

LESSON 3



JESUS MEETS OPPOSITION

Scripture Text: Mark 3:1-21

In this lesson we look at some of the forces set against Jesus in His early ministry. It is evident that the Pharisees had purposed in their hearts to accuse Jesus. The accusation existed before the cause of it. This is a bad attitude. What spirit is present in a heart that will accuse Jesus or that enjoys accusing another? Why, when His purpose was all good, was the plan to kill Him formed early in His ministry? Who was behind this opposition? Let us look at what the Bible has to say in answer to these and other questions.

MEMORY VERSE: *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* *John 1:17*

The Desire to Accuse

Mark 3:1-6 It was not long before Jesus was confronted by His enemies. In Capernaum He went into the synagogue and saw a man with a **withered hand**. Immediately the battle lines were set up between two opposing forces. Jesus and the Pharisees. They wanted Jesus to heal the man **that they might accuse him** of breaking the Sabbath. It is evident that they wanted to accuse Him; it was as if they had set Him up. Jesus called the man to stand up before all. **Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?**—to kill by neglecting to help. Any answer would have shown the Pharisees to be wrong, so they said nothing. Jesus **looked . . . on them with anger**—not a feeling of hatred but intense rejection of their attitude. He was **grieved for the hardness of their hearts**. Their deadness or blindness was the result of a long resistance to the grace and Spirit of God—past feeling, past seeing. By long opposition to the light of God, they became dark in understanding, cut off from God in their sins and deception. Then by His Word Jesus healed the man. Beaten at their own scheme, the Pharisees sought the Herodians and plotted together to kill Jesus. They planned to destroy the Minister instead of the works of evil which they were doing. False prophets that cannot get along with one another today will join hands in fighting to destroy the truth and the work that is being done by a true man of God.

Jesus Continues in Spite of Opposition

Mark 3:7-12 Jesus **withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea**. It was not yet His time to die. He needed more time to preach His Gospel. In spite of the bitter opposition, Jesus' fame spread. From all parts of the nation great numbers flocked to Him. People were hearing of His miracles, and as the news spread many came to see for themselves.

And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. Unclean spirits—demons dwelling in people—fell down in forced surrender to Him and confessed Him to be Who He really was, **the Son of God**. Demons recognized Him clearly; why cannot man? **He straitly charged them . . . not make him known**. He didn't need any help from Satan's kingdom.

Jesus Chose the Twelve

Mark 3:13-19 Jesus went from the people **up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve** (appointed to a duty or office). According to the Scripture there was no formal ceremony in the ordination of these twelve men. Jesus simply appointed these to the activities He chose for them. The

twelve named in verses 16-19 are known as the twelve Apostles. The purposes for which Jesus chose them were (1) to **be with him**, to learn of Him, (2) to be sent **forth to preach**, (3) to receive **power to heal sicknesses**, and (4) to receive power **to cast out devils**. They received life in themselves, enabling them to minister life to souls and to bodies, and power to destroy the kingdom of Satan.

Jesus Was Misunderstood

Mark 3:20-21 Jesus returned to the people once again. They came in such numbers and with so many requests that Jesus **could not so much as eat bread**. The rumor went out that He was insane. **His friends**—probably some of them relatives—thought He needed their help, so went **to lay hold on him**. Since we are not told that they succeeded, we can feel sure that He turned them aside and continued His work. Jesus at no time (until His Crucifixion) put Himself under the power or protection of others.

When a man gives himself to making money, seeking worldly fame and pleasure, satisfying the flesh, wasting his life in worthless ventures, or destroying his health by sinful living, the world understands that and generally considers him normal and within his rights. But when another gives himself to the service of God and the spread of the Gospel, denying his own comfort and health to do it; when all of his life is consecrated to the glorifying of God, this the world does not understand and generally considers him **beside himself**, out of his senses.

Jesus Had Right Method

This lesson will help check each of us out. How easy it is for even saints to fall into the sin of an accusing spirit. People can do much good led by the Holy Spirit, and others will sit back and find fault. Let us examine our hearts as to whether discovery of a fault in another gives us pain or pleasure (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

When Jesus faced opposition He showed courage. He did not alter His plan because of it. He did not fight or use force against His enemies. His only force was the power of God. He came away the Victor. We can learn from His example. We can receive from Him all we need in our meeting of opposition from the powers of Satan.

JUST A THOUGHT

**No matter how great the odds, you can't win
when you fight against God.**