

Mark 3:7-19 ~ Scripture Verses

Crowds Follow Jesus

⁷ Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. ⁸ When they heard about all he was doing, many people came to him from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and the regions across the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon. ⁹ Because of the crowd he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him. ¹⁰ For he had healed many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch him. ¹¹ Whenever the impure spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, “You are the Son of God.” ¹² But he gave them strict orders not to tell others about him.

Jesus Appoints the Twelve

¹³ Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. ¹⁴ He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach ¹⁵ and to have authority to drive out demons. ¹⁶ These are the twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter), ¹⁷ James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means “sons of thunder”), ¹⁸ Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

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Mark 3:7-19 ~ Discussion Questions

1. What is it like to be in a huge crowd such as at a stadium, airport, or festival? How is it possible to feel lost or lonely in such a huge crowd of people?
2. Why did such large crowds of people follow Jesus? (3:8) Name five reasons.
3. From where did the people come from? How far and long must some of them have traveled?
4. What do the details of this story tell us about Jesus' popularity? What was at the root of his popularity at this early time in his ministry?
5. What did Jesus tell his disciples to get? Why? Was Jesus' fear legitimate? (3:9)
6. How did the evil spirits respond to Jesus when they saw him? (3:11) How would the evil spirits have known who Jesus was? What were they afraid of? (1:24)
7. Why did Jesus not want the evil spirits to reveal who he was? (3:12, Luke 4:41)
8. How would it make a difference in your life if you had more confidence in Christ's power and authority?
9. By what criteria do you choose your friends? Or do you wait to be chosen?
10. List five qualities that are important in a friend: A) _____ B) _____
C) _____ D) _____ E) _____
11. What qualities did Jesus look for in his apostles? A) _____ B) _____
C) _____ D) _____ E) _____
12. What qualities are important for a leader in the church? A) _____ B) _____
C) _____ D) _____ E) _____
13. What does the fact that Jesus chose Matthew (a tax collector), Simon, (a political extremist), and Peter (a fisherman) as apostles tell you about the kingdom of God? Does this make any difference to you?
14. Has the call of Jesus in your life changed your attitude toward people with whom you previously would not have associated? If you changed, do you view it as a good thing? Where did you get your original biases? What would that person think of you changing?
15. How can you determine how best to serve God with your particular gifts and abilities?
16. How can you best learn from and take advantage of other more mature believers? Be specific!

Mark 3:7-19 ~ Leader's Guide

1. What is it like to be in a huge crowd such as at a stadium, airport, or festival? How is it possible to feel lost or lonely in such a huge crowd of people?

2. Why did such large crowds of people follow Jesus? (3:8) Name five reasons.

Verse 3:8 says they “heard all he was doing” and verse 3:10 suggests that many people came to be healed. There were surely other factors at work: curiosity, going along with your friends, a new adventure, wanting to see a celebrity, etc.

3. From where did the people come from? How far and long must some of them have traveled?

Verse 3:7 says “from Galilee.” Verse 3:8 adds Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, regions across the Jordan, and around Tyre and Sidon. That indicates that the crowd came not only from the vicinity of Galilee and Capernaum, but also from considerable distances. Jerusalem (in Judea) was about 70 miles south. Idumea was a further 20-30 miles south. Tyre and Sidon are on the Mediterranean Sea 50+ miles northwest, while the “areas across the Jordan” could mean anywhere in the large area that was originally home to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh, as well as Moab and Ammon. People would have had to travel days, if not weeks, from these distant locations.

4. What do the details of this story tell us about Jesus' popularity? What was at the root of his popularity at this early time in his ministry?

He had only been traveling about for a relatively short time, in fact, he didn't even have all his apostles selected nor had he preached his famous sermon on the mount, yet his fame had spread far and wide. It was almost certainly his miracles and healing that were responsible for his fame, not his message. At least, not yet.

5. What did Jesus tell his disciples to get? Why? Was Jesus' fear legitimate? (3:9)

He told them to get a small boat so the crowd would not crush him and push him into the water. We read all too often about people who have been crushed and died trying to get out of a crowded building. What about outside? More than a dozen soccer matches have resulted in people being trampled to death. In Accra, Ghana, 123 people were trampled to death in a soccer match in 2001. In Liverpool, England, 94 fans were trampled to death in 1989. And how about the store clerk that was killed by a crowd of shoppers in New York in Nov. 2008 or the 11 fans who were killed in a crush to get into a Who concert in Cincinnati in 1975. Oh, and yes, in 1980 nine people in Zaire and seven more in Brazil were crushed to death in an effort to catch a glimpse of Pope John Paul II.

6. How did the evil spirits respond to Jesus when they saw him? (3:11) How would the evil spirits have known who Jesus was? What were they afraid of? (1:24)

They fell down before him because they recognized who he was and they cried out, "You are the Son of God." They knew that Jesus was God and had his power and were afraid that Jesus had come to destroy them, In Mark 1:24, they ask, "Have you come to destroy us?"

7. Why did Jesus not want the evil spirits to reveal who he was? (3:12, Luke 4:41)

Luke 4:41 – Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Messiah.

Jesus wanted to first show by his own words and deeds the kind of Messiah he was in contrast to the popular notion that he was coming to overthrow the oppressive Roman government. Jesus did not want the people to get the wrong idea from the demons, nor did he want them saying he was the Son of God before he clearly declared that himself. Not only had the time for revealing his identity not yet come, but demons were hardly the proper beings to make such an announcement.

8. How would it make a difference in your life if you had more confidence in Christ's power and authority?

9. By what criteria do you choose your friends? Or do you wait to be chosen?

10. List five qualities that are important in a friend: A) _____ B) _____
C) _____ D) _____ E) _____

Possible qualities: loyalty, honesty, responsible, forgiving, caring, patient, compassionate, tolerant, generous, reliable, respectful, persevering, energetic, responsive, disciplined, enthusiastic, passionate, self-controlled

11. What qualities did Jesus look for in his apostles? A) _____ B) _____
C) _____ D) _____ E) _____

12. What qualities are important for a leader in the church? A) _____ B) _____
C) _____ D) _____ E) _____

Write down all the qualities on the first list(selecting a friend) so the whole group can see them. The first thing that will pop out is that *no one* has all the desirable qualities. So ask the group to vote on the most important ones. In my group they were: integrity/honesty, dependable/reliable, and loyalty.

Next, write down the list of qualities the Jesus was looking for. How much

overlap is there with the first list? Certainly some, but Jesus was also looking for boldness (the willingness to go out to preach and cast out demons in vs 3:14-15), dedication, self-reliance, and faith/belief in him.

What do we look for in our church leaders? Leadership, ability to teach, ability to counsel others, education (a college degree), stability, above reproach, self-controlled, vision, respected, good reputation. How much overlap is there on this list with the qualities Jesus was seeking? With the qualities we seek in a friend?

13. What does the fact that Jesus chose Matthew (a tax collector), Simon, (a political extremist), and Peter (a fisherman) as apostles tell you about the kingdom of God? Does this make any difference to you?

Easy question. The kingdom of God is open to all.

14. Has the call of Jesus in your life changed your attitude toward people with whom you previously would not have associated? If you changed, do you view it as a good thing? Where did you get your original biases? What would that person think of you changing?

15. How can you determine how best to serve God with your particular gifts and abilities?

16. How can you best learn from and take advantage of other more mature believers? Be specific!