

## **A Demonic Sunday School Lesson**

(Mark 3:7-12)

(preached 10/12/14 Pine Grove BC; Sunday AM)

### **Introduction**

If you are visiting with us this morning, we are on a journey through the gospel of Mark....

Going verse by verse.

This morning, we will be looking at Mark 3:7-12...

Please be finding your way to the gospel of Mark this morning....

It is important to have your Bible out as we go through our text this morning...

That way, you can follow along as we move through these verse together.

First, let me read these verse out loud to us.

Mark 3:7....

***<sup>7</sup> Jesus withdrew to the sea with His disciples; and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and also from Judea, <sup>8</sup> and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan, and the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon, a great number of***

***people heard of all that He was doing and came to Him. <sup>9</sup> And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the crowd, so that they would not crowd Him; <sup>10</sup> for He had healed many, with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order to touch Him. <sup>11</sup> Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall down before Him and shout, "You are the Son of God!" <sup>12</sup> And He earnestly warned them not to <sup>lc</sup>tell who He was.***

Let us pray.

When I look at a piano, I see a wooden box and some ivory keys.

When Ms. Almeta looks at a piano, she sees a musical instrument that makes perfect sense to her.

My fingers would bang on the keys while hers dance across them.

When I look at a periodic table of elements, I see a bunch of abbreviations.

When a chemist looks at a periodic table, he sees endless combinations of elements that he uses to help people.

When I look at the Mona Lisa, I see an unhappy woman...

When an artist looks at the Mona Lisa, he sees a masterpiece of colors, shapes and sizes.

However when I look at a football, I see the laces, the leather and see the ball spiraling through the air to an open receiver...

Others look at a football and see it as a distraction from the important things in life.

When I go into a bait store and look at a wall filled with plastic worms and spinnerbaits, I see a work of art.

When my wife goes in, she only sees the price tags.

This is a great truth on life.

Two people can look at the same object and have two very different responses.

Last week, we spoke about how Jesus is the dividing line in all of human history.

Everything in the world divides over the person of Jesus Christ.

Everything decision in the world is a reflection of a person's view of Jesus.

And we have seen and will continue to see that division in the gospel of Mark.

The split is growing already between the Pharisees and Jesus.

However in today's verses, we get a break from the Pharisees and the religious leaders.

For 5 straight Sundays, we have been examining these religious leaders and their response and disagreement with Jesus....

They have been stalking Jesus, watching his every move.

And we have seen how Jesus is bringing his divide into their false religious system.

On one side are the Pharisees teaching a religion of good works to please God...

And on the other side, Jesus is preaching the gospel of repentance and belief in Him alone...

And these two sides will face off all the way to the cross, where the Pharisees will eventually silence Jesus by killing him.

However today, these two views are replaced by another very important truth of the Bible....

And it is this?

What is a proper response to the person of Jesus Christ?

Or maybe this, what is your reaction when you think of Jesus?

What is the first thought that comes to your mind when you hear the name of Jesus?

If you were to meet Jesus today, what would you do?

Well, I think these verses that we just read will provide answers.

I've divided verses 7-12 into 2 reactions to Jesus in his day.

The first reaction to Jesus will be found in verses 7-10.

I've entitled it Seeing Jesus as a Grocery Store.

The second reaction to Jesus will be found in verses 11-12.

I've entitled this reaction as....

Seeing Jesus as God's Son.

And the challenge to each of you this morning is to look at your reaction to

So, let's begin our look the reactions by beginning in verse 7....

### **I. Seeing Jesus as a Grocery Store (7-10)**

Now before we dig into the text, I want to explain my heading for these verses.

I certainly don't want to sound irreverent with this heading but I do think it addresses a common reaction to Jesus even today.

As I browse Facebook and even listen to people talk, I often read or hear people use phrases like,...

You know, you need to give Jesus a try.

And though I think the people who share this advice are well-meaning,.....

We need to make sure that we don't make Jesus just another option in the world.

Jesus is not simply the new grocery store on the corner.

He is not someone who you need to just give a try and maybe we will like Him.

Jesus is the King of all kings.

He the Lord of all lords.

You don't just turn to him when you have been out of work for a while and hope that he hears your prayers.

You don't get your feeling hurt in a relationship and then see if he can help you.

One well-known preacher is fond of saying, "It may be time to see if Jesus fits your way of life."

That is so sad that we have such a low view of the Savior of the world.

But the world has simply made Jesus a grocery store where they go when they have a need.

Jesus simply put is the Son of God.

That is the point of the gospel of Mark, -to prove to its readers that Jesus is God's Son.

Mark wrote that very thing in the very first verse of this book.

It is the theme of the book and it is the theme in some ways of all the gospel writers, of all the books of the NT...

And in some ways, the theme of the entire Bible.

However, not everyone understood or embraced that truth.

The disciples, those who were closest to Jesus did not get that until much later in this book.

The crowds definitely didn't get that.

We are going to see that this morning.

And unfortunately, many people still don't get that.

To them and even to some preachers, Jesus is just simply a possible solution to life's problems.

Give Jesus a try is simply a suggestion that he may or may not be right for you.

And that is a tragedy.

Because you cannot be saved unless you believe that Jesus is God's Son.

If you see Jesus as nothing more than a quick fix to what's bugging you at the time, you are just like the people that we will meet in verses 7-10...

And just like the people in these verses, you need to get the right view of Jesus before it is too late.

So, let's begin in verse 7.....

***7 Jesus withdrew to the sea with His disciples; and a great multitude from Galilee followed;***

This is a wise move in many ways..

As we saw last week, his enemies have risen to the point of trying to destroy him.

So, Jesus takes his disciples away from the tense situation around Capernaum...

And they go to a remote area near the Sea of Galilee...

Here's a map of this area.

You may have one like this in the back of your Bible...

But Jesus most likely takes his disciples away from Capernaum to a more remote location.

And there is wisdom here...

Jesus is trying to diffuse the anger of the religious leaders.

It is not yet time for his arrest and trial.

And HE has no desire to bring the situation to a head.

There is more teaching to do.

There is more ministry to do.

There are more souls to be saved.

In our day, folks would describe this as a cowardly act.

Most likely, some of Jesus disciples may have thought that.

And that is unfortunate.

Jesus has no desire to appear macho by picking a fight and escalating the situation....

So he simply seeks to get away from a situation that could have gotten much worse.

In our day, we live in a society that values confrontation.

We worry that people will think less of us if we simply let a situation pass without confronting someone.

But Jesus understood and we should too that sometimes it is best to remove ourselves....

From a situation even if that means we suffer because of it.

And here, Jesus took his disciples and withdrew to a more remote location.

But it didn't last long....

Because a large crowd from Galilee followed...

This is the northern section of Israel, which is similar to our state in that it has 3 main sections.

Galilee in the north, Samaria in the middle, and Judea in the south.

Similar to the SC Upstate, Midlands and Lowcountry.

And the first people who follow Jesus out of the city are the crowds from Galilee...

This would include the people in and around Capernaum and other cities in northern Israel.

News would have spread to these areas first and they would have started to see Jesus first.

Then Mark mentions other regions of Israel that also came to track down Jesus.

Look at the end of verse 7 and all of verse 8....

***and also from Judea, <sup>8</sup> and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan, and the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon, a great number of people heard of all that He was doing and came to Him.***

Jesus is drawing people from all directions...

They are coming to Jesus from all over Israel.

They are coming from Judea, the southern section of the nation.

They are coming from Idumea, an area that is even farther south than Judea.

They are coming from the area east of the Jordan River.

They are coming from the western coastal cities of Tyre and Sidon.

And they are simply coming because they had heard what he was doing.

Which is what?

He is healing people.

Large numbers of people.

This is really a summary of the first 2 chapters of Mark.

Jesus has been healing the crowds and he can get not relief from these mobs of people.

Notice that the end of verse 8 doesn't say that they came because of what he was teaching.

There is no indication that word was spreading about his teaching.

Though the synagogue crowd in chapter 1 was impressed with his authoritative teaching...

Most are coming to Jesus because he has shown authority over disease.

So, they heard what he was doing, which is casting out demons, healing leprosy, making paralyzed men walk, giving new hand to people with crippled ones.

And simply put, they came to Jesus from everywhere.

It was a mob scene.

Have you seen pictures of the crowds that go to soccer stadiums in Central and South America.

People die because they get trampled.

And that is the picture of the crowd in Jesus day.

It is getting so bad that Jesus has an escape plan in place.

Look at verse 9...

***<sup>9</sup> And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the crowd, so that they would not crowd Him***

Jesus asks the disciples to get a boat ready so that he can escape the crush of the crowd if it gets worse.

Though there is no reason to think that he used it here...

He will use this method in chapter 4.

And it is a creative solution.

He will slip get into a small boat and float out so that he can teach them from the water.

Where he will have some relief from this push of people.

The word for crowding means to press against him, to squeeze him.

This verse really destroys those pictures that so many people have of Jesus.

Where he has one hand on a sheep and is teaching a crowd of 10-12 people.

In this scene, there is certainly no lamb and he is being swarmed from all sides.

And why are they there?

Verse 10...

***<sup>10</sup> for He had healed many, with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order to touch Him.***

They want to be healed.

No one is pressing on him to open the Scriptures and teach them.

No one is asking him questions about salvation.

No, this crowd is pressing in on him to satisfy their desire to be healed.

And look, I don't fault them too much.

These were days of incredible misery.

Medicine was non-existent.

Death was common in the early, middle and late years of life.

And they are crowding him to get a touch.

To get a cure.

To get a new eye. new leg, new arm.

These were people walking hundreds of miles, and the compassion of Jesus is on display here.

Though he desires to teach, he never turns the crowds away.

He has a heart for the sick and poor and needy.

Though few if any of them will accept believe the good news that He is sharing.

But I want you to notice this clear response and reaction to Jesus in these verses.

The crowds see him as a grocery store.

As a vending machine that will meet their needs.

They just want a touch from Jesus, and then they are on their way.

And 2000 years later, nothing has changed.

Most folks only want to come to Jesus when they need something.

And that is the wrong reaction to Jesus.

That is the wrong response.

And what is strange about this passage is that you would think that people walking hundreds of miles to Jesus is the right response.

But the fact is that they came for personal reasons.

You can see this as they press toward Jesus.

There is no care and concern for others here, and there is certainly no concern for Jesus either.

He has what they want and they react in a way like shoppers on the day after thanksgiving sale.

However, the interesting truth about this passage is that we do actually see a right reaction to Jesus,.

But it comes from the strangest source.

Let's look at the 2<sup>nd</sup> reaction to Jesus found in verses 11-12...

## II. Seeing Jesus as God's Son (11-12)

Verse 11...

***11 Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall down before Him and shout, "You are the Son of God!"***

I entitled this sermon, "A Demonic Sunday School Lesson."

And what is strange is that an unclean spirit or demon is the one in this passage that offers a proper response to Jesus.

The demon teaches us this morning two very important Sunday School lessons about Jesus.

One, his holiness demands a response.

Two, Jesus is the Son of God.

If the crowds had understood these two truths about Jesus, they would not been crowding Him,,,

But would have been crouching before Him.

Instead, they approach him like He is just another man.

He is just another healer.

He is just another option in life.

I hear this Jesus guy in Galilee is healing.

Let's go give him a try.

But the truth about Jesus is that he is completely holy and completely God.

And you know what a proper response when you come into contact with God is?

You fall upon your face.

That is what Abraham did in Genesis 17:3.

That is what Moses and Aaron did in Numbers 16.

That is what Ezekiel did in Ezekiel 1.

That is what Saul did in Acts 9.

That is what John did in Revelation 1.

That is what you should do when you think about the Lord Jesus Christ.

So many pastors and people have made Jesus into some sort of companion in life.

And yes, Jesus is a very personal, compassionate and tender friend.

But you must never lose sight that he is God in the flesh.

He is the Son of God.

He is the Holy One of God.

He is certainly a very present help in times of trouble, but he is also the Lord that demands your worship and honor.

And in his presence, men fall to the ground.

You can never face God unless you have fallen before him first.

Jesus is the Son of God.

And this unclean spirit knows that all too well.

Like I said before, the purpose of Mark's gospel is to show that Jesus is the Son of God.

But up until this point, no one has acknowledged that but the Father as his baptism..

And this unclean spirit in chapter 3...

And the truth is that no one will recognize say that Jesus is the Son of God until a Roman soldier says it while Jesus hangs on the cross.

Yes, Peter makes a confession of who Jesus is in Mark 8, but no one calls Jesus God's Son but the Father and the demons.

And how would a demon know this?

He was created originally an angel who worshipped God in eternity past.

The angels were creatures that offered God worship before the fell with Satan and were cast to the earth to do his work.

At one time, this angel had worshipped Jesus.

He knew exactly who HE was because Jesus has always existed.

And he had worshipped him as God's Son.

For all we know, this may have been the first time in years that He had come into contact with Jesus.

But just like an old friend from years back, he immediately knows Jesus when he sees Him.

And he falls before him and gives him the proper title....

You are the Son of God.

And the demon is right.

But Jesus commands him to not say a word.

Verse 12...

***<sup>12</sup> And He earnestly warned them not to <sup>cl</sup>tell who He was.***

Here is the reason that Jesus gives this command.

He doesn't need the endorsement of a demon.

That is like asking a bald man to endorse your hair replacement medication.

Or seeing an overweight man try to sell you a weight bench.

Jesus doesn't need an evil demon to proclaim that he is God's Son.

His teaching and works will be enough proof, he certainly doesn't want an infomercial from an associate of Satan.

In two weeks the Pharisees are actually going to accuse Jesus of working for Satan...

And if a demon is running around shouting that Jesus is God's Son....

The Pharisees accusations would seem accurate.

So, Jesus orders the demon to keep quiet.

### **Conclusion**

What do you need to carry away with you today from these verses?

#### **1. Jesus is not a self-help book on your book shelf.**

The wrong reaction to Jesus is too see him as a convenience store, grocery store or vending machine.

Where you go to make a selection of what you need for the day.

Where you put in a little prayer and hope to solve a little problem.

Jesus is not somebody that you try on to see if you like Him.

But take off when he doesn't suit your style for the day.

You don't walk up to Jesus, you crawl to Him on your face.

Weighted down by the guilt of your sin.

And you don't ask him to solve this little issue in your life...

But instead you seek help for the biggest issue in your life....

Your sin before a sinless God.

Your unholiness before perfect holiness.

Your unrighteousness before his righteousness.

Jesus wants you on your face, not waving your hand in his face.

He is the Holy One of God.

The Son of God.

Respond to him like that.

React to him like that.

See him like that.

If have had the wrong view of Jesus, repent of that view of Jesus.

Place where he should be in your life.

Not a part of a long list of priorities, but THE PRIORITY in your life.

## **2. Examine your belief in Jesus.**

Here's a question that you needs to be answered.

Is that demon saved?

Well, no.

We know that demons that aren't saved.

But he believed that Jesus was God's Son.

Yes, he did.

But this was saving belief.

James 2:13 says that "even the demons believe and tremble."

So, that means one thing....

There is a belief in Jesus that still leads to hell.

This demon is a great example of that.

He knows that Jesus is God's Son, but that is not enough to save him.

His belief stops short of leading to salvation.

Because his belief does not lead to love for Christ.

It does not lead to obedience to Christ.

It does not lead to repentance.

And some of you may fall into the same boat.

You believe that Jesus is real.

You may even believe that HE is God's Son.

But the truth is that those beliefs have never made a difference in your life.

You still do what YOU what to do.

Not what Jesus wants you to do.

You hang onto your life, rather than losing your life.

That is why when the question of whether you believe in God is asked that most people respond with a yes.

The latest Gallup worldwide poll released in May of this year revealed that 86% of the world believes in God.

Do you think that 86% of the world is saved?

No way.

But that needs to be brought to bear on your life this morning.

Do you believe like the demons believe and most of the world believes?

Or has your belief changed your life?

Has it made you act?

Or are you like this demon...

A believer who knows about Jesus and even respects him, but...

Rejects and hates him in your heart.

If I told you that I believe I can fly, you would grab ladder and send me to the top of this church...

And tell me to jump off...

And I truly believed it, I would jump off.

But if I wasn't so sure, I'd stand on the edge before finally climbing back down.

These demons believe that they will never make the leap to love and trust Jesus with their life.

True belief makes you act in repentance and faith in Christ.

False belief keeps you safe and sound and headed for hell.

What do you believe this morning?