

Mark 3:7-35 - The Conflict Increases

Intro: In the face of mounting opposition from the religious authorities (Mark 3:6), Jesus withdraws with His disciples to the Sea of Galilee; yet His reputation grows and the crowds increase.

READ Mark 3:7-12. Crowds Follow Jesus

- 1) What do these verses tell us about the extent and growth of Jesus' popularity? (See map on back.) What seems to be motivating the crowds to seek Him?
- 2) How do the evil spirits respond when they encounter Jesus? Why do you think Jesus commands them to keep silent, even though what they say is true?

READ Mark 3:13-19. Jesus Appoints the Twelve

- 3) Jesus appoints the Twelve "that they might be with Him" *before* sending them out to preach and minister. Why do you think that order matters—first for the apostles, and then for disciples today?
- 4) Why do you think Jesus chose twelve and why *these* twelve? What do we know about them?

READ Mark 3:22-30. The Religious Leaders' Accusation

- 5) Why do the teachers of the law come down from Jerusalem, and what accusation do they bring against Jesus? What does this reveal about how seriously they view His ministry?
- 6) How does Jesus respond to their accusations and what severe warning does He give?

READ Mark 3:20-21 & 31-35. Jesus' Mother & Brothers

- 7) How do these verses challenge later traditions about Mary and Jesus' siblings?
- 8) What point, do you think, Jesus is trying to make in verses 33-35?
- 9) Jesus' mother and brothers believed they were acting in His best interest. In what ways can well-meaning believers today misunderstand or unintentionally oppose God's purposes?



Digging Deeper (adapted from The Bible Knowledge Commentary, *Mark*, John D. Grassmick)

3:13-19 Jesus' Appoints the Twelve

The number 12 corresponds to the 12 tribes of Israel, thus expressing Jesus' claim on the whole nation. Though significantly linked with Israel...they were the nucleus of a coming new community, the church.

3:22-27 Jesus and the Beelzebub accusation

Satan is the strong man. **His house** is the realm of sin, sickness, demon possession, and death. **His possessions** are people who are enslaved by one or more of these things, and **demons** are his agents who carry out his diabolical activity. No one can enter [Satan's] realm to carry off (plunder) his possessions unless he first binds the strong man (shows he is more powerful). At His temptation (1:12-13) and through His exorcisms **Jesus demonstrated that He is the Stronger One, empowered by the Holy Spirit (3:29). His mission is to confront and overpower Satan and to deliver those enslaved by him.**

3:28-30 Jesus' Warning

...refers to an attitude (not an isolated act or utterance) of defiant hostility toward God that rejects His saving power toward man, expressed in the Spirit-empowered person of and work of Jesus...Such a persistent attitude of willful unbelief can harden into a condition in which repentance and forgiveness, both mediated by God's Spirit, become impossible.

3:33-35 Jesus' True Family

Jesus' rhetorical question was not a repudiation of family relationships (see 7:10-13). He was highlighting the far deeper issue of a person's relationship to Him...kinship [with Him] goes beyond natural family ties. Doing God's will characterizes those who are His spiritual kinfolk.