



Mark: Following in the Footsteps of Jesus

Chapter #3 – Authority That Restores, Appoints, and Divides

Main Idea

Mark 3 continues to reveal the growing contrast between Jesus' life-giving authority and the hardened resistance of the religious leaders. As Jesus heals on the Sabbath, appoints the Twelve, and confronts accusations about His power, the tension around His ministry intensifies. This chapter highlights both the compassion of Jesus and the cost of following Him. While many are drawn to His authority and healing, others respond with hostility, misunderstanding, and outright opposition. Mark 3 shows that Jesus' authority restores the broken, establishes a new spiritual family, and ultimately forces every person to decide where they stand in response to Him.

Chapter Outline

Provided below are the main topics addressed in this chapter:

- Jesus Heals on the Sabbath (verses 1 through 6)
- Crowds Follow Jesus (verses 7 through 12)
- Jesus Appoints the Twelve (verses 13 through 19)
- Jesus Accused by His Family and by Teachers of the Law (verses 20 through 30)
- Jesus Redefines True Family (verses 31 through 35)

Questions for Consideration

1. Why did Jesus' healing on the Sabbath provoke such intense opposition (verses 1 through 6), and what does this reveal about the hearts of the religious leaders?
2. What stands out to you about Jesus' decision to appoint the Twelve (verses 13 through 19), and what does this teach us about calling and purpose?
3. Jesus is accused of acting by the power of Satan in verses 22 through 29. Why is this accusation so serious, and what does Jesus' response reveal about His authority?
4. How does Jesus redefine the concept of family in this chapter (specifically, verses 33 through 35), and why would this have been challenging for His listeners?
5. In what ways does Mark 3 call us to examine how we respond to Jesus' authority in our own lives?



Mark 3 (NIV)

Jesus Heals on the Sabbath

¹ Another time Jesus went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. ² Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. ³ Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone."

⁴ Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent.

⁵ He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. ⁶ Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

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^[a] 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.

Jesus Accused by His Family and by Teachers of the Law

²⁰ Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. ²¹ When his family^[b] heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."

²² And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons." ²³ So Jesus called them over to him and began to speak to them in parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. ²⁶ And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. ²⁷ In fact, no one can enter a strong man's house without first tying him up. Then he can plunder the strong man's house. ²⁸ Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter, ²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin." ³⁰ He said this because they were saying, "He has an impure spirit."

³¹ Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. ³² A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you." ³³ "Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked. ³⁴ Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵ Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother."

Footnotes

- a. [Mark 3:14](#) Some manuscripts *twelve—designating them apostles—*
- b. [Mark 3:21](#) *Or his associates*

