



Controversy Over Sabbath Healing Mark 3:1-12

June 30, 2019
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Mark continues the subject of the Sabbath Day discussion which led to a break with the religious leaders. Mark gives a telescopic view of the many healings that Jesus did. He did not just give us one but many examples such as in Mark 2:23, the disciples picked corn on the sabbath and in Mark 1:24-26, Jesus was preaching in Capernaum in the synagogue on the Sabbath and there was a man possessed with the impure spirit. Jesus said, "be quiet and come out of him" and the man shook with a shriek and the spirit came out. If we tried to calculate the number that he healed on the Sabbath it would only be a guess, there were many.

"And He entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there who had his hand withered. 2 And they watched Him, whether He would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse Him. 3 And He saith unto the man that had his hand withered, "Stand forth". 4 And He saith unto them, "is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, or to kill?" But they held their peace. 5 And when He had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart, He saith unto the man, "Stretch forth thy hand". And he stretched it forth; and his hand was restored. 6 And the Pharisees went out, and straightway with the Herodians took counsel against Him, how they might destroy Him.

7 And Jesus with His disciples withdrew to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and from Judaea, 8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumean, and beyond the Jordan, and about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, hearing what great things He did, came unto Him. 9 And He spake to His disciples, that a little boat should wait on Him because of the crowd, lest they should throng Him: 10 for He had healed many; insomuch that as many as had plagues pressed upon Him that they might touch Him. 11 And the unclean spirits, whensoever they beheld Him, fell down before Him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. 12 And He charged them much that they should not make Him known." **Mark 3:1-12**

When Jesus entered the synagogue There was a man there with withered hand. Some of the Scribes and Pharisees were there looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they

watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. The question arises here: *was the man with the withered hand planted there purposely?* I feel that that possibility did exist. **Psalm 37:32** says, *"The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him."*

Other healings on the sabbath were in secular areas such as fields, this area, the synagogue was a sacred spot. They knew if they planted him in the synagogue Jesus would heal him and they could say He broke the sabbath by healing on the sabbath. So, I believe that the man was placed there and the enemy was watching. Our Lord's enemies were looking for any flimsy excuse to bring charges against him. Proverbs 16:9 says, *"In their hearts humans plan their course but the Lord establishes their steps."* Jesus continued to seek His Father's will daily in every decision he made. Jesus had a decision to either heal this man or not.

Jesus asked the man to come and stand in the midst because He (Jesus) wants to say something. There comes a time when we must decide our actions and we must trust in God. Jesus chose this time to ask the Pharisees *"Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? To save a life, or to Kill?"* They had learned not to answer Him because they always got into trouble when they did. *Christ put the meaning of the Sabbath to the test.* Now Jesus broke through all of this red tape of their traditions, and to the heart of God's purpose in giving the Sabbath day to Israel originally, they wouldn't answer Him because they knew they would incriminate themselves. You can put it down in your memory that Jesus got angry. *"When Jesus had looked around on them with anger" ... This gives us just a flash of righteous anger that is not a grudge or with malice forethought, but Jesus was "being grieved for the hardness of their hearts"*

That was something that He carried with Him. He always had that awful grief because of the hardness of their hearts. This was the Sabbath but because the Sabbath is made for man and Because He is the Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus healed the man on the Sabbath the incident in the end of chapter 2 and this incident must be considered together. These two incidents brought about the break with the religious leaders

Because of these two incidents, both pertaining to the Sabbath the Pharisees never gave up and this was the beginning of the plot to put Jesus to death. **Psalm 2:2** *The together Kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel, together, against the Lord and against His Anointed saying. "Let us break their bonds in pieces and cast away their cords from us."* The multitudes continued to gather and have their illnesses healed by Jesus. In verses seven & eight, we notice the people are coming from various areas now and are following Him. Our Lord withdrew tactfully because as He said, *"My hour is not yet come"*, Later He did move into the face of all the opposition on Jerusalem. These people came from the entire areas to hear the Lord Jesus. Jesus is now in danger of the masses of people not the religious leaders, like mob rule. The crowds were not only hindering him but were endangering Him. The desperation of the crowd in wanting to be healed. We are told that he healed many. Some of the unfortunate persons who met Christ were possessed by unclean spirits, or demons. These spirit beings have no bodily existence but frequently seek to inhabit

humans or even animals. Mark says they fell down before Him, most likely by forcing to the ground the person they possessed. Jesus rebuked the demons who proclaimed you are the son of God, not because the demons incorrectly identified Jesus, but because their testimony was untrustworthy. They did not believe in God as LORD.

In conclusion, there are three truths we can learn that Jesus Christ confronts this controversy is: First, **the Sabbath as made for MAN not for the SABBATH**. Secondly, **the Pharisees watched Jesus closely, NOT to hear his words but to ACCUSE Him**. Thirdly, **Jesus expressed anger, not BECAUSE of they were trying to accuse Him but because of the HARDNESS of their hearts**. Jesus sternly rebuked them that they should not make Him known.