

Mark 3:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

Analysis

Mark explains why Jesus spoke so sternly: 'Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.' The scribes' blasphemous accusation—attributing Jesus' work to demons—crosses into unforgivable territory. They witnessed Holy Spirit's power through Jesus yet called it satanic. This reveals hardened hearts beyond repentance. The phrase 'they said' (ἔλεγον, imperfect tense) indicates persistent accusation, not isolated comment. Their ongoing blasphemy demonstrates willful, malicious opposition to obvious truth. Reformed theology sees this as the unpardonable sin—persistent, final rejection of Holy Spirit's testimony to Christ.

Historical Context

In Jewish theology, blasphemy meant speaking against God's character or work. The third commandment forbids taking God's name in vain (Exodus 20:7). Jesus' contemporaries understood that attributing God's work to Satan reversed good and evil, calling light darkness. This wasn't honest skepticism but willful perversion of truth. Their accusation sought to undermine Jesus' ministry and justify opposition. Church history records similar blasphemies—calling Holy Spirit's conviction 'psychological manipulation' or gospel's power 'mass delusion.'

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does persistent attribution of God's work to evil demonstrate hardness beyond hope?
2. What distinguishes honest doubt from blasphemous rejection of clear truth?
3. How does this passage warn against resisting the Holy Spirit's conviction?

Interlinear Text

ὅτι ἔλεγον Πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον ἔχει
Because they said spirit an unclean He hath
G3754 G3004 G4151 G169 G2192

Additional Cross-References

John 10:20 (Parallel theme): And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?

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