

# Three Views of Jesus

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[ 0 : 00 ] And please turn your Bible to the Gospel of Mark, chapter 3.! Our attention this morning will be directed to verses 20 through 30.

! I want to begin by making a statement that I made during the first sermon in this series. We started it last month. And the statement is this. Although the name of Jesus is perhaps the most well-known name in the world, he is the most misunderstood person in the world. And this holds true, I believe, not just for people who don't attend churches, but it also holds true for many people who sit in churches.

They misunderstand Jesus. They misunderstand who he is. They misunderstand why he came.

[ 1 : 15 ] And they misunderstand what it is to follow him. So far in Mark's Gospel, Mark has been presenting Jesus to us. He's shown us Jesus as the promised King, as the Divine Son, as the last Adam and as the true Israel.

Mark has shown us that Jesus is God based on his ability to forgive sin. He has shown us that Jesus is the spiritual physician who came to heal and save sinners.

He's shown us that Jesus is the new cloth and the new wine who will be rejected by people who represent the old cloth and the old wineskin.

Mark has shown us that Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath, the one who created the Sabbath and the one who is worshipped on the Sabbath.

And last week, Brother Lyndon did an excellent job helping us to see how Mark portrays Jesus as the Master who calls people to cease following him as spectators for what they want and to start following him as disciples for what he wants.

[ 2 : 38 ] Mark has not finished showing us these views of Jesus. But it seems like in this passage where we have come to this morning, Mark is pausing.

He's taking a break from his own presentation. And what he's now doing is he's presenting the views of others. He's presenting some other views of Jesus.

And so this morning, we consider these views and we begin by reading this text. Mark chapter 3, beginning at verse 20.

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.

[ 3 : 45 ] 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. You bow with me in prayer. Father, we thank you for the privilege we now have to sit under the preaching of your word.

[ 5 : 04 ] Lord, we pause to ask for your help because we know that unless you grant illumination, unless you open the spiritual eyes of our hearts, we will never see, we will never comprehend.

So God, open our eyes this morning. Speak to our hearts, we pray. God, we need your spirit. I need your spirit in the proclamation of your word.

We all need your spirit in the hearing of your word. So would you come by the power of your spirit, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, please make a note of any questions that you may have. As we progress through the sermon, I will leave some time at the end to answer your questions. As we consider this passage this morning, here's what I believe Mark, the human author, and God, the divine author, want us to see from this text.

Here's what I believe Mark wants us to see. This is what I believe God wants us to see. How we view Jesus will determine how we relate to him.

[ 6 : 28 ] How we view Jesus will determine how we relate to him. That's a simple statement, but really, it is a profound statement as well. It's profound because we can reverse it and we can say, how we relate to Jesus is truly the way we view Jesus.

And I think this is important because many times what we say with our lips does not match how we live our lives.

And yet many of us would hold stronger to what we say with our lips than the lives we live. And that's because people don't realize as it relates to Jesus, how they relate to Jesus is the most accurate reflection of how they see him, how they view him.

In last week's sermon, we considered how Jesus calls people from the crowd to cease being spectators, to come a part of his company and become disciples.

But in last week's sermon, we also saw how intense and demanding the ministry of Jesus was. If you look back in verse 7, verses 7 and 8, we'll see that a great crowd had followed Jesus.

[ 8 : 02 ] They came to him. And in verse 9, we see that Jesus had to escape in a boat because he was going to be crushed by this massive crowd. And it's not difficult to see why that would be.

If you think about it, just imagine that you had some serious illness or disease and you heard that someone, some traveling minister perhaps, is in town and this man heals.

He's not a hit and miss kind of guy. He's not going to get one, get the other. He gets them all. He heals them all. I'm sure if you were in that condition and you knew that such a person was in town, you would do whatever you needed to do to get to him.

But the trouble is, you're not the only one who knows. The other people who know as well in similar circumstances, and so everyone who is desperate in that way, who believes that this person could heal, is going to flock to that person.

And there's no crowd control. It's a free for all. It's the strongest survives. And I'm sure we've been on lines and, you know, sometimes I go to the bank early and before the bank opens and so there's a line gathering and the crowd is building and it is amazing to see how we can't even form a line.

[ 9 : 30 ] When that door opens, everybody just runs. It doesn't matter if the person just walked in, they try to rush in. So imagine what it must have been like for desperate people at a time where healthcare was almost non-existent to try to see Jesus.

This was no exaggeration. He was going to be crushed. And then we see in verses 13 through 19 that Jesus goes up into a mountain and he appoints 12 apostles.

in verse 20 we are told that he ran home and the crowd gathered again. They had no mercy. They gathered again. And because of all the demands, because of all the needs of the people, we're told that Jesus and his disciples did not even have time to eat.

in verse 21 Mark tells us when Jesus' family heard of this, they went out to seize him because they thought he was out of his mind.

And in verse 21 Mark presents us with the first view of Jesus, his family's view. These are the people who knew Jesus best.

[ 10 : 54 ] These are the ones who grew up with him. And although their view of Jesus is captured in this single sentence that Mark gives us, it says a whole lot about their view.

They did not see Jesus in the way that Mark has been presenting him. when they heard of how Jesus was allowing this ministry to consume him, allowing this crowd to demand so much of him that he didn't even have time to eat, they said, he's crazy.

He's out of his mind. Again, I think Mark wants us to see that Jesus' family had a very different view from the view that he was presenting.

Mark has been presenting Jesus in the multiple ways that we have looked at so far in this gospel.

His family didn't see him that way. They didn't see him as the promised king.

They didn't see him as God's divine son. They didn't see him as the last Adam and the true Israel. If they did, they would never relate to him in this way.

[12:21] He was just their brother. He was perhaps at best just a radical, zealous, Jewish teacher who didn't conform to the rabbinical patterns of the Pharisees.

God's love. And they probably thought he was just overdoing it so much so that he didn't even have time to eat. And their conclusion was he's out of his mind.

He's not the divine son. He's not the last Adam. He's crazy. When you think of this, if you are convinced of what Mark has been saying to us about who this person is, you shudder to see the way his own family saw him.

I mean, if our family seriously thought that we were crazy based on something that we were doing, that would be very offensive to us.

but his family thought that God of very God in the flesh was crazy.

[13:45] He's out of his mind. And I think it begs the question, how is this possible? How is it possible for people to be so close to Jesus and not be able to truly see who he is?

To not be able to see him in the ways that Mark, a stranger, would have seen him? I think the obvious answer is that being related to Jesus or being close to Jesus is no guarantee that we will ever, that we will necessarily see him for who he is and believe on him.

being related to Jesus, being close to Jesus, there's no guarantee that a person would believe in Jesus.

And so this is relevant for us as well this morning. Growing up in a nation where Christianity is taught in most schools, certainly in all government schools, growing up in a godly family, attending church, none of these things guarantee that we will see Jesus as he truly is.

But again, the amazing thing is that people like Mark and others who have followed Jesus saw him as the Messiah, saw him as the Savior of the world, even though they didn't grow up with him and they did not know him in a personal way as his family did.

[15:31] They had no special advantage. marriage. And the same is true today. There are people in countries like India, where in parts of India to mention the name of Jesus is a death sentence.

They've come to see Jesus for who he is. They've come to put their faith in Jesus, knowing by doing so, they take their very lives in their hands and they can die for that profession of faith in Jesus.

Jesus. Again, why is this? Why is it that there would be people in our country who had what we would consider the privileges of hearing the gospel all their lives?

And they would see Jesus in a way to reject him, very much like his own family did. And then there would be other people in cultures that we would consider close to the gospel.

people in the gospel. And yet, they risked their lives to put their trust in this man called Jesus Christ.

[16:43] So how is it? How is it that some close like Mark's, like Jesus' family, and those far away like Mark could have very opposite experiences?

I think there's only one answer. And it is that the grace of God opens the eyes of those who see Jesus as he truly is.

And truth be told, the family of Jesus are not the only ones who saw Jesus as out of his mind.

They're not the only ones who had that view of Jesus.

There are people today, there are people over the centuries who share the same view. Many feel that Jesus had a God complex, that he was just deluded. God they see him no differently from people today who say they are some special Messiah.

Some see Jesus as a holy man, just a regular holy man who had some spiritual powers, but he was a lunatic because he took religion seriously, ministering to massive crowds of people, not even having time to eat.

[18:04] and the challenge that some have is that Jesus claimed to be the son of God, that he claimed to have God's authority and to be equal with God.

And so they say he was out of his mind for making those claims. Well, the second view that Mark presents us with is the view of the scribes.

It's found in verse 22. Mark writes, and the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying he is possessed by Beelzebul and by the prince of demons he casts out demons.

The scribes could not deny that demons were being cast out. They could not deny that Jesus was doing that. So what they did was, they said we don't deny you're casting out demons, but you're possessed by Beelzebul and you are casting out demons by the prince of demons.

And so they were making two separate accusations against him. First, you're possessed by Beelzebul and the demons that you cast out, you cast them out by the prince of demons.

[ 19 : 35 ] When Jesus responds to them in verses 23 through 26, Jesus only refers to Satan. So what is clear is that the scribes were using the names Beelzebul and prince of demons to refer to Satan because that's the one who Jesus uses in his response.

And Jesus helps them to see the folly of their statement. The scribes were grasping at straws to discredit Jesus.

And they didn't realize how illogical what they were saying really was. And so Jesus helps them to see the folly in their statement. He basically says to them, think.

Think about what you're saying. How can Satan cast out Satan? And he goes on to speak to them in parables.

And he essentially says to them, you can't deny that I'm casting out demons. You know that I have. But you're saying I'm possessed by Satan.

[ 20 : 53 ] How can Satan cast out Satan? Notice his argument in verses 24 through 26. Notice what he says. He says 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. If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end.

Jesus says to them, if I'm possessed by Satan, as you say, why would I be destroying Satan's kingdom by casting out demons from people?

He's saying to them, it makes no sense what you're saying to me. Accusing me of being possessed by Satan and casting out demons in the name of Satan by the power of Satan makes no sense. demons. And what he's saying to them is it has to be something else. You know I'm casting out demons and it's logical that I cannot be doing it by Satan's power because if I'm doing that, I'm defeating the whole purpose.

[ 22 : 15 ] So he's saying it must be something else. The power must be something else. It must be, there must be another explanation for what's going on.

The demons are being cast out. Satan is being affected. So there must be another reason for what's happening.

Something powerful, something supernatural, but it's not what you say because what you say makes no sense. And if you think you would realize that. Jesus explains what's happening in verse 27.

Notice what he says. He says, 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.

Jesus is in essence saying to them, Satan's house is being plundered. And the reason Satan's house is being plundered is one who is stronger than Satan has come and has bound Satan and as a result he's able to plunder his house and the plundering was setting people free from satanic oppression and possession and control those who were captive by Satan.

[ 23 : 41 ] Jesus is saying the evidence that Satan's house is being plundered is that people are being set free.

Jesus was the stronger man than Satan. And see this makes sense in every respect when you think of how we think about the world we think about the world really only in two ways.

We think about the world in terms of good and evil. There's in between we think of the world in terms of God and Satan. The kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness. And Jesus is saying the stronger one wins.

And he's saying to them the only reason that demons are being cast out is that the one who is over them and who controls people has been bound.

Matthew's account of this gives us some insight. that's very helpful to get a full appreciation of what Jesus is saying is happening. In Matthew 12 28 Matthew records Jesus saying but if it is by the spirit of God that I cast out demons then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

[ 25 : 08 ] Jesus was saying that the evidence of the kingdom has come is that I'm casting out devils. I'm casting demons out of people. That is the evidence that the kingdom has come.

He said it's not by Satan I'm doing this. He says if it is by the spirit of God that I'm casting out devils you can know for sure the kingdom has come upon you.

Jesus says to the scribes and to everyone else who is present it is by the spirit of God that I'm casting out demons know that the kingdom of God has come.

Brothers and sisters in his first coming Jesus inaugurated the kingdom of God. He gave us evidence of it by casting out devils by binding Satan who really had full sway over the world.

And so we must understand that since Jesus came Satan does not relate to the world in the same way. Satan doesn't have the nations captive the same way that he did before Jesus came.

[ 26 : 20 ] When Jesus came something definitive happened. And indeed that continues to happen because see this was the beginning of it. It continued the cross and will continue until the day.

The Bible says that Jesus right now is seated in heaven and he is waiting until his enemies made his footstool and he will come again he will return and he will consummate the kingdom that he inaugurated and Satan and evil and sin will be defeated once and finally for all.

But this is more than just about people who are possessed by demons. Jesus identifies himself as a strong man who sets people free from the captivity of Satan's kingdom.

But people who are possessed by demons are not the only people who Satan has in captivity.

They're not the only people who Satan holds in bondage. The truth is there are a lot of people who are not demon possessed who are the possession of Satan.

They are under his control. And this is the language that the Bible uses when it talks about salvation. For example, in Colossians chapter 1 verse 13, Paul writes, he has delivered us from the domain or the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved son in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

[ 28 : 05 ] We live in one of two places. Every single human being lives in one of two kingdoms. We are living either in the kingdom of darkness under the bondage and control of Satan, whether that's manifested in demonic activity or not.

We're under the bondage and under the darkness of that. Or we live in the light and the freedom of the kingdom of God.

And guess what? We're born into the kingdom of darkness. Every single person born into that kingdom of darkness, we only come out by the work of God, that God is the one who transfers us out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his dear son.

And this is what Paul is saying in Ephesians chapter 2, where he says, all of us had our course of life living in accordance with the patterns of this world, living in darkness, following our passions.

And Jesus sets free, not just those who are oppressed and possessed by demons in extreme ways that cause them to act in bizarre manner.

[ 29 : 28 ] It's also the educated and the sophisticated and the nice who are in the kingdom of darkness as well. And the only way out is to be translated out and to be set free by the stronger man than Satan, who takes people out of the kingdom of darkness and puts them into the kingdom of God where there is redemption and where there is forgiveness of sins.

If you think that the view of Jesus' family towards him was shuddering and fearful, think about the Pharisees, think about these scribes and the view that they had of Jesus, that they would say to him, you're possessed by Satan and the power that you use to cast out these devils, it's Satan's power.

That's hair raising. That's hair raising to utter that particular accusation against God, against God the Son.

Against God the Son who's doing a work of God, a good work of setting people free. And you say, that's Satanic. we saw how the Pharisees followed Jesus around.

We saw how they saw the miracles. They heard the teaching. They saw it firsthand. men. But their hearts were so hardened because of their own agenda.

[ 31 : 42 ] If you could imagine it, they were doing this when Jesus was preaching and doing this when Jesus was healing. They didn't want to see and they didn't want to hear. And they attributed it to the devil.

people. And Jesus, after speaking to them in parables, in verse 28, he says some very, very sobering words.

he says truly, or verily, or certainly, or without a doubt, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man or 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, this is Mark's, this is Mark's commentary in verse 30, for they were saying he has an unclaimed spirit.

He, he has a demon. He has Beelzebub. He's possessed. By Satan. It's very sobering words from Jesus.

[ 33 : 18 ] Very sobering words from the second person of the Godhead. First of all, we should see that what Jesus says is also amazing.

Sobering, but amazing. First, look at what he says. He says, truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven, the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter.

Brothers and sisters, that is amazing grace. That is amazing grace to hold out to all people, that it doesn't matter what sin you've committed, it doesn't matter what blasphemies you utter, you'll be forgiven.

It's the amazing grace of God. But he could say that as a blank check to anyone that no sin you commit, no blasphemy that you utter, will be too great for you to be able to receive forgiveness. forgiveness. And this is something we need to hear this morning, because there are so many people who languish under the weight of the thought that there's some sin they've committed, there's something they have said that they can't be forgiven for, and the devil feeds them with that lie and says you'll never be forgiven for that.

[ 34 : 54 ] Jesus says no. He says truly I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man and whatever blasphemies they utter.

But he adds something else. Mid-sentence but, verse 29, 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.

Blast for the against the Holy Spirit is taking the work of the spirit and crediting it to Satan.

It is besmirching the goodness of the spirit and crediting it to Satan himself.

and it is not a casual kind of stumbling that someone does.

[ 36 : 35 ] This is a conviction of soul. This is something that is deep-rooted. This is a pronouncement that is strongly rooted in the heart of the person who is pronouncing it.

And when you think about it, the Pharisees, they saw firsthand. They saw Jesus, heard his teachings, saw the miracles, and they refused to believe.

And they credited what he was doing to the devil. And here's what I would say when we try to think through this. I think knowledge of the person is very significant in trying to understand whether the person even is capable of blasphemy.

I don't think a person who is ignorant, who rejects the Spirit's work as being of the devil, commits blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. I think it takes something more than that.

It takes more accountability than that to fall into this no man's land that Jesus says you will fall into if you blaspheme against the Holy Spirit.

[ 38 : 19 ] But the truth is only God knows. The truth is only God knows and so only God alone is able to judge who commits that sin because God knows everything.

He knows our knowledge, He knows our hearts, He knows everything. And obviously the safest way is to avoid blasphemies altogether when it comes to the work of the Spirit.

The safest way is to not comment on what we don't understand. The safest way is we don't need to pass judgment, we can leave it to God. there are some people who actually have this concern that they may have blasphemed against the Holy Spirit.

They have this concern because of some reckless statement that they may have made and they wonder have I blasphemed the Holy Spirit and is there forgiveness for me?

And obviously the enemy bombards them in their minds and they are back and forth. Some people over periods of years where they wonder, did I blaspheme the Holy Spirit when I said that?

[ 39 : 47 ] But a number of years ago I heard the late Dr. R.C. Sproul address this concern. And in his wise and witty way, he was responding to a question that had come in and some person felt that she had blasphemed the Holy Spirit.

And he said, if you're worried about the possibility that you may have blasphemed the Holy Spirit, that's a good sign that you haven't. Because if you did, you wouldn't be concerned.

I thought that was very wise. Godly sorrow is a gift from God.

Godly sorrow is a gift from God. And when God gives the gift of godly sorrow, that's the beginning of his work in a person's life that will be followed by the gift of forgiveness.

will be followed by the gift of repentance, which is part of godly sorrow, but it will be followed by the gift of forgiveness. Anyone who has godly sorrow, it will not end only with godly sorrow.

[ 41 : 08 ] You will not just die with godly sorrow. If you have godly sorrow, godly sorrow will come to its fruition, which is heartfelt repentance, turning from sin, and receiving forgiveness from God.

God and so if you're concerned, even concerned about maybe I've done something or said something that I'm not getting forgiveness for, that in itself is an indication and an evidence of God's grace at work in your heart and in your life because if God was not at work, you would care less about what you said or what you did.

And so to be worried about whether one is blasphemed against the Holy Spirit is evidence enough that you haven't.

so we've seen two different views of Jesus' family's view and the scribes' view.

The third view that I believe that Mark wants us to see and consider is actually not stated in the text, but it's implied in the text. Mark has given us these two views of Jesus as if to ask, what about you?

[ 42 : 45 ] Who do you say Jesus is? What's your view? And friends, this view is more important than the other two views.

This view is more important than the view of his family. It's more important than the view of the scribes. This view is more important because this view will determine ultimately where we spend eternity.

So this is my third and final point, your view. Mark seems to be saying to us, I presented you with the evidence to show that Jesus is the promised king, that he is the divine son, that he is the last Adam, that he is the true Israel.

I presented you the evidence to show that Jesus is God by his ability to forgive sin. I've shown you that Jesus is the spiritual physician who has come to heal those who are spiritually sick.

I've shown you that he is the loving bridegroom who sets his love on his people in an everlasting way. I've shown you that Jesus is the new cloth and the new wine that can only be received by new garments and new wineskins, which is symbolic of people whose hearts have been made new to receive him.

[ 44 : 07 ] I've shown you that Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath, the one who created the Sabbath, the one who's worshipped on the Sabbath. I've shown you that he is the master who calls people to follow him as disciples, not as spectators.

Finally, Mark would say, and I've shown you the view of his family, I've shown you the view of the scribes, what about you? And friends, this is the question that we all must answer.

It is not enough for us to evaluate his family's view, not enough for us to evaluate the scribes' view.

We need to focus on ourselves now and say, what is my view?

How do I view, Jesus? See, this is the issue. This is the issue. A lot of people like to think about God.

What do I think about God? No, no, no. That's not what the issue is. Because the way God has designed it, God has chosen to reveal himself through his son. That's why Jesus says in John 14, verse 6, I am the way and the truth and the life.

[ 45 : 21 ] No one comes to the Father except through me. So the Father is here. We first have to come to Jesus. We don't jump over Jesus to see the Father.

We come to Jesus. And so the question is, what's your view? Who is Jesus? Jesus? Is he just some other human being the way his family saw him, where you could dismiss him as being crazy? Is he just some religious lunatic who is so hungry for power that he would sell his soul to the devil so he can perform miracles?

And there are some who do that today. Listen to the way the writer to the Hebrews put it. In Hebrews 1 verses 1 through 4, long ago, at many times and in many ways God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.

But in these last days he has spoken to us by his son, whom he appointed the heir of all things.

Through whom all so he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God, the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

[ 46 : 46 ] After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

The writer to the Hebrews says, this is the one through whom God speaks today. And he says, this one is the exact imprint of his nature.

Not a counterfeit, not some photocopy, but the exact imprint of his nature. This one is God of very God. This is God the Son. And God's design is you encounter him before you encounter me.

So it's not what we think about God, it's what we think about Jesus, it's how we view Jesus. That's where the conversation about God starts, brothers and sisters. How are we relating to Jesus in light of how we view him?

And if he is not Lord and Savior of your life, it matters not what you say. It matters not what you say about how you view him. Because we cannot say he is Lord, he is Savior.

[ 48 : 09 ] That's where I see him. And that's no reality in our lives. How we relate to Jesus is the evidence of how we see Jesus.

His family had no problem. fear of God was not on them when they said he is crazy. That's the way they saw him. He is my brother. Just my son.

The scribes had no fear of God when they said he is possessed by the devil and he is empowered by the devil. And so they uttered it. And that's the way we relate it to Jesus.

if Jesus is not the Savior of our lives, if he is not the Lord of our lives, if he is not the one for whom we are living, we don't see him as such.

And see, we can have all the right answers. We can be given a theology exam and we can answer every question correctly. But it comes down to what does our lives say and what our lives say is really the view that we have of him.

[ 49 : 35 ] That's how we actually view him. There's no denying the historical Jesus.

He was not a myth. He's not a man who was carried away with religion. No. He was the promised king.

He was the son of God. He's the savior of the world through whom forgiveness is possible. That's Mark's view.

By the grace of God, that's my view. By the grace of God, that's many of our view. we're here this morning, and that's not your conviction.

Then what is your view? What is your view? Are you going to be like the Pharisees and cover your eyes and stop your ears?

[ 50 : 40 ] Pharisees? The Pharisees had their own agenda.

Jesus threatened it. They probably didn't know what would happen to them and their positions if Jesus was allowed to be seen for who he really was.

And the truth is, Jesus does threaten when he comes. Things do not remain the same when he comes. Things have to change.

But there are changes for the better. There are changes for our good. There are changes to set us free from bondage and living under the power of Satan.

God us. And so the question that I believe that Mark implies is what's your view?

[ 51 : 53 ] Let's pray.

Lord, thank you for the amazing grace that you bring to the hearts and lives of undeserving sinners to see Jesus.

To see him as he is revealed in the pages of scripture, as he was revealed in his earthly ministry.

Lord, we thank you that we can agree with Mark, those of us who have put our trust in Jesus that Jesus is indeed the promised king.

He's the divine son. He is the last out of the true Israel. He is all that he has portrayed to be in scripture.

[ 53 : 17 ] But our own intelligence did not bring us to that conclusion. Our righteousness did not bring us to that conclusion. Lord, you had mercy and opened our eyes to see the beauty of the Savior and to submit our lives to him.

Lord, I pray, Lord, for those who would find themselves in a place where what their lips say is not connected to the lives that they live.

but help them to see that they are relating to Jesus, how they actually see him, that you're calling them to see him in accordance with how he is revealed in the pages of scripture.

So God, would you open their eyes. Father, I pray for those this morning who are like the Pharisees who are closing their eyes and stopping their ears because Jesus threatens them.

God, help them to see the mercy that you are displaying through your son.

[ 54 : 45 ] That they may submit to him, follow him, and serve him all of their days. Would you do this, Lord, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Are there any questions from the sermon? Thank you.

I'm wondering if you would respond to this, and it probably will take me 20 to 30 seconds. I hope you don't mind. But you said that there is no denying the historical Jesus.

And I thought that everything that you said was so powerful as it relates to that. And I thought about the various tests that Jesus really, that the historical Jesus would pass.

He would pass the evidentiary test that a lawyer perhaps would have. And the historical corroboration test that a historian might have.

[ 56 : 03 ] Or the accuracy test that a newspaper writer would have. And all of those are based on first-hand and second-hand accounts that we find in various historical accounts of Jesus by different individuals.

And I think very often people look at those accounts because they're compiled in one book. And they think that maybe it is one person. But we see all of these accounts by Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, by Peter, and Paul, and all of the others kind of thing that are supporting this historical Jesus. And yet, we find that people, some who have sat in church, right, and many who have not, but are aware of these accounts, they still have the views of the scribes or Jesus' family.

How do you explain or account for that? I think a couple of things I would say. One, a person's current response to Jesus is not the definitive final response necessarily.

So where we see a person at the moment does not necessarily mean that's where that person will always be. So you see that part? That all that you've described in those people who sat in churches, et cetera, let's say they've been in the church for 20 years, 30 years, 40 years.

[ 57 : 47 ] As long as there's breath in their body, we cannot say they will never see. Okay? So that's the first thing I would say. And then the other part of it is to say there's certainly mystery in terms of God's saving work, but what we know is not mysterious is that God holds unbelievers accountable for their unbelief.

And so why we would acknowledge that yes, we need the mercy and the grace of God to open our eyes. If he doesn't open eyes, nobody sees.

Scripture's clear on that. Scripture's also clear that those who die in unbelief will be held accountable for their sins.

And when we think of that, we have to think of it through the grid of a holy God who's perfect and just in all of his ways. So though we may not understand that justice, we would be unwise to accuse him of injustice because we be falling very close to where the Pharisees were falling when they were making accusations against Jesus about things that were just absolutely wrong.

So that would be my response that one, people are not necessarily finally where they are.

[ 59 : 33 ] There's hope beyond that. And then second, to remember that while in God's economy, there is no contradiction between a God who is sovereign and gives sovereign grace and a God who also holds unbelievers accountable for their unbelief.

And let me say this about that and then I'll see if Lyndon has a follow-up. The things we find in Scripture, they're wonderful to understand when we understand them.

But do you know that the call on our lives, the demand on our lives is not to understand. it is to believe. It is to believe.

And so the burden is on us to believe what we see in Scripture more than it is to understand what we see in Scripture. And I think what happens for us a lot of times is we seek to understand and we say understanding is where I'm going to place my hat as opposed to believe.

And the truth is there are many things in Scripture which our finite minds don't understand. But there are things which we can't deny are in Scripture and we're called to simply believe them.

[ 61 : 06 ] And I would even say that those things, those aspects of Scripture that we understand partly or we don't understand at all, they're not essential.

God has given us all the things that pertain to life and godliness. He's given us all the things that pertain to salvation.

So we don't need to ever worry about whether something we don't understand is going to hold us back from salvation in terms of what God has made plain in Scripture.

one of the doctrines we hold of Scripture is that Scripture is clear. Scripture is simple. Even a child, the smallest child is able to understand the truths of Scripture that lead to salvation.

That's why Paul could say to Timothy, he says, Timothy, from you a young boy, from you a child, you knew the Scriptures that made you wise unto salvation.

[ 62 : 07 ] Anything else? That's good. Okay. Enjoy. Okay. By the way, I'm enjoying the series very much. It's very insightful. A question I have is involving Mark, when the verse is 28, or rather 20, yeah, 28 to 30, where we spoke about the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

Now, I've heard it said that this condemnation is specific just to the scribes here, and that in fact, there is no sin that we can commit that will condemn us, including this one here that the scribes are condemned for.

Would you address that? Yeah. That's a very good observation, Troy, and there are some good Christians who hold that view where they limit it to these particular ones who heard Jesus.

Here's what I would say about that. I think Jesus seems to speak a bit more universally than that when he says, whoever blasphemes. And then the question would arise, okay, what about the scribes and the Pharisees who were not there on that occasion?

Does it apply to them as well? And that may be a very valid view, that may be the correct view. I think the safer view is to see this as a very sobering caution to humble ourselves, to be careful how we handle holy things, how we speak about things we don't understand.

[ 64 : 03 ] We don't need to be the judge of it. We can step back, let God be the judge of it, rather than casting some verdict on it and causing ourselves to be in some difficulty.

I'm fine with taking the position God knows, God knows the heart, he knows whether it's just those Pharisees that Jesus was addressing or was a broader group.

So that is a view and it's a view that's held by many good Christians. I think the safer view though would be to certainly include those Pharisees, but to take it as a broader caution, a more universal caution that could apply, not that it necessarily does apply, but could apply beyond just those ones. Any other questions? No? All right.