

**Mark**  
**Chapter 3**  
**“All The Power You Need”**  
**\*All scripture references are from the NASU unless otherwise noted\***

Calvary Chapel Fellowship of Enid  
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Last week, we left Jesus as He was ministering to some of John the Baptist’s misguided followers.

He had begun to call men to follow Him and His ministry was ramping up to what we know it became.

But as we saw in last week’s study ... when God moves, man, too often stiffens and we see that here ...

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**Verses 1-2:** For what it’s worth ... the language tells us that this man was not born with a withered hand, but that it occurred at some point during his lifetime and the church historian and early church leader, Jerome makes record of the fact that this man was a plasterer before his hand withered. He was in construction.

So now that’s gone ... he can no longer earn a living as he once did.

**Q. How wonderful would a touch of God be for this man?** – “But not today” said the Pharisees.

See they had rules for everything and the practice of medicine was no exception. Although there is no such Old Testament law, their mandate was that medical assistance could only be rendered on the Sabbath to save a life.

If a man’s leg got cut off ... you could apply a tourniquet to stop the hemorrhage, but you weren’t allowed to bandage the stump or apply any ointments because that was not considered part of saving his life.

So here’s a man with a withered hand ... not a life-threatening medical emergency. And whether they planted this man in the synagogue or had merely slithered into a good hiding spot to see if Jesus would break their rule is unknown, but the plot is easy to see.

As a bit of a side note here ... may we not have this Pharisaical attitude about our times together.

See they weren’t coming to the synagogue to meet with God ... they were coming there to mete out the law. They weren’t coming to commune, but to criticize. Their motive was completely wrong. They went looking for all the imperfections that they could point

out.

And that's not to say that we shouldn't point out areas where improvement is needed ... we should. But it's a question of attitude. If you're coming to critique and criticize ... you'll have no want of material. But you will also be thoroughly distracted, unfruitful and often even harmful.

If God points out issues ... wonderful ... now you've got a problem that YOU'VE been chosen to deal with, but don't come to church just to see how many flaws you can spot.

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**Verse 3:** People with infirmities such as this were often asked to sit in the far rear corners of the synagogue because of the stigma that they must have been cursed by God to be in such a condition.

But still ... no big deal ... there was nothing wrong with his legs, so Jesus tells him to come forward ... front and center.

Now Jesus knew they were watching Him.

**Q. So why not just wait a few hours until the Sabbath had passed ... or at least heal this man out in the desert somewhere? Why front and center?** – Because more than healing a man's hand, Jesus wanted to heal His nation's heart as we'll see.

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**Verse 4:** Christ's argument is that if God had given Him the capacity and the will to heal this man ... it would be wrong for Him to do nothing even if that's what their law required.

And the question apparently left them speechless. They couldn't say "Yes" to healing on the Sabbath, but they certainly didn't want to say "Yes" to doing harm on the Sabbath either so they remained silent.

I think that's the first wise thing we've seen them do so far.

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**Verse 5:** The hearts of the Pharisees were not only hardened toward this man ... forbidding that he be healed on the Sabbath, but hardened toward the very power of God as well.

Again, the original language matters here because it points out to us that there was an order to these events. An order that, not only, helps us to capture the scene, but also to understand the point.

It tells us that when Jesus commanded the man to stretch forth his hand ... his hand was still withered. It tells us that his hand was restored AS he reached forward with it.

So Jesus is asking this man to do the impossible when He says "stretch out your hand." It was still withered so this man knew that it was impossible.

**Q. How many times had he tried before and failed?** – So he could have argued with Jesus ... set forth all of the reasons that he couldn't and walked away, but instead he obeyed and the impossible happened.

Jesus will empower you to do anything and everything that He commands you to do, but the majority of the time, you must do it before that power is made known.

It's been said that "God's commandment is God's enablement" and that is true, but you are I are enabled as we do what we're commanded ... not as we think about it or intend to, but as we do it.

"I just can't" ... if God's commanded it ... then you can if you want to.

**Q. Wouldn't you love to have been there?**

**Q. Do you think his arm made funny noises after being withered for so many years?**

**Q. Did it glow or do something that highlighted the miracle?**

**Q. And the faces of the religious leaders ... fear, awe, anger?** – Some combination thereof I suspect.

**Matthew 19:26** says that ...

**"With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."**

And so here Jesus is commanding this man to do what was impossible ... to stretch out a hand that was withered and contracted. This man obeys and as he did the impossible became a piece of cake.

But it says that Jesus was both angered and grieved by the hardness of their hearts.

But this "hardness" was a specific hardness. This was a hardness that stemmed from their religion. Their religious traditions would literally hold back the work of God if they could. And Jesus was grieved.

**Q. But you know what?** – This still goes on today. Because it doesn't fit with their theological positions ... many people would hold back the work of God today by denying people God's power to heal or to speak in prophetic ways or to perform miracles.

May we not be people who would deny a work of God because of some rigid theological position based upon the traditions of man.

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**Verses 6:** Ah ... good ole religion! To heal a man on the Sabbath was a grave violation of their law, but to plot the destruction of an innocent man was perfectly acceptable.

But that's what religion does! You see their sin, but not your own.

Now the Pharisees most of us are familiar with and we understand that they opposed Christ essentially out of jealousy. They felt threatened by the power He displayed and the popularity He had gained.

**Q. But what about this group called the Herodians?** – Well as the name would imply, they were groupies of Herod. They were Jews nationally, but believed in peace at all cost. So they opposed Jesus for the way He was bucking the system and for stirring up Rome with His popularity and God-given authority.

So they partnered together to scheme against the Son of God.

But ...

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**Verses 7-8:** You really have to pull out the map to appreciate this. If Jesus was in the desert regions near Capernaum as the scriptures would indicate, then some of these people had travelled as much as 170 miles ... perhaps 7 or 8 days to be near Him.

And we thought John driving over from Ponca City to fellowship with us every week was impressive.

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**Verses 9-12:** So everyone with a problem was pressing in just to touch the Lord. And the truth of it is ... if you and I had been there and we had a problem ... we'd be in that throng of pressing people too.

**Q. But then again ... makes you wonder ... do we think that we don't have problems and issues now ... is that why we don't press in with fervency today?**

We're again reminded that Jesus came to this earth on a divine timeline. His times were appointed and at this time ... He was not to be fully revealed ... hence His commandments to the demons and His reason for having this boat at the ready.

It wasn't that **He was out of healing power or that He was just tired or weary of all the needy people ... no** ... as He said to His disciples back in **Chapter 1, verse 38** ...

**"Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; for that is what I came for."**

In the flesh Jesus was limited by same constraints that you and I live with. In this case, the one that jumps out is that He could only be in one place at one time.

So all these people wanted a physical healing from Him, but that was not His primary mission and He would not allow it to become so.

Verse 13:

**Q. Do you remember a few weeks back, talking about ministry investments and ministry expenditures?** -- Well here Jesus calls a select few unto Himself ...

**Q. Why?** – Because He was investing in them.

**Q. But wait a minute ... isn't this a click that Jesus is forming here?** – I suppose you could call it that, but under any name ...

**Q. Is it wrong?** – Must not be ... Jesus did it.

This is an important point to me ... perhaps more important to me than it is to you, but I've been accused of playing favorites. I've been criticized for spending more time with some individuals than with others ... to which I plead guilty.

Now ... I can't claim to have the motivational purity of Christ, but at the same time ... I do invest time where I see returns and I do withdraw where I don't. And I can't apologize for that because it's right ... to the best of my ability.

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**Verses 14-15:** He "appointed" them it says. That is ... it was His idea for them to do what they did on His behalf.

But notice ... it's subtle, but very important ...

**Q. What did He choose them for? What does it say?** – He chose them **so that they would be with Him**. He chose them to spend time with Him ... to fellowship and commune with Him ... underline that in **verse 14**.

And YES ... He did train them up and send them out to do His work, but doing His work was not His first priority and we need to see that, but it's not the primary reason that He chose you either.

But I also want to remind you that God chooses you and your ministry as we see in this passage.

I recently read an account by Chuck Swindoll about a time he was in a cemetery and saw a woman weeping at her husband's fresh grave. And he felt moved to minister comfort to her and in doing so ... he led her to salvation.

Today, this woman goes from cemetery to cemetery looking for broken-hearted woman and he says she's led countless women to Christ doing it.

It's a good example of how God appoints because no man would have thought of that.

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**Verses 16-19:** One committed suicide, eleven were tortured and killed for their faith and

the one remaining member of this click was boiled in oil and exiled to hard labor and no doubt wished to die.

So they were chosen as investments, but the payout was steep.

Now most of these names you're familiar with ... the twelve disciples. So I'm not going to recite a laundry list to prove the point that these guys were failures. They were mess ups in a big way. Chicken hearted, big mouthed, hot-headed zealots with more energy than know-how.

**Q. But here's the question ... did Jesus know they were mess ups when He called them by name?** – You bet. He knew every failure, past, present and, even more importantly ... future.

And that comforts me. It reminds me that Jesus is never surprised by my failures. He never gasps and screams "I never would have imagined!"

Now don't misunderstand me ... He's disappointed. Very much so, but He's never surprised.

And honestly ... if you're surprised by man's failures, then you don't have a very solid understanding of just how corrupt the human heart is.

The Bible says that we are but dust (that's "but" with one "T") (**Gen 18:27**).

**Q. But still ... what do you expect out of dust? Great things?** – Probably not!

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**Verses 20-21:** By "**home**" it means back to Capernaum and by "His own people" it means kinsmen.

All He wanted was a meal and a little rest, but it wasn't happening so His family came to kidnap Him. And it says that they were trying to protect Him from Himself even more than from the crowds.

**Q. Why? What worried them?** – The fact that He was bent on a pathway of self-sacrifice and figured that could not be the intent of a sane man. That's just not natural human behavior.

He must be crazy. And so the world will look at you!

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**Verse 22:** We've talked many times about the potential for discouragement in ministry. I get discouraged at times.

But I'm heartened by this because this is Jesus Christ and He's got a dozen mess-ups in leadership, a following who isn't hearing His message because their own agenda has plugged their ears. His family thinks He's lost His mind and the religious leaders are

spreading lies, calling Him names and plotting to kill Him.

And He calls this – total success ... because He had done what the Father ask of Him. Beautiful!

So these fine religious people travel from Jerusalem, not to check out Christ’s ministry, but to destroy it. They weren’t interested in whether or not it was fruitful.

**Q. Why?** – Because they hadn’t sanctioned it and that meant they got no credit for it. In fact it took away from them.

So they accuse Him ... basically of practicing black magic. They claimed that the only reason He was able to control the demons was because He was in league with the chief demon himself, Satan (here referred to as Beelzebul ... which was a derogatory name that was sometimes used for him ... I like it because it literally means “poop-god”).

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**Verses 23-27:** Note that Jesus went to the source of the problem. These lawyers had come down to destroy His ministry by spreading lies ...

**Q. So does what He do?** – He goes to them ... not to others, but to them. And rather than attacking them ... He tosses some logic out there for them to think about ... something to occupy their minds and maybe ... maybe even soften their hearts.

Because ... listen to what He says next ...

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**Verses 28-30:** So Jesus ends His conversation with these lawyers on this very sober note. And it says that He did so because of their accusations.

**Q. Makes you wonder ... was He condemning them for this accusation? Is this an example of the unforgivable sin?** – No.

Jesus is not saying that these people were beyond salvation, but He is warning that they were close. And He says they were close because of the accusation they’d made.

**Q. Why?** – Because God is known ... He makes Himself obvious to anyone open to see Him (So says Romans 1:18-19).

So when man is faced with the undeniable evidence of God over and over, but has set his heart not to believe in Him nor accept Him, then that man has no choice but to scramble for explanations and rationalizations for the evidences of God. That’s a warning sign that they’re getting close.

When people start scrambling for an explanation for the manifestations of God and His power ... they’re getting close committing the only unpardonable sin.

**Q. So what is that one unpardonable sin then?** --

**Q. Remember your mom warning you that if you crossed your eyes too much they'd stick that way?** – Well I'm not sure that's true, but what God is saying here is ... "Reject Christ one too many times and your opportunity of salvation will expire."

**Q. How many chances does a person get? When's it too late?** – Only God knows. Once you've burned up your spiritual nerve endings by your hardness to His call ... and can no longer hear the wooing of the Holy Spirit, then the scriptures pronounce that person eternally lost.

Because that person has rejected the one and only provision for forgiveness that God offers ... the blood of Jesus Christ.

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**Verses 31-35:** Jesus' Father was and is God, but the remainder of His family ... well He wants that to be you.

**Q. Wanna be a part of Jesus' family?** – There's your invitation! Whoever does the will of the Father.

It's the same priorities that we've been looking at on Wednesday evenings.

**Q. Let me ask you ... the adage ... "blood is thicker than water" ... is that true?** – Well in the western culture it has come to mean something that is NOT true! When we hear that cliché we almost instantly associate that with the importance of blood relatives.

But it is believed that the phrase was first used as a part of a sermon given on **1 Samuel chapter 20**, although the author is unknown. In **1 Sam 20** we have the story of David and Jonathon. They were not related by blood, but they were both sons of the Heavenly Father and as a result they swore their allegiance to one another ... even above their natural families.

So the original meaning of the adage, "blood is thicker than water", was ... and I quote "The blood of the covenant is thicker than the water of the womb," or, "My relationship with those to whom I am joined in covenant is to be considered of more value than the relationship with a brother with whom I may have shared the womb."

But sadly ... that doesn't happen much anymore, because we've allowed the severely skewed thinking of the Western World to make us believe lie.

The body of Christ ... those who do the will of God ... comes before extended family members who don't. Even mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters.

That's not to say that your blood family shouldn't be important to you. As a Christian ... family should indeed be important to you, but there is and should be ... a bond that comes in the family of God that is stronger and deeper than the bonds of a human family. May it be so!