

Encounters with Jesus.

STUDY Jewish Leaders



Key verse: Mark 3:24.

If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

Kick Off



Big Idea: The unity of God's kingdom is of primary importance and is achieved by the power of the Holy Spirit.

How important is unity and what things strengthen or weaken it:-

a. in a family? b. in the work place? c. in a country?

As Jesus progresses through his earthly ministry he becomes more popular with the crowds but less liked with the Jewish leaders. He moves out of the synagogues and into the open air or into private homes. But as we see here the leaders actually follow him and criticise him.

STUDY

Read Mark 3:20-34.

1. Jesus' family hears that he is not looking after himself properly v21.

- What do they think is the problem v21?
- How do they plan to solve it v21?
- Is it the crowd or the priority of the Kingdom of God or both that is keeping Jesus from a square meal?

2. What do the hostile Jerusalem religious law teachers affirm about the ministry of Jesus v22?

It is worth realizing Jesus' enemies didn't deny his demon casting authority. What they disputed was the power by which he acted. They claimed he was Satan possessed and Satan empowered.

3. Work through verses 23 to 26 carefully. What is Jesus really saying?

Think about the end result of those Jesus cast demons out of. How is their restored condition evidence that Jesus' work couldn't be Satan empowered? (a pirate who destroys fellow pirates to get more plunder for himself is acting consistently. But a pirate who destroys other pirates to restore the property to its rightful owners ceases to be a pirate!)

4. V27 is a parable.

- Who is the strong man?
- What do his possessions represent?
- Who ties up the 'strong man'?
- How is the robbing of his possessions currently happening?

5. Notice in v28 Jesus doesn't start with, 'thus says the Lord...' Jesus speaks with his own authority and how serious is his warning v29?

P. Barnett writes on this verse, "*The present tense verb 'blasphemes' indicates not a single act, but a pattern of habitual practice. To resist the ministry of the Holy Spirit convicting the heart and mind about the truth of Jesus is to be guilty of an eternal sin.*" The Servant King p.69.)

6. Jesus' natural family now arrive but they are outside while Jesus' adopted family is inside with him. When Jesus is told, he again asks a question and then answers his own question. What are the implications of Jesus' words regarding natural family unity? How is kingdom unity achieved v35?

THINK AND APPLY

Many of us have unbelieving natural family connections. How can we manage to remain faithful to God and friends with our unbelieving family members?

Kingdom priorities impacted on Jesus' health and family life? Should we expect the same today? In what ways has kingdom priorities impacted your 'quality of life' here?

PRAYER

What can you pray about arising from this study?



**For next week
Read John
18:28-19:30**