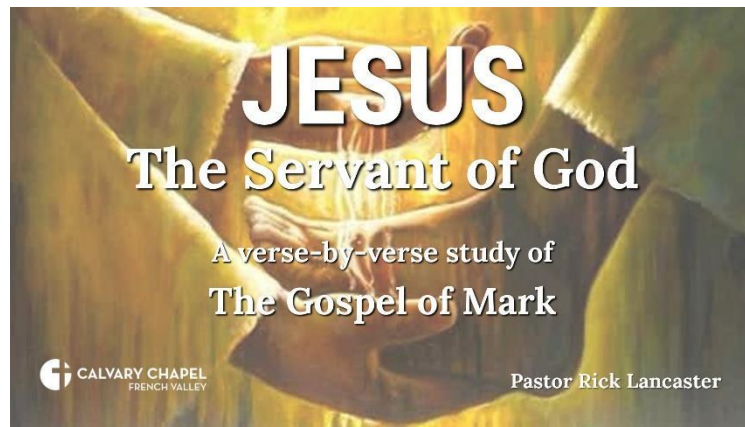




# **JESUS: The Servant of God**

A verse-by-verse study of the Gospel of Mark

## **The Gospel and the Heart**

**Mark 3:1-12**

**Message #7**

**Sermon given on November 9, 2025**



**Sunday Morning Service**

**Pastor Rick Lancaster**

# The Gospel and the Heart

**Mark 3:1-12**

## Opening Comments

- Open your Bibles to **Mark 3**
- Today, we begin a series through the gospel of Mark – **JESUS: The Servant of God**
- Let's open this time in our service with a word of prayer. - **Pray**

## Teaching

### • **The Gospel and the Heart**

- I am no different than anyone else, there are things in life and the world that bother me - that make me angry.
  - The Bible teaches that we shouldn't let our thoughts and emotions go unchallenged. **1 Corinthians 10:4-5**
- <sup>4</sup>For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, <sup>5</sup>casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ...**
- When we experience strong emotions, we should ask ourselves some questions.
  - And we need to try to be brutally honest when we answer them.
  - What is the emotion I am feeling?
  - Why am I feeling this emotion?
  - Is it the right emotion?
  - And if it is not, what is the right emotion?
  - Very often it is our heart telling us what to feel.
  - That is a problem. **Jeremiah 17:9**
- <sup>9</sup>The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?**
- Only God the Holy Spirit can change the human heart, but that only happens when we surrender our heart to Him so that He can change it.
  - One of the signs of spiritual maturity is not being controlled by our emotions.

- A spiritually mature person has the same emotions everyone else does, they just aren't moved by those emotions.
- They feel them, they exercise self-control, and respond as the Holy Spirit leads to act like Jesus would in that situation or circumstance.
- Jesus is going to express an emotion we rarely see from Him in our text for today.
- **Mark 3:1-2**
- In chapter Jesus told the religious people who challenged what could and could not be done on the Sabbath that He was Lord of the Sabbath.
- That meant He was the authority who determined how Sabbath was to be observed.
- There was a man at the synagogue with a withered hand.
- Tradition claims that he was a stonemason.
- We don't know if he was born with a withered hand or if it was the result of some kind of injury.
- As a stonemason, it would make his work exceedingly difficult.
- It is the Pharisees who are watching to see what Jesus will do.
- They are watching to see if Jesus will violate the prohibition against working on the Sabbath by healing this poor man so they can accuse Him and discredit Him and His ministry.
- Jesus decides to challenge the religious guys to examine their hearts.
- **Mark 3:3**
- Jesus could have healed this man without a word.
- He could have pulled aside and healed him.
- Instead, Jesus puts him right in the middle of the room.
- **Mark 3:4-5**
- The Sabbath was meant to be a day of rest for physical restoration and spiritual renewal.
- Religion turned it into a burden that deprived man of both.
- The Pharisees claimed spiritual authority over people.
- They had set themselves apart and claimed to be examples of how God wanted His people to live.
- Jesus is trying to show them their hypocrisy, not to condemn them, but to convict them and call them to repent.

- But as Jesus looked around, He saw there was no conviction or repentance because their hearts were hard.
- A hard or calloused heart is insensitive to the Spirit of God.
- His first response is grief, or sadness.
- There can be no greater tragedy than a human heart that cannot feel the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- We were created to know God, worship Him, and walk in an intimate, communion fellowship with Him.
- That is only possible if the Holy Spirit is in you and you are yielding your life to Him.
- Christ's second response is anger.
- Of all the people on earth at the time of Christ's first advent, they should have recognized Him as their promised Messiah.
- They knew the Scriptures that foretold His coming better than anyone.
- Jesus was grieved because their hearts were hard, but He was angry because they chose to harden their hearts. **Hebrews 3:14-15**

**<sup>14</sup>For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, <sup>15</sup>while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."**

- Brothers and sisters, hardness of hearts is a choice.
- We must all be very careful not to assume this is a problem someone else has.
- Each of us may have areas of hardness in our hearts.
- We should regularly ask God to examine our hearts and to show us anything that is displeasing to Him.
- Jesus tells the man to stretch out his hand, which he does and is immediately healed.
- One act of faith and obedience and this man was completely healed.
- Many of us may have things in our life that we would like Jesus to make right.
- I wonder if we might be one step of faith and obedience away from complete healing?
- We are not told how the healed man responded but we can imagine he was overjoyed.

- We do know how the religious guys reacted.
- **Mark 3:6**
- Instead of repentance for their hardness of heart and rejoicing that a man is made whole, they conspire to plot Jesus' murder.
- Listen, if your religion moves you to violence against others, your religion is wrong, evil, and demonic.
- Christians must be very careful in our highly divided culture.
- There are things going on that ought to grieve our hearts and maybe even stir us to anger, but the response to that must never be violence.
- Any belief system that encourages violence against others, including who are opposed to their beliefs, is wrong, evil, and demonic.
- Some, like Islam, even say they worship the same God we do, but they encourage violence against anyone who is not Muslim.
- They are not worshipping our God, and because our God is the only true God, they are worshipping something that is not God.
- Our God is a God of peace and love.
- Jesus doesn't hang around while they plot His murder.
- **Mark 3:7-10**
- The sense of this is that it is still on the Sabbath.
- When you see the phrase 'great multitudes' it means many thousands.
- They are coming from everywhere to be healed by Jesus or to watch Him heal people.
- Some came because they needed spiritual healing.
- **Mark 3:11-12**
- Unclean spirits are demons or fallen angels.
- Just as angels are real, so are demons.
- They still roam around the world doing the will of their master, Satan.
- **John 10:10a**
- <sup>10</sup> **The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.**
- The thief is the Devil.
- Jesus forbids the demons from declaring who He is.
- It would be like a serial killer telling everyone what a great pastor I am.
- What he is saying might be true but I don't want my ministry associated with his life.

- Jesus was grieved and angered over the hardness of their hearts.
- They put their religion over the needs of people.
- They had allowed their hearts to become hard toward God, His word, and His people.
- They hadn't always been like that.
- At some point they were probably sensitive to the things of God.
- But now they are insensitive. **1 Corinthians 2:14**

**<sup>14</sup> But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.**

- We should be very sensitive to the state of our heart.
- Jesus could see the hardness of the Pharisees' hearts and it grieved and made Him angry because they did it to themselves.
- What I would like to think about this morning is, if that is what makes Jesus angry, what makes Him happy?
- I believe it is better to focus on what pleases God rather than on what makes him angry.
- So, what does please God? **Hebrews 11:5-6**

**<sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found, because God had taken him”; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. <sup>6</sup> But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.**

- It pleases God when we live by faith.
- Living by faith means we are getting to know God better every day through His Word and by His Spirit.
- One of the ways we walk by faith is by allowing the Holy Spirit to help us keep our heart tender toward God.
- That is the opposite of being hard-hearted.
- Every Christ-follower should regularly examine their heart to see if any hardness is developing.
- The world is filled with things that can result in a hardening of the heart.
- We can't discuss them all.

- One of the things is being hurt by the church or someone in the church.
- Really, any hurt by anyone anywhere can wound our heart.
- Those hurts can result in scars on our heart.
- Scar tissue on the body is not as sensitive as healthy tissue.
- If you get wounded enough times, your heart will be insensitive to the person or thing that keeps hurting you.
- There is only one thing that can prevent that scar tissue from building up on your heart and causing it to become insensitive - forgiveness.
- Forgiveness is about healing your heart from the hurt caused by others.
- It may not change the person who hurt you, but it will allow your heart to heal.
- Forgiveness prevents spiritual scar tissue from building up on your heart.
- Jesus is our example.
- He lived a perfect life and loved everyone He touched during His life.
- And then He was betrayed, falsely accused, beaten, mocked, scourged, and ultimately crucified.
- And then from the cross He responded with grace, mercy, and love.

#### **Luke 23:34a**

<sup>34</sup> **Then Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.”**

- Jesus knew the Father in heaven was pleased with Him.
- We know that too because God raised Christ from the dead and now He is seated at the right hand of the father in heaven.
- We also can know God is pleased with us as we walk with Jesus by the Holy Spirit in faith and obedience.
- That’s what we were created to do, and when we do it, God smiles.
- I love the idea of God smiling down from heaven in my life.
- What wouldn’t God do for someone whose life makes Him smile?
- Let’s be a people and a church that brings a smile to the face of God.
- Let’s pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help us to examine our heart and make sure it is tender toward God.
- **Pray - Communion – Last Song**