

## The Cross Shaped Life: Shaped by Countercultural Mission

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Mark 3:20-35

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**Dominant Thought: The family of Jesus lives God's will.**

**Objectives:**

**I want my listeners to understand the relationship between Jesus and His family.**

**I want my listeners to appreciate Jesus' love for all people.**

**I want my listeners to practice reaching out to someone new this week.**

When you think of home, what comes to your mind? I remember the time I was five. We lived in Cambridge, IL. In the side yard was a big tree with a long branch. Mom warned me not to climb that tree. I climbed it anyway and fell and broke my wrist. Mom cared for me and took me to the hospital where they set my wrist and brought me home.

Home. Shawnee Avenue Seneca, MO. We rented a house that was made of rock. It was a fun place. I remember Christmas and a new VCR and watching the Cosby show. Home.

We moved up the hill, and my parents bought their first home with the help of an FHA loan. 11 Oak Ridge Drive. Lots of basketball in the driveway, too many hours of Nintendo, youth group gatherings in our home. Lots of love and good food. Time around the dinner table with my mom and dad and sister. My senior year we welcomed an exchange student from Brazil named Raphael into our home.

Home is not your house. Home is your family. It's your relationships. Did you know Jesus had a family? No, He never married. He was born to the virgin Mary. Joseph was His earthly father. Jesus had siblings, too.

In [Mark 3.20](#), the English Standard Version says, "The He [Jesus] went home." On arriving at home, a crowd gathered once again. In this early season

of ministry, many crowds are following after Jesus. He amazes them with healings and His teaching.

The crowd has gathered at the home. Then, two groups of people who are not happy with Jesus arrive. The first group is his mom and brothers. Mary and the boys. Did you know Jesus had brothers? He even had some sisters. We read the names of the brothers in [Mark 6:3](#), “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.” The people in the hometown synagogue also took offense at Jesus and He marveled at their unbelief ([Mark 6:6](#)).

In [Mark 3:21](#), Mark uses a typical phrase to describe the family of Jesus, “those beside him” or “those close to him.” Maybe the family of Jesus thought He was crazy because people from the outside were finding their way to Jesus. In the opening chapters, we’ve seen demons cast out and the lame healed. Jesus touched a leper and cleansed him ([Mark 1:40-42](#)). Is Jesus embarrassing His family? Are they concerned for His safety? Are they jealous of the crowds? Do they think He’s gone too far in welcoming outsiders and not staying closer to the Jewish family line?

Mark says His family went to “seize” Jesus. It can mean to take hold as to hold someone’s hand. It is also the same words for the chief priests and the scribes when they sought to “arrest” Jesus. See [Mark 12:12](#); [14:1](#), [44](#), [46](#), [49](#). The very ones who were leaders of God’s family appear aligned more closely to Jesus’ own blood family in their attempt to seize and arrest Jesus.

The first group, the family of Jesus believes Jesus is crazy. He is out of His mind. The second group arrives from Jerusalem. The scribes, those experts in the law, charge Jesus with demon possession. They say, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and “by the prince of demons he casts out demons” ([Mark 3:22](#)). Beelzebul may mean “lord of the house” or “lord of the heavenly abode.”

Insanity and demon possession are not good traits to have on your resume. What do those closest say about you? Oh, they think I’m crazy and demon possessed.

Jesus doesn’t back down from the experts from Jerusalem. He points out the fallacy in their argument. In a very logical way, He asks, “How can Satan cast out Satan?” It’s a very fair question. One that someone whose out of his mind probably would not be able to consider or reason.

Then, Jesus shares in [Mark 3:24–26](#), “If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end.”

Abraham Lincoln quoted these words of Jesus at the state Republican Convention down the road from us in Springfield, IL on July 12, 1858. In his speech, Lincoln was challenging “the Kansas-Nebraska Act and its effect on the extension of slavery in the Territories” (James C. Humes, *The Wit & Wisdom of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 213). In the speech Lincoln said, “A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other.”

While we live in angry and divisive times in 2026, we are not as divided as we were in the American Civil War. Still, as followers of Jesus, let’s lead with the love and truth of Jesus to build a united nation under God.

Jesus talks about binding the strong man to plunder his house. Jesus was binding Satan with every demon He cast out and ultimately defeating Satan at the cross and the empty tomb.

In [Mark 3:28–30](#), Jesus gives some of the more challenging verses in the New Testament. He starts out quite clear in [Mark 3:28](#), “Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter.” It sounds like all sins will be forgiven. We need a broader scope of Scripture to see that Jesus is the One who forgives sins ([Mark 2:10](#)).

The next verses are challenging. [Mark 3:29–30](#), “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.’” Blasphemy or speaking against the Holy Spirit is an eternal sin and never has forgiveness. What is this sin? Have I committed it? Blaspheming the Holy Spirit may be attributing the work of Jesus to Satan. The Holy Spirit power is at work in the miracles of Jesus like casting out demons. Remember the charge of the scribes? By the prince of demons you are casting out demons. [Mark 3:30](#) gives us a clue to the audience Jesus is addressing. The scribes were saying, “He [Jesus] has an unclean spirit” ([Mark 3:30](#)). Again, they are accusing Jesus of Satanic and demonic activity. These accusations come from hardened hearts that do not honor Jesus or the Holy Spirit. To speak against the Holy Spirit is to speak

against Jesus is to speak against God. So, if you are worried you have spoken against the Holy Spirit in this way, then you haven't. Your heart is soft to Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

The scribes accuse Jesus of demon possession. His family thought Jesus was crazy. Mark resumes the story with the family of Jesus in [Mark 3.31](#).

Two times in [Mark 3.31-32](#), Mark tells us the mother and brothers of Jesus are standing outside. They've come to seize Him. They send messengers to Jesus to call Him outside, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you" ([Mark 3.32](#)).

The family was important in the days of Jesus. [Exodus 20:12](#), one of the 10 commands declares, "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you."

How will Jesus respond to their request? In typical Jesus fashion, He answers with a question. "Who are my mother and my brothers?" Mark records the answer in [Mark 3:34-35](#), "And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.'"

### ***The family of Jesus lives God's will.***

"His people,' his real family, are constituted by behavior, not blood." (Brian K. Blount, *Preaching Mark in Two Voices*, p. 41).

So, how do we know God's will? We can look at the life of Jesus. We can look at this chapter and see what was upsetting His family and the experts in the law.

*We live God's will by...*

**1-Helping the hurting ([Mark 3.1-6](#)).** In [Mark 3](#), we meet Jesus at a time when He gets angry. He's in the synagogue, a Jewish place of worship. A man with a withered hand is there. People watched if Jesus would heal on the Sabbath. Jesus asks the people if it's lawful to do good or do harm, to save life or kill on the Sabbath. The people are silent. Jesus grieved at the hard hearts and looked at them in anger. The hardness of their hearts reminds us of Pharaoh's hard heart when he refused God's people freedom ([Exodus 4.21](#); [7.3](#); [8.32](#); [14.4](#)). The prophets challenged God's people for their hard hearts before the exile ([Jeremiah 3.17](#); [7.24](#); [9.14](#); [11.8](#); [13.10](#); [16.12](#)).

Then, Jesus commands the man to stretch out his hand and his hand was restored.

The result? The Pharisees went out to confer with their political enemies, the Herodians, how they might destroy Jesus. In typical fashion, a common enemy can bring enemies together. We are in the opening verse of [Mark 3](#) and the stage is being set for the death of Jesus.

Who needs the healing touch of Jesus this week? Who is someone who is hurting whom you can help in the name of Jesus?

*We live God's will by...*

**2-Welcoming outsiders** ([Mark 3.7-12](#); also [Mark 2.15-17](#)). In [Mark 3.7-8](#), people are coming from all directions to be with Jesus. From Galilee in the north to Judea in the south. Jerusalem in the south and Idumea further south of Jerusalem. “From beyond the Jordan” is usually the east side of the Jordan. Tyre and Sidon are on the northern coast of the Mediterranean. Several of these places are folks who are not Jews. They are different ethnicities. His family and the scribes may have been upset with Jesus because He welcomed people of different races.

Earlier in [Mark 2.15-17](#), Jesus eats with tax collectors and sinners. That upsets the leaders, too. Jesus came not for the healthy, but for the sick.

Gary W. Charles, a preacher, tells the story of when the church he was serving appointed a new deacon named Tom. Some thought it was a charitable gesture to appoint Tom as a deacon. Tom lugged a large oxygen tank around with him. He was young, but his lungs were old due to a degenerative disease. To those on the outside, Tom must have looked pitiful—elect the disabled person to show how gracious and kind we are.

However, from the inside looking out, Tom was an obvious choice. While others slept, Tom wrote notes to shut-ins. While others spent their days on the job, Tom would call hospital patients or first-time guests. While others traveled on vacation, Tom would visit people less ill than himself. While others were too busy to voice a political concern, Tom made sure that all his representatives always heard from at least one citizen on issues of shelter, drug rehabilitation, and hunger. Tom lived as a brother of Jesus and died as a child of God (adapted from Gary W. Charles, sermon, “Inside, Looking Out,” in *Preaching Mark in Two Voices*, p. 59).

Whoever does the will of God is my mother and brother and sister.

***The family of Jesus lives God's will.***