

Mark 3:20-35 – Welcome To The Family

Leader's Guide

January 20, 2019

1. Read Mark 3:20-35 to familiarize yourself with the passage. What was the most interesting part of the study? What did you learn about Jesus that you did not know?

Mark 3:20–35 (ESV)

²⁰ Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. ²¹ And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.”

Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit

²² And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and “by the prince of demons he casts out the demons.” ²³ And he called them to him and said to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶ And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. ²⁷ But no one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.

²⁸ “Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, ²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin” — ³⁰ for they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.”

Jesus’ Mother and Brothers

³¹ And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. ³² And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you.” ³³ And he answered them, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” ³⁴ And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵ For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.”

2. Many view participation in church like membership in a club or gym. What does a club or gym approach to church look like in the Christian life? How does understanding the church is a family change the way we think about life in the church? What do these verses teach us about life in the church? (Mark 10:29-30, Galatians 6:10, Ephesians 2:19, John 13:34-35, Hebrews 10:25, 1 Thessalonians 5:11)

1. What does a club or gym approach to church look like in the Christian life?

I attend when it fits my schedule. Church is about entertainment and what I get out of it, not following Jesus and how I love and serve other people. The offering is paying my membership fee, not my act of worship to God. A gym or club is about meeting my needs while the church should be about serving others. In the church, God gifts me to serve others. In the club or gym, I serve myself.

2. How does understanding the church is a family change the way we think about life in the church?

When we see the church as a family, we invest in other people and love them. We sacrifice for others in need, like we do for our own family. Attending church is not just about meeting my needs, it is about encouraging others and meeting their needs. Seeing the church as a family means the church is a place that should be warm and welcoming.

3. What do these verses teach us about life in the church?

Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. Mark 10:29-30 (ESV)

- The church is to be a family where Christians belong. The church is to be an even better family than our biological family because we are connected together through Christ on a spiritual level and will spend eternity together. We are not just biologically related.

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. Galatians 6:10 (ESV)

- We should view the church as a household, a family. Just as we do good for one another in our biological family, we go out of our way to love and sacrifice for others in our church 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 (ESV)

- When the church gets together, we are not to be aliens and strangers. We are not to be disconnected. We are members of God's household. We are part of God's family. We are to love one another that way.

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34-35 (ESV)

- One of the defining qualities of the way we live together in God's family is the way we love one another. The family-love we have for one another is to be so present that other people can feel it and are drawn to it.

not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. Hebrews 10:25 (ESV)

- We gather as a family not just to worship together but for the chance to encourage one another. Christians attend the weekly family reunions.

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (ESV)

- Since we are family, we look for every opportunity to encourage one another in the hard times of life.

3. Study verses on the unforgivable sin. (Matthew 12:31-32, Mark 3:28-29, Luke 12:10, Hebrews 2:3-4; 6:4-6; 10:26-29) How do these verses help you understand the unforgivable sin? What makes the unforgivable sin unforgivable? Why is questioning a possible supernatural occurrence not the unforgivable sin? (See 1 John 4:1-3)

Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come. Matthew 12:31-32 (ESV)

"Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"— for they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit." Mark 3:28-30 (ESV)

And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

Luke 12:10 (ESV)

- The passages in the synoptic gospels on the unforgivable sin are similar. Mark also specifies they were giving Satan the credit for the words and works of Jesus. The religious leaders were not just turning their backs on the full power and evidence of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, they were insulting God by giving credit to Satan.

how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will. *Hebrews 2:3-4 (ESV)*

- The writer of Hebrews reminds us that if we reject Jesus and the evidence of the Holy Spirit's power, there is no alternative.

For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. *Hebrews 6:4-6 (ESV)*

- Those who have experienced full knowledge of Jesus and the Holy Spirit's power then have rejected it have nothing left.

For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? *Hebrews 10:26-29 (ESV)*

- Continuing in deliberate sin after taking in the knowledge of Jesus leaves us without a sacrifice for sin. This is a matter of continuing in sin without repentance. It is not a matter of falling into sin that is followed by repentance.

4. Sometimes we think that if we just saw Jesus' miracles, it would be easy to have faith in him. How does this story disprove that assumption? Where does our faith come from? (Ephesians 2:8)

- The pharisees and scribes saw Jesus' miracles but they completely rejected him. They even grew hard to him. A hard heart will not accept Jesus, no matter how many miraculous works are done.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, Ephesians 2:8 (ESV)

- Our faith is ultimately a gift from God. It is not something we work up in ourselves. It is God opening our eyes to recognize Jesus as our savior.

5. Jesus says those who are part of his family do not simply know him, but they obey him. Why is obedience to Christ, not just being part of the crowd around Christ, essential for a genuine relationship with him? (Mark 3:35, John 14:15, 1 John 2:4, Matthew 7:21, 1 John 4:17)

- The crowd around Christ in the Gospel of Mark was gathered to watch the show. Only the disciples of Christ sat at his feet and obeyed what he said. It is dangerous to say Christ can be our savior but he doesn't need to be our Lord. Do we obey Christ perfectly? Of course not! Assurance of a true relationship with Jesus is seen when we obey his word.

For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother."
Mark 3:35 (ESV)

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. John 14:15 (ESV)

Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, 1 John 2:4 (ESV)

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Matthew 7:21 (ESV)

- These are a brief sampling of many verses that tell us obedience to Christ is an essential part of a genuine relationship with Christ.