

Blaspheming the Holy Spirit

Mark 3.20–30

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • June 11, In the year of our Lord, 2014

I. What Is Your Opinion About Jesus?

- A. Lunatic?
- B. Liar?
- C. Lord?
- D. He is Lord, but see no need to obey?
- E. Mark 3.7–30 shows these four reactions.
 - 1. 3.7–10 the multitudes seemed to believe He was the Lord.
 - 2. 3.11–12 unclean spirits acknowledged Lordship, but disobeyed.
 - 3. 3.13–21 His friends believed He was temporarily a lunatic.
 - 4. 3.22 the scribes believed he was a liar.

II. The Charge Against Jesus, “He Has Beelzebub”

- A. Who was Beelzebub?

- 1. Second Kings 1.2

2 Now Ahaziah fell through the lattice of his upper room in Samaria, and was injured; so he sent messengers and said to them, “Go, inquire of Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this injury” (2Ki 1.2).

- 2. By the New Testament the Jews had come to use the name for Satan,

24 Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, “This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons” (Matt 12.24).

3 So He called them to Himself and said to them in parables. “How can Satan cast out Satan?” (Mark 3.23).

- B. They made this charge against Jesus,

- 1. not able to deny His miracles, so

2. they attributed the power to Satan.
 - a) Why attribute the power to Satan rather than
 - b) just acknowledging that Jesus as the Son of God?
3. Moreover, do you understand what they were calling the Holy Spirit?
 - a) What or who is the Holy Spirit?
 - (1) What does His name or rather than indicate?
 - (2) He epitomizes holiness.
 - b) Whereas, Satan epitomizes evil.
4. The Pharisees could not have been more wrong.
 - a) Did the Pharisees not know who or what was working through Jesus,
 - b) or did they honestly believe He was a fraud?
 - (1) Jesus could only do miracles by the power of the Spirit of God.
 - (2) If not, then what is the possible explanation?
 - (a) Jesus will show in Mark 3.23–27
 - (b) that Satan certainly would not cast himself out.
 - (3) Are there any other options, other than these two?
 - (a) Jesus worked by the power of Satan; or
 - (b) Jesus worked by the power of God.
 - (4) John 5.36

36 But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me (John 5.36).

- (5) John 10.20–21

20 And many of them said, "He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?" 21 Others said, "These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

(John 10.20–21).

(6) John 10.25

25 Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me” (John 10.25).

(7) John 10.37–38

37 If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; 38 but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe {NU-Text reads understand.} that the Father is in Me, and I in Him (John 10.37, 38).

(8) John 14.10–11

10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. 11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves (John 14.10–11).

C. No other way exists

1. to explain the miracles of Jesus
2. other than the fact that God worked through Jesus.

III. Mark 3.23–27 – The Reasoning of Jesus

A. In Mark 3.23–26 Jesus argued

1. that Satan would not intentionally fight against himself,

23 So He called them to Himself and said to them in parables. “How can Satan cast out Satan? 24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. 26 And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end” (Mark 3.23–26).

2. Why would Satan not fight against himself?

a) Satan is incredibly wicked, but

b) he is also intelligent.

(1) If he were to fight against himself,

(2) what would happen?

B. Mark 3.27 shows the motive of Jesus,

27 “No one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And then he will plunder his house” (Mark 3.27).

1. Why was Jesus casting demons out of people?

2. He sought to plunder the house, to take it over as His possession.

IV. Mark 3.28–30 – Blaspheming the Holy Spirit

A. Matthew 12.27–28 offers a powerful argument

1. that tore the charge against Jesus to pieces,

27 “And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. 28 But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Matt 12.27–28).

2. Jesus countered their charge

a) to which His enemies would not or could not answer, that is,

(1) if demons can only be cast out by the power of Satan,

(2) then the Pharisees condemned their own sons.

b) This implies that some of their sons were disciples of Jesus.

(1) The Pharisees would not want to condemn their own sons,

(2) the alternative is that Jesus operated by the Spirit of God.

(a) This meant that the kingdom of God was among them.

- (b) God approved of Jesus, but
 - i) they condemned Him.

(3) Jesus impaled them on the horns of a dilemma.

- (a) They either condemn their sons, or
- (b) they approve of Jesus.

B. Mark 3.28 All sins and blasphemies are forgivable,

28 “Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter” (Mark 3.28).

1. All sins are forgivable, provided there is repentance.
2. First John 5.16–17 addresses this issue,

16 If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that. 17 All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading to death (1Jo 5.16–17).

C. Mark 3.29 Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is not forgivable,

29 “but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation” (Mark 3.29).

1. Compare Matthew 12.32

32 “Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come” (Matt 12.32).

2. Hebrews 10.29–31 mentions the danger of insulting the Spirit,

29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is

Mine, I will repay,” {Deuteronomy 32.35} says the Lord. And again, “The LORD will judge His people.” {Deuteronomy 32.36} 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb 10.29–31).

- a) Insulting the Spirit and blaspheming the Spirit seem similar.
 - b) The results of doing either one are similar.
- D. What blaspheming the Holy Spirit is.
- 1. What is blaspheming?
 - a) To blaspheme is to speak evil of something or someone sacred.
 - b) Thus, blaspheming the Spirit is speaking evil of the Sacred Spirit.
 - 2. Mark 3.30 gives us an inspired commentary
 - a) on why Jesus charged the Pharisees
 - b) with blaspheming the Spirit,
 - 30 because they said, “He has an unclean spirit” (Mark 3.30).**
 - 3. They credited the work of the Holy Spirit to the devil,
 - a) claiming Jesus worked by demonic power.
 - (1) What greater sin could there be?
 - (2) It led them to crucifying Christ!
 - (3) It led them to reject the new covenant.
 - b) Thus, while in that state they could not be forgiven.

V. Why Is It Unforgivable?

- A. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit manifests a depraved heart.
- 1. Matthew 12.33–37 is what Jesus spoke immediately
 - a) after speaking of this blasphemy.
 - b) He informs us why a person would commit this sin,

33 “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the

tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. 34 Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. 36 But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. 37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned (Matt 12.33–37).

B. The Spirit's work ends God's declaration of His Son.

1. One may reject Jesus initially, but

a) later be persuaded by the Spirit's testimony.

b) We read John 10.20–21, 25, 37, 38; 14.11 earlier,

(1) which argued that the Spirit testified

(2) through the works of Jesus, as in Mark 3.

(a) According to John 15.26–27

(b) the Spirit's testimony would be recorded by the apostles,

26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. 27 And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning" (John 15.26–27).

(c) If a person rejects these things,

(d) what is left to persuade him?

2. At that point, a person has gone beyond saving

a) until they come to the Spirit's testimony.

C. Blaspheming the Spirit is not only rejecting His testimony, for

1. many people reject the testimony of the Spirit without blaspheming, but

2. it is equating the Holy Spirit with Satan as the scribes did.

D. People who have blasphemed the Spirit

1. have gone beyond the point of no return
2. in that they will not return.
 - a) Second Chronicles 15.2
 - b) Second Chronicles 36.15–16
 - c) Proverbs 1.24–33
 - d) Jeremiah 7.16–20
 - e) Jeremiah 11.14
 - f) Jeremiah 14.11
 - g) John 12.39
 - h) Romans 1.28
 - i) Ephesians 4.19
 - j) Second Thessalonians 2.10–12
 - k) First Timothy 4.2
 - l) Hebrews 6.2–6
 - m) Hebrews 10.26–29
 - n) Second Peter 2.14
 - o) They have become spiritually atrophied.
 - (1) One who has gone this far
 - (2) has not necessarily blasphemed the Holy Spirit, but
 - (3) those who have blasphemed the Spirit have gone this far.