, Jesus had healed the man who was lowered down through the roof by his friends. As the man lay before Him Jesus declared, “*Son, your sins are forgiven you*”. It was when this statement was heard by some of the scribes who were present, that that in their hearts, they accused Jesus of blasphemy. After that healing and confrontation Jesus went out by the sea and in our text He does the same thing on the heels of the confrontation of **verses 1-6**. Both times Jesus went out from crowded buildings and both times point us to the fact that the Divine time clock if you will is governing the situations of Jesus life and ministry. The seashore rather than the synagogue is the place where Jesus is now to be by Divine sovereign control and timing. Jesus *hour* will come, but it is not yet. As we’ll see in more detail later, Christ who was never at a lack for courage does show us there is no wisdom in needlessly putting ourselves in danger. Read **John 2:4, 7:6, 7:30, 8:20, 12:23, 13:1**.

The Word Applied: Are you daily aware of God’s sovereign control of all things; including the very timing of events and circumstances in your life?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You that You are in perfect control of “my” day; even as to the timing of circumstances. Help me trust You more and praise You for Your mighty power.

TUESDAY – As Mark continues in his narrative, he describes for us now that a *great multitude from Galilee followed Him*. The people are coming to Him and following Him in droves from Galilee, the region He is currently in. But as we continue to read in **verses 7-8** we find out the great crowds and masses of people are coming to Him from all over. These various regions from which people were coming to Jesus are listed as *Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan*, as well as *Tyre and Sidon*. As to the reason that these crowds are gathering to Jesus, Mark very simply states concerning them in **verse 8** that, *when they heard how many things He was doing, came to Him*. Christ is preaching and Christ is healing and the word is on the street. People are hearing of Jesus and His ministry and they are coming to hear and see for themselves. In looking at the scene being described it is understood that some of this

multitude is coming to Jesus because they are seeking Him to work miracles for them. They are not just coming to get in the vicinity, they are pressing in on Him. The thoughts and consideration of the *many things* Christ has done for us should drive and compel us to *come to him* as well. Scripture speaks of the need of coming to and following the Lord in many places. Read **Psalm 46:8, 95:2, 100:2, Matthew 4:19, 8:22, 10:38, and 11:28.**

The Word Applied: What things or persons have you “come to” or “followed” this week? Why do you follow certain people or things and what are some ways you could follow Christ better?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, I am easily attracted by many things. Some of which are not honoring to You. Help me see my sin of having other god’s before You and may You please stir up a Holy zeal and passion for Christ within my heart and soul by Your work, Holy Spirit.

WEDNESDAY – In **verse 9** we read that the situation of this great crowd coming to Jesus prompts Christ to take some action or precautions as it were for His safety and the order of the situation. The verse tells us that Jesus *told His disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for Him because of the multitude, lest they should crush Him.* It says the Lord Jesus *told His disciples...* Actually this is an indicative in the Greek so He literally commanded them to have this boat ready so that He may use it if necessary to prevent the crowd from *pressing* Him. This word is used for the pressing of grapes and Jesus is saying in our vernacular, keep this boat handy so I can get in it and avoid being squeezed by all these people. The text tells us that Jesus commanded His disciples to have a *small boat ready*. This *small boat* teaches a large lesson. Many people would just fly past this detail in the narrative without stopping to see what is being taught. Here we see Jesus as both God and man. As God, He knew his hour had not yet come and as man, He took the precautions necessary for His safety. Many times people use the promises of God to take care of their needs as an excuse to avoid the work and precautions which wisdom demands (**Luke 14:28-32**). Mark doesn’t tell us if the small boat needed to be used but the fact remains it was ready if needed. Read the following verses which contain two spiritual lessons. The one fact must not be emphasized at the expense of the other. **Philippians 2:12-13.**

The Word Applied: Do you just sit around and “trust God” to bail you out of every circumstance in life? Take some time to plan and write out some specific goals to be striving towards which would demonstrate a wisdom and stewardship which God is pleased with.

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me trust You as provider of all things. But also help me be wise by planning and working hard in this life. Help me work hard as I watch You work in me.

THURSDAY – **Verse 10** explains to us why the *small boat* of **verse 9** was necessary. Jesus had already healed many people as Mark has informed us in the previous chapters. Now there were multitudes of people who seem convinced of His power or at the very least are ready to investigate for themselves this miracle working man. They have seen Jesus touch others and heal them and the way **verse 10** reads it as if they were unwilling to wait for Jesus to come and touch them so instead *they pressed about Him to touch Him.* This is why Jesus needed to be able to slip out in the *small boat* if need be; the people were swarming around Him and literally in the Greek language “falling, rushing, or pressing upon” Him. Mark tells us *that as many as had afflictions* were trying to touch Jesus. This word *afflictions* which means literally “a whip, scourge” is only used six times in Scripture; three of those times by Mark. In all of Mark’s texts he uses the metaphorical meaning of this word which is “a plague, or a calamity, misfortune, esp. sent by God to discipline or punish”. Luke uses it once in his gospel the same way as Mark does here speaking of Jesus healing people and then in the book of Acts, Luke uses it to describe literal scourging as does the writer of the book of Hebrews. It is an interesting side note that this word speaks of a scourging or whipping which is preformed by hand. Our English word plague has its origin in a compilation of French, Latin and Greek words which refer to a stroke or blow being dealt. We have heard it said, “I was plagued with it” or “I was hit with this sickness”. Plague and disease came to be regarded as a stroke from a divine hand. It is interesting that people were coming to *touch* Jesus, God in the flesh for healing from plagues which were ultimately under the command and control of the mighty sovereign hand of God. We see that God’s sovereign purposes and His plan for His glory play a part in even such matters as sickness and disease. This is illustrated beautifully in Scripture in the story of Jesus healing the blind man in **John 9:1-7.**

The Word Applied: How do you react when “plagued” with either sickness or other unpleasant circumstances? Who do you turn to for strength and why?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You for Your sovereign control of even my sicknesses and unpleasant circumstances. Help me turn away from SELF and toward You and the person and work of Jesus in those times. Help me Holy Spirit to be thankful that You care for me so much that You bring circumstances in my life to conform me more to the image of Jesus.

FRIDAY – Verse 11 continues with the reasons for the crowd *pressing* in on Jesus when it describes for us another matter in which the people coming to Christ were *afflicted*. There were many who were coming to Jesus because they were *afflicted* by demons. Scripture describes these demons as *unclean*, a word which speaks to their foul and filthy state of being not cleansed but rather even being unclean in their moral state of thought. These demons were and are morally and spiritually filthy which is why when they come into contact with absolute perfect purity and sinlessness they cry out *You are the Son of God*. **Verse 12** tells us what we have studied previously in **Mark 1:21-28**. Jesus *sternly warned* these demons *that they should not make Him known*. Many suggestions have been offered as to why this was the case. One suggestion is that Jesus did not want these filthy demons to be the ones that announced who He was but rather He wanted His message and ministry to proclaim His role as Messiah, The Son of God. Some see in Christ's rebuke His desire to show that He was completely at odds with Satan and his demon hosts since the scribes were even saying that Jesus got His power from Satan Himself (**Mark 3:22**). Regardless the reason we are told that Jesus was unwilling to allow the demons to announce who He was. Read **2 Corinthians 6:14-18**.

The Word Applied: In this passage Paul charged believers to be holy & separate from joint ventures with any who by life or lip would not be in agreement with the true gospel. Is there any area in your life where you need to “come out” and be separate?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me to be a testimony in this lost world to Your gospel and keep me from worldliness and compromise which would undermine its proclamation.

SATURDAY –In **verse 13** we come to a transition. From the volatility of the scene of the multitudes following Jesus and pressing in on Him we move *up on the mountain* where we find Jesus narrows down the list of followers as *He called to Himself those He wanted*. We will see this in detail this next week but suffice to say Jesus would employ the aid of some chosen men to help handle the work of proclaiming and demonstrating the Gospel of the Kingdom. Jesus is always in control and He is the one doing the choosing. Read **John 15:16**.

The Word Applied: What does the verse say that Jesus chose His men to do? Evaluate your life and list the fruit you see? How much fruit that remains is there?

Suggestion for Prayer: God, convict me of all my window dressing. Help me bear much fruit.