

## Jesus' Galilean Ministry

Mark 3:7-12

November 25, 2012

### Introduction

One of the saddest things about people all over the world is that many are constantly looking for signs—signs that would give them answers or meaning to their existence. Many are unwilling to do anything unless signs confirm their decisions.

Examples: Weeping statues (from both the Catholic Church and Hindu religions), faces of Jesus and saints in objects and photographs.

In the Christian circle, a growing movement believes that salvation to the world is only possible through signs and wonders. In other words, people need to experience signs and wonders before salvation occurs. Those seeking the signs are akin to the Jews seeking the signs of the coming Messiah. I believe this sign seeking is unbiblical, and one of the biggest lies that Satan has perpetrated upon the Christian church. We are saved by grace through faith alone, not by sight (or any other senses). Yet there are those who insist that salvation is impossible apart from signs. What signs do those people seek? Healing (usually healing of non-believers), dreams, visions, objects appearing at times.

Examples: Oral Roberts City of Faith hospital (now mostly empty)—opened in 1981 and closed in 1989—sold in 1993. Now called CityPlex Tower. Oral had a vision of 900 foot Jesus telling him to build a hospital based on faith healing. 60 stories—main building, 30 and 20 stories for other buildings. Complete failure.

People believe that God is pouring out these signs upon the world, so that many will be saved. However, the Biblical evidence does not support this.

Throughout His ministry, Jesus has performed many signs—healing, raising people from the dead, and all those signs are pointing to one thing: that Jesus is indeed the Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity. What Jesus has done also bears witness that He is the promised Messiah that will save His people from their sins.

**John 5:36** *I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the very work that the Father has given Me to finish, and which I am doing, testifies that the Father has sent Me.*

Here Jesus is saying that His works proves that He is from the Father. Consider this claim: can anyone on earth, above earth, or below earth heal people instantly or raise people from the dead? The only One who can is God. If Jesus can do this without praying or asking God for help...then He is God.

**John 10:25** *Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in My Father's name speak for Me."*

What more evidence do you need?

**John 10:37-38** *Do not believe Me unless I do what My Father does. <sup>38</sup>But if I do it, even though you do not believe Me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.*

Sadly, they refuse to believe His work is divine. The religious leaders (and the people) have attributed His work to the devil.

**Matthew 12:38-42** *Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to Him, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from You." <sup>39</sup>He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. <sup>40</sup>For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. <sup>41</sup>The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now One greater than Jonah is here. <sup>42</sup>The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now One greater than Solomon is here."*

The Pharisees dog Jesus throughout His ministry, critiquing His every word and deed, and refusing to believe in His work. It is interesting that the Pharisees do not deny the miraculous works He has done; however, they attribute His work to the devil. They refuse to believe that He is the Sent One from God. Jesus explains that those who demand the signs are evil and adulterous—sinful. He further explains that the Ninevites will stand up against the Pharisees because they have listened to Jonah's preaching and have believed. Jesus is greater than Jonah because of who He is. No signs were given to Nineveh about their doom, yet they believe. The Queen of the South (Queen of Sheba) listened to Solomon's wisdom (and by Jesus' words) and believed in God through Solomon's preaching. Again, no signs were given to her for her to believe. Those who demand signs are unbelievers and they will remain in unbelief.

After recording the five conflicts that Jesus had with the Jews, Mark goes back to the Jesus' ministry in Galilee. We will see that even though Jesus performs many miracles, many in the crowd do not hold allegiance to Him as Lord. Mark is emphasizing that Jesus is indeed Lord despite that the fact people do not recognize Him as such even though the signs He has performed is evident.

**Mark 3:7-12** *Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. <sup>8</sup>When they heard all He was doing, many people came to Him from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and the regions across the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon. <sup>9</sup>Because of the crowd He told His disciples to have a small boat ready for Him, to keep the people from crowding Him. <sup>10</sup>For He had healed many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch Him. <sup>11</sup>Whenever the evil spirits saw Him, they fell down before Him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." <sup>12</sup>But He gave them strict orders not to tell who He was.*

## I. Jesus' Popularity (7-8)

**Note:** Jesus goes through periods of immense popularity. Remember the gospel does not equate success with popularity, not that Jesus is a failure for not capitalizing on the popular response. The problem is that it is the flesh that is the stumbling block. Mark is telling Christians that it may seem that our group is small and that we do not have large crowds and Jesus' goal is to teach and preach the gospel of the kingdom of God and the need for men to repent of their sins and believe in the good news in order to be reconciled to God.

- Withdrawing to the sea
  - After the confrontation with the Pharisees in the synagogue
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> withdrawal recorded in Mark
    - 1<sup>st</sup> withdrawal

**Mark 2:13** Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to Him, and He began to teach them.

- 1<sup>st</sup> confrontation is with the healing of the paralyzed man at the house
- Why does Jesus withdraw?
  - It is not yet His time
- Large following
  - Wherever Jesus went, there were large number of followers

**John 6:24-25** Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor His disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus. <sup>25</sup>When they found Him on the other side of the lake, they asked Him, “Rabbi, when did you get here?”

- They are usually persistent in finding Jesus
- Why do they keep following Him?

**John 6:26** Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, you are looking for Me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill.”

**Mark 3:10** For He had healed many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch Him.

**Note:** They were only following Jesus to satisfy the desires of the flesh.

- Widespread followers
  - Judea and Jerusalem
    - Southern area of Palestine
  - Idumea
    - Edomites mixed with Jews
    - Herod the Great is from this region
  - Jordan
    - East of the Jordan River
  - Tyre and Sidon
    - Northwest of Galilee on the Mediterranean Sea

**Note:** Jews and Gentiles all have heard about Jesus’ miracle works. His fame is widespread in the region.

**Transition:** The people do not respond to the message of the gospel of Jesus but rather obtain healing for their own benefit. They were interested in one thing: His power, not His message.

## II. Jesus’ Power (9-10)

- His healing
  - He heals many
  - He does not exclude this healing
  - But He preaches first and foremost
- Crushing crowd
  - He has to ask the disciples to make ready the small boat
    - So He could preach

- Not the first time it has happened

**Luke 5:1-3** *One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding around Him and listening to the word of God, <sup>2</sup>He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup>He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked Him to put out a little from shore. Then He sat down and taught the people from the boat.*

- Why preach off shore from the boat?
- Crowd is crushing around Him

**Note:** NIV has the word “crowding” (v9). A better translation is “*crushing* Him”.

- Like reporters today around celebrities or events
- This is a crowd that is coming from every direction around Him
- They are touching Him so they can be healed
- He preaches from the boat because it is safer and prevents harm (Jesus has perfect common sense!)

**Note:** This is a perfect example of people not caring what they hear. They just want healing—find relief from their distress. They are satisfying the desires of their flesh instead of finding healing for their souls.

**Transition:** Mark exposes an irony of the situation—the people do not recognize nor acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God, but His adversary, the demons, do.

### III. Jesus' Authority (11-12)

- Demons
  - Fell down
  - They reveal themselves
  - They know who Jesus is—the Second Person of the Trinity...their Creator

**Note:** The demons call Jesus the Son of God. This is not a messianic title.

- Jesus' order
  - The demons to be quiet
  - Why?
    - The demons are liars and evil
    - Their motives are not pure when they identified Him
    - Would have caused confusion and make people think that they are Jesus' allies
  - His authority over demons

**2 Peter 2:4** *For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment.*

**Jude 6** *And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these He has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.*

**Note:** The emphasis on the two verses is that the Satan and his demons are divinely limited to what they can do. They are removed from the glory of God's presence (gloomy dungeons) and their activity restricted (everlasting chains). When Jesus commands them, they have to obey Him.

## **Conclusion**

In spite of the signs and miracles He has done, the Jews do not believe in Jesus. If they have refused to accept Him, how much more will people believe today when presented with signs and wonders? The answer is not promising. From Scripture, all signs and wonders that people perform has stopped after the apostles (because it was done to authenticate the apostolic authority (cf 1 Corinthians 12:12). For people today looking for signs from heaven, they will never find answers nor will they find rest in their souls unless they seek the One who died on the Cross. Our eyes should always be on the person of Jesus Christ.