



Study 4 : Jesus—The Rejected Man

Mark 3:7-35

Personal Preparation 1

'Jesus – Who Are You?' is the name of this series, and it's the question that's ever present throughout Jesus' public ministry, as shown in Mark 1-8. However in 3:7-4:35, we see that certain people aren't asking that question anymore. They have now reached their own conclusions. And their answer for who Jesus is far from complementary. Let's get to know Jesus more and see how he responds to those who have already made their mind up. **Read Mark 3:7-21**

1. How do the crowds respond to Jesus at this time? How does this attention restrict Jesus?
2. How would you say Jesus responds to the crowd's amazement and adulation?
3. What does Jesus do on the mountain?
4. For what purpose does Jesus' gather these 12 men?

Extra Points if you can name the 12 apostles in growth group this week!

5. What is Jesus' family reaction to all the attention he is receiving?

For Today: Why do you think Jesus' family responds in the way they do? Why might we consider it 'reasonable' for a family to make such a conclusion about their own son or brother? Why is Jesus' family wrong?

thoughts. questions. insights

Personal Preparation 2

Before it was Jesus' own family who reject him. Now it's the turn of the religious hierarchy. We've already seen that they're offended by Jesus (2:7). We've already seen that they've decided they want to kill Jesus (3:6). Now they come out directly and say what they think about him.

1. List the four times in Mark 1-3 where it is recorded that Jesus had contact with demons or Satan?
2. What is the conclusion the teachers of the law reach after observing this contact? v22
3. Why do you think they say this?
4. In response Jesus tells the teachers of the law a parable. This is the first parable of Jesus in Mark. He will go on to tell many more – next week's study! In the parable of verses 24-26, what is the point Jesus is making?
5. In verse 27, who is the strong man, and what is the point Jesus is making here?

Read Mark 5:1-13 – the time when Jesus literally shows his power over a strong man.

For today: In our own context, demon possession raises all sorts of questions for us. Is it a modern phenomenon? Do we not pay enough attention to 'evil spirits' today? Whatever answer we have on those questions, the demonic influences that Jesus encountered were very real. Jesus came to bring release from demons, and his ultimate victory over Satan was shown on the cross. Give thanks for Jesus, the strongest man of all.

thoughts. questions. insights

Jesus: The Rejected Man, Group Discussion Questions

In personal preparation time, we've seen the different people who reject Jesus – his own family, and the religious leaders. As a group we'll spend some time on this, but we also need to also that Jesus was someone who was not rejected by all. In fact, Jesus had his apostles, he had his followers, and they become part of the good news that Jesus brings – God's kingdom in near and hope for Israel has arrived. **Read Mark 3:7-35**

1. What were the issues raised, questions posed, new insights you had as you read Mark 3:7-35 this week?

The Rejection of Jesus

2. Why do you think the teachers of the law say that Jesus is possessed by Satan?

3. Jesus' words in verse 28 have caused a lot of anguish for Christians – worried that they may have committed the unforgiveable sin. But from the context, what is the unforgiveable sin?

Who has the most chance of being saved—someone possessed by an evil spirit, or a well credentialed Jewish leader who accuses Jesus of being possessed by the devil?.....It seems that the unforgiveable sin is their total ongoing hard heartedness toward Jesus which they eventually express in saying that Jesus is on the side of Satan. When they have that attitude, how can they ever be in the position to receive God's forgiveness through Jesus!?

Those Who Follow Jesus

4. What purpose did Jesus have in going up to the mountainside to appoint apostles?

This is your chance to receive the prize - can anyone remember the names of the 12 apostles!? What do you think is the significance about the number 12?

'12' was the number of the sons of Jacob who we can read about in Genesis. The 12 son names became the names of the tribes of Israel. Ten of the tribes were destroyed by the Assyrians in the 722BC, and since then Israel has limped along through times of scattering, exile and suffering under the power of foreign rule - Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, now - Romans. But **have a read of Isaiah 49:5-7** which speaks of a future time of restoration for Israel (tribes of Jacob) and salvation for all nations.

5. How does this Old Testament prophetic background give meaning to what Jesus is doing on the mountain?

It's worth noticing that Jesus is doing his appointing of the 12 on top of a mountain. It's on a mountain, out in the wilderness where the true nation is being gathered again. This is subversive. The restored people of God (the good news) centres on the person of Jesus, and not on the standard national-religious symbols of Jerusalem or the temple.

Let's keep focussing on those who are not rejecting Jesus, but actually coming to him.

Read Mark 3:31-35.

6. What is shocking about what Jesus says?

We need to realise that what Jesus says is very shocking. If we value normal family ties in our own society today, how much more so in the 1st century world of Israel – with their close network of relatives, bound together through ties of tribal allegiance, physical living arrangements and work.

7. What is comforting about what Jesus says?

8. How are you going at expressing your family relationship with others in church?

9. How do you think we are going as a church at expressing our family ties?

Pray

- Praise God for Jesus – that though some rejected him, he brought good news for a restored Israel and good news for salvation to all.
- Give thanks – that by accepting Jesus and doing God's will – a new family is created that we are part of.
- Pray that as a church we would express family love for each other
- Pray that _____ would not be heard hearted towards, but follow Jesus and become part of God's family



Remember

- This Sunday you can still sign up to be part of the 'Guess Who's Coming to Lunch' which is on 9 March.
- Have you checked out the fresh-church website lately? www.freshchurch.net It's updated with new information regularly. If you want to tell someone about our church, you could also give them our web address.