

Mark: 3:7–12

From Catena Aurea:

6. And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

7. But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judæa,

8. And from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

9. And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him, because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

10. For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.

11. And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.

12. And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.

THEOPHYLACT. But the soldiers of Herod the king are called Herodians, because a certain new heresy had sprung up, which asserted that Herod was the Christ. For the prophecy of Jacob intimated, that when the princes of Judah failed, then Christ should come; because therefore in the time of Herod none of the Jewish princes remained, and he, an alien, was the sole ruler, some thought that he was the Christ, and set on foot this heresy. These, therefore, were with the Pharisees trying to kill Christ.

THEOPHYLACT. At the same time again, He goes away, that by quitting the ungrateful He might do good to more, for many followed him, and he healed them. For there follows, And a great multitude from Galilee, &c. Syrians and Sidonians, being foreigners, receive benefit from Christ; but His kindred the Jews persecute Him: thus there is no profit in relationship, if there be not a similarity in goodness.

THEOPHYLACT. Consider then how He hid His glory, for He begs for a little ship, lest the crowd should hurt Him, so that entering into it, He might remain unharmed. It follows, As many as had scourges, &c. But he means by scourges, diseases, for God scourges us, as a father does His children.

THEOPHYLACT. Morally again, the Herodians, that is, persons who love the lusts of the flesh, wish to slay Christ. For the meaning of Herod is, 'of skin.' (pelliceus. v. Hier. de Nom. Hebr) But those who quit their country, that is, a carnal mode of living, follow Christ, and their plagues are healed, that is, the sins which wound their conscience. But Jesus in us is our reason, which commands that our vessel, that is, our body, should serve Him, lest the troubles of worldly affairs should press upon our reason.

From Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture:

3:10 They Pressed Upon Him to Touch Him

Touching Him by Faith.

Augustine: It is by faith that we touch Jesus. And far better to touch him by faith than to touch or handle him with the hands only and not by faith. It was no great thing to merely touch him manually. Even his oppressors doubtless touched him when they apprehended him, bound him, and crucified him, but by their ill-motivated touch they lost precisely what they were laying hold of. O worldwide church! It is by touching him faithfully that your "faith has made you whole." Sermons, On Easter 148

3:11 The Unclean Spirits Fell Down Before Him and Cried Out, "You are the Son of God"

The Absence of Charity in Demonic Confession.

Augustine: Both the devils and the faithful confessed Christ. "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," said Peter. "We know who thou art. Thou art the Son of God," said the devils. I hear a similar confession, but I do not find a similar charity. In one there is love, in another fear. He is lovely to those who are sons. He is terrible to those who are not sons. On the Psalms 50.2.

Faith Works by Love.

Augustine: The “faith that works by love,” is not the same faith that demons have. “For the devils also believe and tremble,” but do they love? If they had not believed, they would not have said: “You are the holy one of God” or “You are the Son of God.” But if they had loved, they would not have said: “What have we to do with you?” Letter 194, To Sixtus.