

Introduction: Get ready... Lean IN! God is speaking to us through his Word.

Read 3:13-35

These words teach us about...

**“The New People of God”  
Mark 3:13-35**

T: As we will see as we break down these accounts, the new people of God live with new priorities and a new perspective, on God’s new path.

**1. New Priorities: Proximity & Ministry (3:13-19)**

Jesus Invites...

- Don’t miss the profound revelation in verse 13.
- First, Jesus went up on the mountain, the hill country of Galilee. Luke 6:12 tells us he retreated to SPEND ALL NIGHT IN PRAYER. When making decisions, retreat with God. Seek his wisdom! We often want answers without asking.
- Once Jesus received direction from his Father, he takes the initiative in the discipleship relationship. He called “those whom he desired.”
- Here’s a question for you: Who’s pursuing who? We *can only* pursue God because we’ve been pursued by God!
- This is the basis of grace-motivated living. God is not bossing us around, barking out commands. He’s inviting us into relationship, and all his instructions are rooted in LOVE.

Jesus chose 12 to be his closest followers.

- Why twelve?
  - Just as there were 12 tribes of Israel who made up the people of God, now Jesus is calling twelve people to represent the new people of God.
  - And notice, Jesus is not 1 of the 12. Just as God formed the nation of Israel through 12 tribes, Jesus now calls his new people through 12 disciples, another implicit claim to Jesus’ divinity. We’re seeing it every week!
- But who were the 12? This should encourage you.
  - Peter, Andrew, James and John: four fisherman, never trained formally,
  - Matthew, a tax collector working for Rome...
  - Plus Simon the Zealot, who wanted to overthrow Rome! Only Jesus could bring those two dudes together.
  - Not to mention Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas (known for his doubts), James the Son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus (), and Judas Iscariot, who would ultimately betray him.
- Here’s the point: different backgrounds, different passions, different Enneagram #s. :) 1’s and 9’s and 5’s ORDINARY people. But ordinary people in the hands of an EXTRAORDINARY GOD, unlocks the limits on who those ordinary people can become or what they can do.
- **“For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:26-29)**

T: Look back at verse 14. This might be the best role description of a follower of Jesus in one verse. Check our PRIORITIES: WITH & SENT. Say it with me: WITH & SENT. What does it mean to follow Jesus? WITH & SENT. How do we know if we’re experiencing all God wants for us in discipleship? We’re living WITH & SENT! Proximity & Ministry

### Priority #1: WITH (PROXIMITY)

- This is the greatest news. Jesus chooses us that we might BE WITH HIM. God paid the price for our salvation to restore our friendship with him.
- I love what Mark Edwards says in his commentary: “Discipleship is repeatedly defined in Mark by *simple proximity* to Jesus: being with him (3:13), sitting around him (3:34, 4:10), hearing him (4:1-20), and following him ‘on the way’ (1:16-20; 10:52).” (Edwards, 16).
- So let me ask you: How’s your friendship with God? (2x; camera) Are you creating room to...
- **Vision: 1,000,000 Minutes with God: Invest at least 1% of your day (15 minutes) in focused, face to face time with God. [YES! Oh man, Pastor Tanner, I remember you preaching about that on 1/10, but it kinda slipped my mind quick. Ok! God hasn’t run away. He hasn’t taken your name off calendar for today or tomorrow!**
- We live life WITH JESUS, and also

### Priority #2: SENT (Proximity & MINISTRY)

- Ministry involves serving and bringing the light of God’s kingdom to others
- I believe most Christians are conceptually comfortable with being WITH Jesus. We like the idea of hearing his teaching and seeing him do what he does, but then, he says, “Your turn!” and sends us out.
- The word “apostle” means “sent ones.”
- We’re less comfortable with being sent to preach and we don’t even know what to do with the authority to cast out demons. Most 21<sup>st</sup> century American Christians functionally “Command X” that clause (CUT IT - Make it disappear), because we think that was just for Jesus’ time, as if demons are still not active today, or because confronting the demonic and praying the literal hell out of hearts, homes and cities IN THE NAME OF JESUS scares us to death.

But let me make simplify this with some first steps.

- #1) Spend time with Jesus. Read your Bible. Pray, and listen for God to speak to you and guide you.
- #2) Preach Jesus. Talk about #1. What is God teaching you? How is he changing you? Share your God moments, your God encounters with the people around you. You don’t have to preach Genesis to Revelation to preach Jesus, you just have to talk Jesus.
- #3) When it comes to our authority over spiritual forces of darkness, start with prayer. Take a stand against demonic influences through prayer.

The new priorities of the new people of God are being...

With. Sent.

Proximity. Ministry.

Jesus multiplying himself in us. Then we multiply ourselves into others.

Receive. Give.

Sit. Go.

**PIC: Citgo Sign.**

Can never see the sign the same way again. Sitgo.

T: But sadly, not everyone heard the call. Not everyone embraced his vision. Jesus not only gives us new priorities but he also gives us a...

## 2. New Perspective: Jesus’ Identity & Power (3:20-30)

The people in vv. 20-30 did not have the proper perspective of Jesus' Identity & Power. Their perspective may shock us, and yet if he's not the Son of God, and promised Messiah, it's understandable why they would say these things. They missed his identity, and consequently his power.

Look at vv. 20-21.

- Did you hear that? "He is out of his mind." Who said that? HIS FAMILY!
- I'm sure they were concerned. If I were so busy with ministry that I wasn't eating, my mom would show up on my steps too. Love you mom!
- But it's more than that... This is more than a misunderstanding. This is a failure to embrace him, at this point, in his Messianic mission.
- "He is out of his mind."

But then, we hear the more egregious accusation from the scribes. Look at verse 22. They're saying: "He is possessed by Beelzebul," [a nickname for Satan] and "by the prince of demons he casts out demons."

This is the NEXT VERSE! Verse 21. He's deranged. Verse 22. Hey Jesus, we know you're on Satan's team. WOW.

Let me tell you something: criticism stings. Live long enough, lead long enough, you will be criticized. For us, it's often warranted and helpful, but not for Jesus. These were fabricated assaults on his character and the integrity of his mission.

And yet... when you live from your identity and possess security in your assignment, and most of all, in the Father's love ("You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased." Mark 1:11), you don't have to fire back in self-defense.

Think about it. Jesus could have said: "Hey, I'm bringing heaven to earth. The kingdom of God is shining before your eyes. And oh, by the way, I'm going to be crucified to save you from God's just judgment." Instead, he simply speaks truth. Look at vv 23-27.

#### Rebuttal... (23-27)

- Verses 23-26 points out the absurdity of their thinking. If Satan is working against Satan, he has launched his own civil war against himself.
- Jesus uses two examples (which Mark calls parables) to explain. He says a divided kingdom and a divided house will not stand. They won't endure. They will crumble. The division is the beginning of their downfall.
  - Interestingly, Jesus' language here echoes 2 Samuel 7:16, which speaks of the Messiah's legacy: "Your house and your kingdom will endure forever."
  - There is no alliance between Jesus and Satan but a battle! Rival kingdoms. Jesus makes this clear in verse 27.
- Verse 27. Part 2 Somebody say: "Verse 27" Say it with some satisfaction. "Verse 27" - mmm, mmm, mmm, mmm, mmmmmmmmm.
  - Who's house? Who's the strong man? That's Satan.
  - Who's the one entering, and binding, and plundering? Who's the stronger man? That's Jesus.
  - What's the plunder? From the context of his exorcisms and setting people free from their oppression by demons, as well as Isaiah 49:24-26 that talks about taking captives back, and Ephesians 2:1-3 that tells us before we met Jesus, we were following Satan's lead and playing on his team! The plunder is us. We're the valuable possessions Satan has taken and Jesus is **TAKING BACK!**
- Now think about it: We follow the stronger man. This informs the mindset we should live with. We're on offense. We're on the attack. We don't live scared. We live victorious.

- **“And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18)**

How does this happen? By. The. Spirit. Jesus makes clear: his work is done by the power of the Holy Spirit (see Mark 1:9-11).

Two very important points here, one negative, one positive.

- The negative is eternally serious. Verses 28-30. To blaspheme is to slander. Jesus says, “all sins will be forgiven and whatever blasphemies they utter.” That’s the good news of the gospel. God offers us forgiveness, complete and eternal, through the death of Jesus.
- But... Jesus says, there is one sin that is an eternal sin: blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit is attributing the work and witness of God’s Spirit through Jesus to the work of Satan. Put within the larger context of the gospel, William Lane says, “Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit denotes the conscious and deliberate rejection of the saving power and grace of God through Jesus’ word and act.” (145)
- This is the eternal sin that never has forgiveness: rejected the work of Christ by the Spirit.
- If you’re worried about committing it, it’s evidence you haven’t yet. But let’s be clear, you must turn to Christ. You must receive his saving work in his life, death, and resurrection through repentance and faith.
- Do it today! Cry out to God: I need you. Forgive me. Save me. My life is yours!

Now for the positive point: The rest of Mark should be read against this backdrop. Every exorcism, every good deed (feeding hungry people) and certainly his death on the cross, giving all people access to God, should be read in light of v. 27. What is the STRONGER MAN doing in all of that? He’s plundering the house and kingdom of Satan. He’s the true King!

T: Hallelujah! New priorities. New perspective.

### **3. New Path: God’s Ways as God’s Family (3:31-35)**

We came to what literary scholars call an “interlocution.” All you need to understand this is a sandwich. Mark sandwiches the (I’m gonna go with chicken parm from Bob’s)... he sandwiches the C parm of the Beelzebul account between two accounts of his family trying to also pull him away from his mission. That’s the bread. You see that?

But why? “Both represent the rejection of Jesus by his own and the establishment of new family relationships based on spiritual allegiance rather than physical ancestry (see 3:34–35).” - Strauss

Again, Jesus’ family, this time, specifically his mother and brothers are standing outside, calling to him, but Jesus responds in verse 33. Check it out. Read 33-35.

- These were shocking words. The family unit was held in the highest esteem. No earthly relationship surpassed the importance of family, but Jesus is saying, there is another family beyond our earthly family, our spiritual family. If you follow me, if you do my Father God’s will, you are my mother, brothers, and sisters.
- The church is a spiritual family. **“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.” (Ephesians 2:19)**
- But we’re a family with a common purpose and mission. That is to do his will.
- What’s his will? Repent and believe the good news. Live WITH & SENT. It’s obeying everything he taught and commanded us.
- What did we read in James 1 this week? **“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” (James 1:22)**

- Hear this: God's will is not simply living a pure life: be kind, not angry; be humble, not proud; be loving, not hateful. It IS that, but it's more than that. It is Mark 3:13-15. Intimacy. Ministry. Preaching. Bringing healing and restoration to those under spiritual forces of evil.

This is our privilege. This is what Mark 3 is showing us...

**The Point: Jesus calls people into a new family to join his kingdom work.**

*Conclusion:*

Following Jesus means living the life of Christ.

**“So they shall fear the name of the Lord from the west,  
and his glory from the rising of the sun;  
for he will come like a rushing stream,  
which the wind of the Lord drives.” (Isaiah. 59:19)**

This is about Jesus. Jesus came like a rushing stream, driven by the wind of God (a sure pointer to God's *ruah* - Holy Spirit). And what does a stream brings? That's right. LIFE. Jesus brought LIFE wherever he went. That's why people were shouting and dancing and celebrating, and now, he gives us the same privilege. As we live in him, we bring his LIFE to others.

**“On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ ” Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.” (John 7:37-39)**

If you have Jesus, you have his Spirit. If you have his Spirit, you have living waters flowing out of you.

Walk close. Proximity. Live sent. Ministry.

Jesus is on the move.

Let's pray.