



1. V2 “looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched Him closely,”
 - a. Do we? God can withstand our fists beating off His chest.
 - b. But hang on, “who is that masked (son of) man!?” (Dan 7:13-14; 88 times NT of Ezekiel 90 times self-ascribed – ambiguous term – *you* decide which one He is.)
 - c. “Jesus’ presence demanded a decision about His preaching, His acts and His person” (Walter Wessel & William Lane, NIVSB, 1495)
 - d. Religious leaders envious of His authoritative teaching & miracles, & people flocking to Him. Beware of Christian leaders who seek even a smidgin of God’s glory.
2. Vv2-3 “would He heal on the Sabbath” (ie not *could* He!)
 - a. Cultural-historical context: disability (cf Lev 21)
 - b. Why did Jesus do it publicly? (*imago Dei*; good v religion; cause a stir?)
 - i. Mark’s focus on miracles.
 - ii. V3 “stand up in front of everyone”. Obedience linked to healing.
 - c. Strict Rabbis make allowances only for the saving of a life as an excuse for curtailment of Sabbath rest (*Mishnah Shabbat*. XXII). Or, here (ironically), for plotting murder!
3. V4 “Which is [quintessentially] lawful to do on the Sabbath....but they remained silent”
 - a. Doing nothing in the face of evil is not an option.
 - b. Silence from fear of self-condemnation, or loss of popularity (beware of both)!
4. V5 Jesus “looked around at them in anger, and deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts” healed the man. Rule of thumb: it aint looking good when Jesus is angry!
 - a. ESV and NKJV “grieved at the hardness of their hearts” – ask God for compassion
 - b. How do we deal with those we disagree with? Radical inclusivity of God’s people.
 - i. ‘Loretta J Ross: What if we called people in rather than calling them out?’ by Manoush Zomorodi (Ted Radio Hour on NPR)
 - ii. *The Conspiracy Theory Handbook* by Stephan Lewandowsky and John Cook (<https://skepticalscience.com/docs/ConspiracyTheoryHandbook.pdf>)
 - c. “If we do not believe in Jesus, then we must finally crucify Him” (‘Mark’, R Alan Cole, *New Bible Commentary*, 955.)
5. V7 “Jesus withdrew”
 - a. Scared? I don’t think so!
 - b. Not the time for a showdown; importance of rest.
6. V8 “Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea...across the Jordan...Tyre and Sidon”
 - a. Significant breadth and distance from Capernaum. Raging fame. Broke the internet. Crowds see what leaders don’t.
 - b. Most of Israel, and even it’s neighbors. Likely included Jews, proselytes, & beyond.
7. V12 “He gave [the demons] strict orders not to tell others about Him”
 - a. Disembodied evil spirits. (yikes, but just wait till Ch5!)
 - b. James 2:19. *Merely knowing* who Jesus is isn’t enough!
 - c. So called ‘Messianic secret.’ “Jesus...did not want [the evil spirits] to reinforce a popular misconception.... [but] wanted to teach the people about what kind of Messiah he really was – one who was far different than their expectations. Christ’s Kingdom...begins with the overthrow of sin in people’s hearts, not the overthrow of governments. (Robert Guelich, George Guthrie & Grant Osborne, NLTASB, 1622)
8. Vv13-15 “called to Him those He wanted” – calling of the 12, out of the many.
 - a. Apostles were a group from *within the disciples* (Luke 6:12). EG, in addition there’s Joseph-Barsabas (Acts 1:23), Matthias (Acts 1:23-26), Cleopas (Luke 24:18); and also Mary-Magdalene, Joanna and Suzanna (Luke 8:1-4). See ‘Did Jesus have Female Disciples’ by Rebecca McLaughlin on thegospelcoalition.org
 - b. Calling TO Christ then IN Christ.
 - c. V14 “be with Him” – intimacy!

- d. V14 “send them out” – sentness! God’s missionary people (See *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in the Theology of Mission*, David Bosch).
 - e. V 15 They “have authority”. Over the demonic forces of evil – *ekballo* (see Eph 6).
9. Vv16-19 “twelve He appointed”
- a. See also Matt 12:2-4, Luke 6:14-16, Acts 1:13. Note: “sons of thunder”; Thaddeus/Judas of James (Thaddeus meaning ‘warm-hearted’; could be nickname or changed from ‘Judas’ because of stigma); Simon the Zealot/Cananite (likely transliteration of Aramaic for zealot). Nicknames: ‘the Rock’ the ‘twin’. Again indicative of intimacy.
 - b. Disciples/apostles. Crowd to core.
10. Vv22-27 “He is possessed by beelzebul!”
- a. Vernacular term, often rendered ‘beelzebub’, a bastardization of *ba‘al-zəvûv* from 2 Kings 1; a lesser god of filth and carrion (lit.) “lord of the dunghill.” (See RC Sproul, *Mark: An Expository Commentary*, 59-60)
 - b. Jesus: ‘yeah that doesn’t make sense.’
 - i. Vv23-26 A kingdom divided falls
 - ii. V27 Implication that He (Jesus) has tied up “the strong man” (as He finally and utterly will, in the end, Rev 20:10)
11. Vv28-29 “whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven”
- a. Ascribing Jesus’ healing to satan’s power, rather than the Holy Spirit. If you worry you’ve done it, you haven’t. (Also see Luke 12:10).
 - b. Someone who “persistently attributes to satan what is accomplished by the power of God – that is, if one makes a flagrant, willful, decisive judgement that the Spirit’s testimony about Jesus is satanic – then such a person ‘never has forgiveness’” (Hans Bayer, *ESVSB*, 1899).
12. Vv20-21, 31-35 Family feud.
- a. V20 “not even able to eat”
 - b. V21 “He is out of His mind”
 - c. V21 (lit.) ‘those belonging to him’ (aka) ‘His people’.
 - i. Mary (later cared for at the foot of the cross, Matt)
 - ii. James & Jude – what a difference a resurrection makes!
 - iii. Us: family are hardest to love sometimes. Our reorientation around the Lordship of Christ may be misinterpreted as criticism, hypocrisy, or bigotry. Long-term love, prayer, and looking for opportunities is the best. (Col 4:5-6)
 - d. Vv31-35 “whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother”. Membership in God’s family (shown thru obedience) transcends human family. Blood family CF Covenant community; “Obedience is thicker than blood” (Mess 3:35)
 - e. “One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother” (Prov 18:24, & see Prov 27:6,18) – *be* and *keep* those friends!

QUESTIONS FOR THE BRAVE OF HEART

- How do you deal with it when you think you have “a reason to accuse Jesus”?
- What stops you from allowing “shriveled” parts of your life to be called out into the open?
- If you asked God for more compassion, how do you think He’d (specifically) answer?
- Does your ‘righteous anger’ bear Spirit fruit? (Ask someone close to you if in doubt!)
- Who would you rather wasn’t allowed into church? (btw, *don’t tell them* – repent and sacrificially and overwhelmingly welcome them)
- How could you love your earthly family better? Your spiritual family?
- Have you committed to covenant community? Have you decided on your pallbearers?