

Daily Bible Study

“The Identity of Jesus’ Real Family”

Mark 3:31-35

January 17-23, 2010

THE LORD’S DAY – We now come to the end of Mark chapter three as we take for our text the last four verses, **Mark 3:31-35**. In this weeks study we see that Jesus’ earthly brothers and mother (Mary) make an attempt to contact Him with the probable intention of removing Him from the public eye and providing Him a haven to recoup as they have heard of some of the things He was involved in without rest and refreshment. Although they may have had true and honorable intentions, Jesus makes it clear that physical ties and concern are secondary and subservient to The Will of God. Many things in life, including family may interfere with progression in obedience to God and here Jesus gives illustration of that to us from His very own earthly family. Everything bows before obedience to God, everything. Then, the chapter ends with Jesus beautifully defining for us who really is in His family. Read **Mark 3:31-35**.

The Word Applied & A Suggestion for Prayer: Prayerfully read the text then ask God to both teach you from His Word this week and then give you opportunity to practice what you learn.

MONDAY – Our text begins in **verse 31** where Mark seems to pick up his thoughts from **verse 21** and further explain and bring some clarity to the point he was making back there when he spoke of Jesus’ *own people...* He specifically tells us now in **verse 31** that Jesus’ *brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him.* Without trying to over analyze or make too simplistic what is taking place here I think we would be safe to say this of the text before us. In the big picture we see there is a conspiracy brewing here with its goal being to *lay hold of Jesus* for *He is out of His mind* (**Mark 3:21**) and Jesus mother, Mary herself is in the middle of the plot. How this should serve as an example and warning to us of how clever and deceptive is sin and the enemy of our souls. Fallen human reasoning would argue that Jesus’ *mother and brothers* are only looking out for His best interests. In actual matter of fact, they are running “sinful interference” if you will with the Divine plan. Let us be quick to recognize here and understand that Sacred Scripture points out to us that NOTHING happens contrary to the determinative and purposeful will of God (**Isaiah 46:10, Ephesians 1:11**). With that being said we still see in the events of this world as well as the specifics in this very text the raging battle which results when there is this conflict of ideas and this massive collision between human sinful desire and the true eternal Wisdom and purpose of God. Beloved, make no mistake as to which “side” wins this battle or comes out victorious! Even seeming “defeat” is part of the *all things* which *He works for good...* (**Romans 8:28**). Here in our text Jesus and His truth rule the day as it were as He makes clear human, natural ties and genuine familial concerns don’t dictate His schedule. Instead, even strong family ties are subordinate to obedience to the will of The Father.

The Word Applied: What “family” decisions & choices in your life exemplify that you’re priority is obedience toward God’s will? Or does your lifestyle reflect God takes second place?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me to have a God centered priority in my life. Help me to make the sometimes hard family decisions and to love You with all my heart, soul and strength.

TUESDAY – In **verse 32** we begin to see the details from the former verse filled in. If you just read these two verses (**31-32**) you can't help but visualize this scene. It is quite a remarkable and vivid picture. As we have read over and over from the previous chapters of Mark's gospel it is business as usual for Jesus who is busy dealing with the people through His teaching and healing ministry. Here in this scene, He has a *multitude around Him*. We learn from Mark's description in **verse 34** that there was apparently a *circle* type of arrangement. Although he gives us the briefest of the gospel accounts only Mark, provides these little details. He helps us to paint the mental picture of how things looked as Jesus sat and the people were gathered around Him listening and watching Him preach and work. Meanwhile, the text tells us that Mary and the brothers were *standing outside*. This part of the picture is quite pathetic as Mary and Jesus brothers are *standing* on the *outside* of the house and according to what we saw in **verse 21** are apparently thinking Jesus is inside, gone mad and beside himself and they are eager to get Him and take Him home. The problem is they can't get directly to Jesus as they were literally crowded out. It is also interesting that they don't just send in their specific message; rather, unwilling to relay in specifics they just *sent to Him, calling Him*. They *fo-neh'-o* (Phoneo) Him. I think you can see that from this Greek word we get an English word which we like and use so much...Phone. Yes, they phoned Him in today's vernacular. Read these verses which speak of calling out to and getting a listening ear from The Lord. **Psalms 4:3, 17:6, 18:6, 50:15, 55:16**. Read **Psalms 66:18** and see that God does not always give a "listening ear".

*The Word Applied: According to **Psalms 66:18** what is it that hinders our communication with God? What sin(s) are you cherishing in heart that would cause The Lord not to hear you?*

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, examine me and give me a repentant heart. Help me confess and mourn over my sin. Thank You for always being there to forgive and hear my cries to You.

WEDNESDAY – We read in **verse 32** that the message gets to Jesus. When the word is passed on to Him, The Master uses the interruption to His advantage as He always did. We have already seen some moments in Mark where Jesus was interrupted. In His ministry there were many times when He was interrupted either from speaking, or praying or sleeping. Read of some of these incidents recorded for us and taken from Mark's gospel in the following verses: **Mark 1:35, 2:1-4, 4:37-39, 8:31-33, and 10:46-52**. In all of these incidents including the one before us in our text, Jesus always delivers. He takes the interruption and draws everyone's attention to Himself and then either utters a momentous Divine truth or He takes the opportunity and delivers a marvelous/miraculous deed. Never is Christ caught at a loss for delivering true, sound wisdom even when He seemed to be often interrupted in the middle of conversation or thought. This takes place for Christ's heart and mind are filled or better yet saturated with Divine Truth, God's Word, and The Holy Spirit. He does not give a "knee-jerk" reaction and utter something foolish; rather, He drops an atomic bomb blast of eternal significance amidst apparent chaos. This is our Savior Beloved; the one who NEVER responded sinfully or impatiently. Oh how we need to be like Him!

The Word Applied: How do you respond when interrupted or when things come into your schedule that you have not planned? What attitudes surface from your heart in those moments?

Suggestion for Prayer: Jesus, I need to be like You in always responding properly and with truth to every situation. Help me to be filled with The Holy Spirit and The Word and be prepared to "ooze" as it were Biblical Truth and temperaments when the "squeezing" times come.

THURSDAY – In **verse 33** Jesus begins His response which contains the heart or central nugget of truth in our lesson. Jesus asks a question after being told that His mother and brothers were outside *seeking* Him. He answers that statement with “*Who is My mother, or My brothers?*” This is a question we must all ask and answer. Who is related to Jesus, Who is in His family? Before we look at Christ’s further response let’s pause a moment and reflect on this scene. Although one’s heart goes out in some degree to Mary in this scene we must remember that her Son is God incarnate and He never treated her or sinned against her or any one else for that matter in any way. He was and is the perfect, eternal Son of God. Led by their emotions, sinful and fallen people would almost be inclined to accuse Jesus of disrespect here. Make no mistake Beloved, no man EVER honored His father and mother like Jesus did and we see clearly displayed for us His tender concern for Mary, perhaps at no time more brilliant than while He gasped for breath, dying in horrible suffering from the cross. It was there, in the midst of that horror, that He makes sure of her care and well being (**John 19:26-27**). Be assured, this statement of Jesus as to *who is My mother and brothers* is no slight or disrespect. He is making clear however, that His Father’s agenda trumps ALL other earthly connections He may have. Remember beloved, it was Jesus or maybe better said, God The Son, who time and again dropped the very “un-American” truth bomb that a man’s love and devotion to his family must be secondary to his love and devotion to Christ or he can’t even be Christ’s disciple. Let me boil that down and say it plain and straight: You will go to hell if you love your family more than Jesus. You can’t even truly love your family properly if you don’t love Jesus supremely. And what is so gracious of God is the fact that if you love Him with all you have, He enables you to love your spouse or family better than you think possible. Read **Matthew 10:32-39, Luke 14:25-27, 18:28-30**.

The Word Applied: Jesus was not saying we must have hatred for our family but rather that our love for Him would be such that our love for family would look like hatred by comparison. How does your life reflect and give evidence that you love Jesus supremely?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me love You with ALL my heart, soul, mind and strength.

FRIDAY – Jesus proceeds to answer His own question in **verse 34**. **Matthew 12:49** records Jesus gestured with His hand as it were toward His true disciples. “*And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, “Here are My mother and My brothers!”* Among this group were no doubt genuine believers in Christ among them the Apostles of our Lord, faithful men like Levi, who if you will recall, “*left everything*” to follow Him (**Luke 5:27-28**). These men were examples of what it looks like to “*hate*” father and mother by comparison to one’s love and obedience to Jesus. These precious souls, men and women who love, obey, and follow Jesus, these are His family. Jesus will go on to elaborate and define for us the behaviors of His true family but let me say for now that Jesus called “family”, men and women who were by no means perfect spiritually. We are told often that the disciples themselves were men of “*little faith*”; but may it never be forgotten that except for Judas, those men were granted *The Faith* by the sovereign power and grace of Almighty God. Read **Matthew 16:15-17, John 6:65**.

The Word Applied: Are you in The Faith? Do you long for more obedience and love for Jesus?

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You for Sovereign Grace given to an undeserving sinner.

SATURDAY – Jesus closes this powerful portion by saying in **verse 35** ...*whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother*. It doesn’t get more straightforward than that Beloved. Who is Jesus family? Who is truly saved and born again? Those who, “*do the will of God*” or as Luke records, “*those who*

hear the Word of God and do it". We learn the *will of God* and the *Word of God* are used synonymously. God's will is revealed in His Word. Pardon my poor English, but may I say it this way, "Family do" (verb-*poy-eh'-o*). Family hears and obeys the Word of God. Don't be fooled dear person; those who don't obey the Word of God and the God of the Word are NOT in the family. Read **James 2:18-24, 1 John 2:17**.

The Word Applied: *Are you hearing and obeying the voice of The Lord from Scripture?*

Suggestion for Prayer: *Father, grant me ears to hear and power and desire to obey You.*