

### 3. Family Moment

*34 Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 35 Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother." - Mark 3:34-35 NIV*

When Jesus' family arrived, they sent word that they wanted to speak to Jesus. In response Jesus declared that the primary identity of His family was no longer limited to blood relatives.

*How did Jesus define those included in His family? What do you think it means to do the will of God?*

Jesus was not rejecting His family; He was redefining it. The members of His birth family would eventually understand that. Mary had always known. Jesus' brother James would eventually overcome his doubts and became a leader of the early church. The family of Jesus extends beyond His birth family to us. We have been adopted into the family of God when we trust in Jesus as our Savior.

#### WRAP-UP

In this passage, Jesus faces accusations from both His family and the religious authorities after casting out demons, as they misunderstand His mission and powers. Jesus' family, confused and concerned, attempts to take control, while the Pharisees accuse Him of working with Satan. Jesus responds by highlighting the absurdity of these accusations, explaining that a divided kingdom cannot stand. He teaches that Satan was defeated at the cross but still has influence in the world, and that the ultimate battle requires Jesus' strength, not ours. Jesus also redefines His family, stating that those who do God's will are His true family, emphasizing faith and obedience over blood relations.

#### MEMORY VERSE

*35 Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother." - Mark 3:35 NIV*

*Challenge – Be alert this week to issues that threaten the unity of believers. Recognize that this is a tactic of our enemy and combat it by inviting Jesus into the battle.*

## Confronting Darkness Gospel of Mark ch. 3 - Week 2

### INTRODUCTION

During His ministry on earth Jesus constantly confronted the Kingdom of Darkness. But those encounters weren't always welcomed by everyone. In the passage we are studying today Jesus' casting out of demons results in accusations from both the religious authorities and from His family. Jesus' response gives us insight into the battle that underlies the spiritual struggles that we too will face.

#### Ice Breaker

*When was the last time you had to defend yourself against a false accusation (perhaps you didn't actually take the last piece of that chocolate cake).*

#### Key Passages

**35 Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother." - Mark 3:35 NIV**

### STUDY QUESTIONS

#### 1. Accusations

*20 Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. 21 When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind." - Mark 3:20-21 NIV*

*22 Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, and Jesus healed him, so that he could both talk and see. 23 All the people were astonished and said, "Could this be the Son of David?" - Matthew 12:22-23 NIV*

In Mark's account of this incident Jesus' family hears what he is doing and decides to take charge because "He is out of his mind." But in Matthew's account we see a little more detail. Jesus has cast out a demon from a man who was both deaf and mute and the crowds are asking if He might be The Son of David, indicating they thought He was the promised Messiah (Ps 132:11).

What do you think it was like for Jesus' family to hear He was casting out demons and being considered the Messiah? Why do you think they wanted to take custody of Him?

*22 And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons."  
- Mark 3:22 NIV*

*8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.  
- 1 Peter 5:8 NIV*

Jesus was not a physician treating an ailment, He was a warrior doing battle. This was The Kingdom of God against the Kingdom of Darkness. Even if his family didn't recognize this, the Pharisees and Scribes certainly did. They came a long distance to discredit His power over Beelzebul, the enemy of God.

*God's enemy, and ours, is Satan. But it is challenging or even frightening to recognize the Spiritual Warfare that takes place when the Kingdom of God invades the Kingdom of Darkness. Do you find it difficult to accept Satan as a real enemy in your life? What are the challenges or arguments that you must overcome to do so? In what ways have you encountered the power of Satan?*

Jesus' family and the Pharisees both attempted to explain what was happening apart from the truth, that Jesus was the Messiah and He had come to set the captives free from the power of Satan. We don't want to fall into the same temptation, to explain away the power of God against the forces of evil. This is our battle as well, and Jesus shows us how it is fought and how it is won.

## **2. Jesus' Response**

Jesus was aware of what was being said by the religious leaders to the crowd. They were planting the seeds that suggested Jesus was collaborating with Satan. Jesus directly confronts the fallacy of the Pharisees who were saying that He was using Satan's power to cast out demons. He begins by pointing out two ways that a "house" (or kingdom or family) is undermined, either from within or without.

*Jesus says that Satan casting out Satan means his kingdom is divided against itself and cannot stand. Describe when you've seen internal division ruin an organization, a family, or anything else? If issues arise that threaten to divide a church, what can we do to recognize Satan and our enemy rather than those with opposing viewpoints?*

*22 And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons." 23 So Jesus called them over to him and began to speak to them in parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan? 24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. 26 And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. - Mark 3:22-26 NIV*

In verse 27 Jesus explains how external forces can tear down a stronghold. He uses a parable of plundering the house of a strong man after the strong man is bound. Ironically the literal translation of the name Beelzebul is lord of the house.

*27 In fact, no one can enter a strong man's house without first tying him up. Then he can plunder the strong man's house.  
- Mark 3:27 NIV*

*24 Can plunder be taken from warriors, or captives be rescued from the fierce? 25 But this is what the LORD says: "Yes, captives will be taken from warriors, and plunder retrieved from the fierce; I will contend with those who contend with you, and your children I will save.  
- Isaiah 49:24-25 NIV*

*If Satan is the "strong man" in this parable, how was he bound? In Isaiah 49 we find that captives and plunder will be retrieved from the fierce. How do you see this applying to Jesus healing the blind and mute man in Mat 12:22?*

The evil one was bound at the cross. Satan was defeated but is not yet powerless. We see the effects of evil in our world. But there is one who is stronger, and that is Jesus. When we confront the kingdom of darkness, we need to invite Jesus into our battles and not rely on our own strength.

*28 Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter, 29 but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin."  
- Mark 3:28-29 NIV*

*34 You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. - Matthew 12:34 NIV  
8 "And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 "of sin, because they do not believe in Me;  
- John 16:8-9 NKJV*

*Identifying the "unpardonable sin" has troubled many Christians. To blaspheme means to speak evil or defame. What does defaming the Holy Spirit reveal about the heart (Mat 12:34)? In John the job of the Holy Spirit is to convict us of sin. What does verse 9 say about that sin? Can sin be forgiven without believing in Jesus?*