

## **FG Midweek**

### **The Gospel of Mark**

#### **Class 3: Mark 3:7-35**

Name the twelve disciples game.

Good evening! Welcome back to our Midweek gathering. This time on Wednesday nights focuses on equipping you to do the work of ministry. God calls you to do more than just sit on the sideline—He has a plan and He has a purpose for you in His mission. Wednesday nights serve as an opportunity for you to learn, be built up, and to be equipped to the ministry that God has called you to.

Reminder: study in spring, share in fall

### **REVIEW**

In the first two chapters of Mark, Jesus is introduced as the long-awaited Messiah and divine Lord. Following Jesus requires repentance and faith, but also requires counting the cost. We will face opposition because Jesus faced opposition. Nevertheless we are called to live with faithfulness, boldness, and perseverance in the face of opposition.

The third section in Mark emphasizes the identity and essence of a disciple.

### **The Gospel of Mark**

- Mark 2:1-3:6
  - In this section, Mark highlights the opposition that Jesus faces from his opponents (scribes, Pharisees, and Herodians mentioned here specifically).
  - There are five scenes where Jesus is questioned by various opponents, all pointing us to the same reality: that if Jesus faced opposition, then we as His followers should also expect to face opposition.

- Application & Takeaways
  - This section continues the theme of counting the cost.
  - Following Jesus presents us with opposition from the world. How do we respond to opposition in a loving and missional way?

Read Mark 3:7-35

## **HIGHLIGHT**

- What is the context within the book of Mark? What is the context within the entire Bible?
- What is the author's main intent? What is Mark trying to get us as readers to understand?

## **EXPLAIN**

- What is the author saying?
- What words or phrases are repeated or emphasized in the passage?
- What themes in Mark do you see recurring in this passage?
- What does the author reveal about God? Man? Redemption?
- Does this passage connect to other passages in the Bible?

## **APPLY**

- What does the text teach about mankind and how we differ from God?
- Is there a sin that I am convicted of and need to confess after reading this passage?
- What kind of gospel-fueled obedience does this text call me to?
- Is there a sin to avoid? Is there a promise to hold onto?

## **RESPOND**

- Journal your response to the text by writing down your key takeaway of the text.

## The Gospel of Mark

### Mark 3:7-35

The main idea of this section is to identify and define a disciple of Jesus. What does a disciple look like? What does a disciple do? This section has two parts: 3:7-19 and 3:20-35.

3:7-12	Crowds follow Jesus, but seemingly for what they can get from Him. Demons rightly identified Jesus as the Son of God, but not with a repentant posture.
3:13-19	Reminiscent of Exodus 19:3, Jesus appoints twelve apostles (disciples). Apostles (sent ones) are defined as those who are both with Jesus and sent out by Jesus. One must first be with Jesus in order to be sent out by Jesus. Followers → Companions → Missionaries
3:20-21	Genetic proximity does not mark true discipleship.
3:22-30	Physical and "religious" proximity do not mark true discipleship.
3:31-35	Obedience and commitment mark true discipleship.

In 3:7-19, we see a definition of a disciple. A disciple (apostle in the text here), is someone who is authoritatively appointed by Jesus to be in the presence of Jesus and to be sent out by Jesus.

A disciple (μαθητής or mathetes) is a follower or learner. An apostle (ἀπόστολος or apostolos) is one who is sent, a messenger. Jesus had twelve disciples, and eleven of them would become apostles. To be an apostle, one had to be an eyewitness of the risen Christ, commissioned directly by Christ, and be confirmed through signs and wonders. All of the disciples (other than Judas were apostles, but not all apostles were disciples. There are no longer disciples today because there are not eyewitnesses of the risen Christ, people, though sent on mission through the command of Scripture, are not directly commissioned by Jesus, and thirdly, signs and wonders are no longer a functioning spiritual gift in the context of the local church.

What does it mean then to be a disciple? In the text, Mark points out that disciples spent time with Jesus, and were sent out by Jesus. To be a disciple requires both! Some want to study the Bible, but not engage in evangelism. Others want to engage in evangelism without deep study of God's Word. Both are wrong. To be a disciple means that you abide in Christ, and live on mission as a sent one.

When read together, 3:7-19 helps us to see the difference between a follower who only wants Jesus for what he can get from Jesus, and a follower who wants to be close to Jesus and engaged in the mission of Jesus.

In 3:20-25, we have a chiasm! A chiasm is a literary device where words or phrases are mirrored in the passage so that the central message comes in the central part of the chiasm. For instance, A - B - C - B - A.

Biblical writers utilized chiasms all the time because they only had the written and/or spoken word (no pictures or powerpoint!), and thus they used words, repetition, and grammatical structure to emphasize the main point.

Chiastic Symmetry seen in the characters of the story:

- A. Jesus (3:20a)
  - B. Crowd (3:20b)
    - C. Relatives (3:21)
      - D. Scribes (3:22)
        - E. Jesus (3:23-29)
          - D. Scribes (3:30)
            - C. Relatives (3:31)
              - B. Crowd (3:32)
- A. Jesus (3:33-35)

The main point in 3:20-25 is this: true followers of Jesus are those who actually follow Jesus and do his will, not those who have genetic proximity, “religious” proximity, or physical proximity.

This chiasm is also an example of what theologians have called a “Markan sandwich.” This is when Mark begins a story, then interrupts his first story with a second story, and then finishes his first story. (See also, 5:21-43 , 6:7-32 , 11:12-25 , 14:1-11 , 14:53-72)

→ First Half of Story 1

→ Story 2

→ Second Half of Story 1

The first story is Jesus not being recognized by his own family members (3:20-21, 3:31-35) and the second story is Jesus being questioned and opposed by the scribes (3:22-30).

When we see Mark’s sandwich structure, we see what he is trying to emphasize: that his own family accuses Him of madness, while the scribes accuse Him of demon possession. This highlights the opposition that Jesus continues to face, while also distinguishing between a true follower and those who do not follow Jesus—even His own family members!

So what does a follower really look like if Jesus’ own family and the religious leaders of the day are not true followers? The answer is in verse 35: whoever does the will of God!

## **Conclusion**

When we sit down to read this chapter with a friend who is lost, we want to emphasize what a true disciple looks like. There are many counterfeits in our world today—and a lot of those counterfeits get a lot of attention. But a true disciple will be known for the way they obey and follow Jesus, the way they commit themselves to His Word and his people (the church), and the way they love Christ with their whole heart, mind, and strength.