

GO DEEPER

use these questions for further study

In your own words, summarize the main idea from last week's passage (2:18-3:6)

Read Mark 3:7-35. Share 2-3 observations of what you see in the passage and then answer some or all of the following questions:

Verses 7-19

- Jesus seems to move away from the crowds (first departing Capernaum, then getting in a boat, then going up a mountain). Why does he do this?
- What is significant about all the place names listed in this passage (use a Bible Atlas or a map in the back of your Bible to help visualize).
- Why does Jesus tell the unclean spirits not to reveal his identity?
- What is the distinction between a disciple and an apostle? How many disciples did Jesus have at this point? How many apostles? What is the significance of the number of apostles Jesus calls? What is he doing?
- What do you notice about the diversity of apostles called in 16-19?

Verses 20-35

- Why does Jesus' family think he's out of his mind?
- Why did some people accuse Jesus of being possessed by Beelzebul (a powerful demon)? Who is the "strong man" Jesus is referring to? Who is the "plunderer" Jesus refers to? What is Jesus' larger point in this teaching?
- Jesus says all sins and blasphemies are able to be forgiven, do you believe this? Do we ever treat some sins as unforgivable? Why?
- To blaspheme the Holy Spirit means to insist on calling the things of God "not from God." It is the refusal to believe God; the persistent rejection of the acts, power, and testimony of the Holy Spirit. Why is cutting yourself off from God (persistently rejecting Jesus) the only unforgivable sin? Should this comfort us or concern us?
- Why does Jesus change the definition of family? How does this relate back to his teaching in 2:22 on new wineskins?
 - > How might this redefinition of family challenge you?
 - > How might the redefinition of family comfort you?

Jesus' warning about blaspheming the Holy Spirit and his redefinition of family should cause us to evaluate the trajectory of our hearts. Are you choosing to trust Jesus and let him radically redefine your life, or are you rejecting his words and calls because they are too hard, too extreme, or mismatched with your own thinking? Is your heart slowly hardening or slowly softening to his leadership?

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