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## Concerning Jesus (Mark 3) -Aaron McRae

This Discussion Guide is designed to help you **think more deeply** about the sermon and **engage with others** through thoughtful conversation, biblical exploration and **allow God to work** in your life as you apply what you discover.

### ➤ CONVERSATION STARTER

**What is one quality or character trait that you look for and appreciate in a friend?**

### ➤ EXPLORATION

As we continue on in the book of Mark we begin to see a fuller picture of who Jesus is and what he does. In chapters 1 and 2 Jesus has been preaching, teaching and healing people everywhere he went. Many people began to follow him around so they could see and hear more. But Jesus' teaching was often in conflict with the teachings of the religious leaders of the day.

#### 5 Instances of Conflict for Jesus Early in Mark

- 1 Jesus forgives & heals a paralyzed man 2:1-12
- 2 Jesus eats with sinners & tax collectors 2:13-17
- 3 Why don't Jesus' disciples fast? 2:18-22
- 4 Observance of the Sabbath 2:23-28
- 5 Healing on the Sabbath 3:1-6

The Pharisees (religious leaders) didn't like what Jesus was doing because it challenged their customs.

#### **Mark 3:1-6 (From your bible, read aloud)**

**Why do you think the Pharisees were so upset with Jesus?**

Jesus didn't let the opinions of the Pharisees keep him from doing what God sent him to do.

#### **Mark 3:13-18 (From your bible, read aloud)**

Jesus invited 12 people to be his disciples. These men would walk with Jesus, learn from him and work together to accomplish whatever he called them to do.

Some of the disciples are more familiar to us than others. Most of them were mentioned many times in the New Testament, and we know a lot about their lives with Jesus and beyond. But there are other people that we don't see mentioned again. Whether we know about them or not, each person was important to the life and ministry of Jesus.

#### **The 12 Disciples of Jesus**

- 1 Simon- aka Peter, seems to be the leader
- 2 James= and his brother John "Sons of Thunder"
- 3 John= the disciple whom Jesus loved
- 4 Andrew= Peter's brother
- 5 Philip= One of the 12 disciples
- 6 Bartholomew= One of the 12 disciples
- 7 Matthew= formerly known as Levi, tax collector
- 8 Thomas= the doubter
- 9 James= son of Alphaeus, possibly Matthew's brother
- 10 Thaddeus= One of the 12 disciples
- 11 Simon the Zealot= member of a radical zealot party
- 12 Judas Iscariot= who betrayed him

None of them were theologians, or rabbi's or teachers. None of them would have been seen as religious leaders. None of them would have been considered a good "World Changer" and yet because of Jesus they became all those things.

This was a diverse group of people. They came from different social circles, with different philosophical, political and personal preferences. We can only imagine how challenging it would have been for them to work together in unity. Without the invitation of Jesus to become his disciples, it is highly unlikely that these men would have ever worked together. They were just too different from each other.

**Have you ever worked with someone who you found difficult? Without naming them, share about what made it so hard.**

Even though the disciples were very different, Jesus called them, appointed and empowered them to do the following:

#### **The 12 Disciples Were Appointed to:**

- Be with Jesus
- Go out and preach the gospel
- Have authority to drive out demons

***Mark 3:20-21, 31-35 (From your bible, read aloud)***

Apparently even Jesus' family didn't understand what Jesus was doing. They thought he was out of his mind. But Jesus continued on the mission that God had given him and in this passage he redefines the idea of a family. It is not just our flesh and blood relatives, but it is everyone who does the will of God.

*"What is my vision of God's purpose for me? Whatever it may be, His purpose is for me to depend on Him and on His power now. If I can stay calm, faithful, and unconfused while in the middle of the turmoil of life, the goal of the purpose of God is being accomplished in me. God is not working toward a particular finish— His purpose is the process itself."*

~Oswald Chambers "My Utmost For His Highest"

**How do you discern what God's purpose is for your life?**

The idea of living out God's purpose in our lives can be a challenging concept for us. The disciples were able to learn God's will as they walked with Jesus, learning to do the things he did.

One of the most important ways we can know God's will for our lives can be found in a careful reading of scripture. Through the Bible we see what Jesus did, what he taught and how he lived.

Read the following passages and identify what they tell us about God's will for our lives.

***1 Timothy 2:1-4 (From your bible, read aloud)***

***1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 (From your bible, read aloud)***

***1 Peter 3:17-18 (From your bible, read aloud)***

***Romans 12:1-2 (From your bible, read aloud)***

***1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (From your bible, read aloud)***

Knowing God's will and purpose for our lives is possible, even today. We may wish we could have specific direction for every detail of our lives, but that is not what we see most often in scripture.

Understanding and doing the will of God is something we can learn and grow in over time as we discover what the bible says and grow in our spiritual formation.

#### **The Will of God Includes:**

- Being saved & knowing truth
- Learning self-control
- Suffering for doing good
- Being transformed & renewed
- Gratitude in ALL things

**From this list, in which area(s) do you need to grow?**

**What steps will you take to learn and grow in this area?**

#### **> TAKE AWAY**

Jesus called 12 uniquely diverse people to become his disciples. Even though they were very different in many ways, they were part of God's plan to change the world. As they followed Jesus, they helped give us a glimpse of the redefined family of God.

Like the disciples, we are also invited to be part of God's family with all those who believe in Jesus and do the will of God. With this in mind, consider how you might interact with other believers as your brothers and sisters.

**Take some time to pray together, thanking God that you belong to the new "Family of God." Ask God to bless each person in your family; at home, at church and around the world.**