

Jesus true family

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[0 : 00] So we're just continuing in our series in Mark's Gospel. Last week, you may remember, for those who weren't here, we were looking at the calling of the 12 apostles, in a very real way, as kind of reminding us at the beginnings of the church, that the beginnings of the church is founded on these 12 men.

We know Paul, and Matthias is added to that as Judas leaves. But it's founded on these men, of who God's people are and how it all starts.

Well, this week, we kind of carry on this theme of the church, because we learn this week who God's people of the church are and who they're not, who they are and who they're not.

And we see that when Jesus faces opposition. When Jesus faces opposition. And opposition is a big thing.

It's a big thing. Obviously, Jesus faces lots of opposition in his life. But also, opposition, as a more general theme, opposition always comes when people fear loss.

[1 : 14] It comes when people fear loss. Or fear losing something. And the opposition comes against the threat, which is going to take that thing away.

You see that, I don't know if you, we love watching, our kids love watching the Attenborough documentaries. I don't know if you enjoy those. Sometimes on a Sunday night, it sort of calms everybody down if it's been a busy day.

And you see that in animals, don't you? If you've ever watched Attenborough, you watch the mother elephant when she gets even a hint that poor little baby elephant is in danger. The fear of losing that baby elephant to the lion or the rough rapids provokes sort of opposition to what she's going to lose.

And in fact, the whole, I don't know what you call a herd, is it a herd of elephants? The fact of losing, the whole herd gathers around the little baby one because they're fearful of losing something and they have opposition to the threat.

And we're exactly the same. If we fear losing something, we oppose the threat that will take away the thing that we value. And that's what we're going to see in our passage this afternoon because we see two groups of people that fear losing something.

[2 : 39] And so they oppose Jesus and they oppose his plan. And hopefully it should help us think that through, that why might people oppose Jesus today?

And also, perhaps maybe more challenging, how might we still do that in some sense? So we're going to look at that. We're going to think about the unexpected opposition, the offensive response from Jesus that he says to them, and then Jesus' true family.

As we come into chapter 3, I mentioned earlier, we saw Jesus last week calling his 12 apostles and very much so after he's called them. It's almost like a new phase in Jesus' ministry from what he was doing in the first two chapters.

It's this new phase of ministry. And in the very first, after he's called his 12 apostles, we see this opposition. And what we see is that it comes from both camps.

Maybe, I think, from unexpected places. I'll just give you, just as a note, how this passage fits together.

[3 : 48] Mark uses sort of a literary device quite often in the way that he writes. And you'll notice there's an interruption that starts off with the narrative about his family.

But then after verse 21, the scene with the family carries on in verse 31. You see, it talks about his family. They say he's out of his mind. Then there's this big break where it goes to something else and then it carries on with his family in verse 31.

In verse 22 to 30, you've got an interruption in the story. And the reason Mark's doing that is because they're all interconnected. It's like a bookmark, bookends.

It's to say that the thing in the middle is connected to the thing on the outside. It's in the connected and it's demonstrating the same thing. It's demonstrating opposition from unexpected people. Beginning and the end show opposition from his family. And the middle interruption, if you like, shows opposition from the Pharisees. So look with me firstly.

[4 : 57] We're going to take the beginning and the end by looking at the opposition from his family. Verse 20. Then Jesus entered a house and again a crowd gathered so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat.

When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him for they said, he is out of his mind. That phrase, to take charge of him, is a mild way of putting it.

It has the connotation of trying to see someone, to grasp hold of them. And they're saying something quite strange.

They're saying he's out of his mind, this man. Now we know that this is not the family house because they go out to look for him, we read. It's very likely people think that this house was the house that Jesus was at when the crowds came to him before when he's in Capernaum.

They hear there's so many people at the house that Jesus and the apostles, we read, they can't eat. And either way, they want to stop him from what he's doing.

[6 : 06] Now, I don't want to be too hard on Jesus' family. We know Mary, his mother, was a follower, did follow Jesus, her son. But what we do see is that perhaps, perhaps, even good intentions can be used to oppose the work of Jesus.

Even good intentions, what I mean by that is we don't know if it was because she was worried about him, he'd been going off saying things that might get him into trouble, maybe she goes to grab hold of him to get him away for everything that she's been doing.

But either way, even if it is with a good intention, it still opposes that this would stop Jesus doing what he's there to do. But then alongside that, in our second account, in the account that comes in the middle, we have the teachers of the law, of the scribes.

They're responsible for teaching God's people how to live God's way. That might be a surprise that, I mean, these are the guys who know their Old Testament, the Bible, back to front, and yet here they are coming to oppose Jesus.

Probably not the type of people you'd expect to oppose the living God. And when we, read, don't we, that they've come from Jerusalem to Capernaum, which is just off the, just near the Sea of Galilee.

[7 : 32] Now, just bear in mind that Jerusalem to Galilee is over 100 miles. That would take a week to walk if they were on foot. That's a long way to travel to then have a go at someone, isn't it?

It does tell you, doesn't it, that opposing Jesus, accusing him was right at the chopper of their gender because you don't travel 100 miles for nothing. They were deeply fearful of him.

And they accuse him, what do they accuse him with regards to casting out demons? Verse 22, they say he's possessed by Beelzebul, by the prince of demons he's driving out demons.

Beelzebul just means master of the house and they're referring, we know, they're using that term to refer to Satan, to the devil. That is some accusation, isn't it?

That this, when we really boil it down, that this man in front of them, who they've travelled 100 miles to see, who's been doing miracles, who's been healing people, is empowered by spiritual evil.

[8 : 43] That is what they're saying. That Jesus is calling on the power of the devil to do what he's doing. Now we know why they're doing this.

You might remember from verse 6 just the other week after the episode of the man with the withered hand that we read they set out to destroy him. Their first way is to discredit him.

Now, we don't know if they actually believed that or whether they, what they were saying or whether they were just lying. No doubt, they've known about the miracles that he's been doing.

Either way, if they do believe it's the work of Satan, then it's shocking, isn't it? It's shocking that the teacher of Israel can't tell the difference between good and evil.

I mean, you might remember what from the prophet Isaiah, Isaiah said, woe to those, woe, woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

[9 : 54] The big question, I suppose, we're faced with is why would they travel over 100 miles for this? And from our first episode, why are the family saying he's out of his mind?

Why the opposition? It's what we started with. The answer is fear. And I said, opposition comes because of fear of loss.

It's fearing the threat and of losing something. And just like Jesus faces opposition from his own family, we can face that too.

Just like opposition comes from God's people. In the church, there can be opposition as well. How might our families fear?

Maybe if we start taking God's word, maybe people think if you take God at his word, you might have others who just think you're taking it a bit too seriously. You might, maybe you have family who are worried about how his word seems to dominate all of your life and maybe the extreme views that you have might get you into trouble at work.

[11 : 09] Don't go shouting your mouth off about it. You never know who's listening. Now that might be a genuine fear, but it might stop you doing the thing that Jesus wants you to do.

What about the church? What might they be? Afraid of losing status, people, a voice, in society? That the church might be fearful of losing something, of losing something that they once had, a voice.

Because it doesn't, because the truths of old don't seem to fit with the current cultural trajectory. It's fear.

What about us? Has there been times when we're not opposed to what Jesus has said, but we've tried to water it down out of fear that if we may, fear that perhaps if we make it more palatable to our modern culture or the culture, then it will be received better.

I know there's times when I've been tempted to do that. And if you're not a Christian, if you're not a Christian, do you fear what if, of having Jesus in your life that you will lose something?

[12 : 42] And what is it that you fear you will lose by trusting in him? We all have something that we fear losing.

Is it fearing that Jesus will take away the very thing that we value, that we've heard Christians aren't into? What is it? If you're not a Christian, what is it that is holding you back?

What is the barrier that is stopping you from putting your trust in Jesus Christ? It is worth thinking it through people? Because many people over years have had this fear of losing something.

And it's the fear of looking at Jesus as a threat. And this is what the family and the Pharisees sees Jesus as a threat. Secondly, we'll look at how Jesus responds to them.

And what we see is that it is an offensive response to those who are there. Jesus responds to both types of opposition and it's no doubt that what he said would cause offense.

[13 : 54] I want to start, back to front, we'll start with the scribes, the teachers of the law. And we read, he used parables to explain why they're wrong. Just look with me in verse 23.

He says, how can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand, the end has come. That's the first parable, it's a metaphor. He's saying the work I've done couldn't be powered by the work of Satan because it would mean that he would be attacking his own demons who are in league with him.

If he were, Satan's end would be in sight. But he's not in the world, he's still at large and doing his evil work. It's saying it would be like a civil war.

If we know a civil war within a country, I thought one was about to happen last night in Russia. It's the same people within a country attacking one another, but the end is coming for that country because they're killing one another.

[15 : 04] They wouldn't need any attack from the outside as they get weaker and weaker. But Jesus is saying Satan's still at work. Here Jesus proves to them that he can't be empowered by Satan.

First and foremost, it doesn't make any sense. Then in verse 28 he says something shocking and this is what would deeply have offended them. Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven. they are guilty of an eternal sin. He said this because they were saying he has an impure spirit. You see what Jesus is saying? He's saying they've blasphemed the Holy Spirit because they're attributing his work, which is the work of the Holy Spirit, they're attributing what he has done as evil

and the work of Satan.

They've seen that the work of Satan in casting out demons, in doing miracles, belongs to Beelzebul the master of the house, to the devil himself. Now, I just want to pause here because it's very common that Christians hear this and worry that they might have done this themselves and that their future might be in jeopardy.

There's two things I want to say. If you have the Spirit of God in you, you've not done this and actually worrying that you might have done this is probably a sign that you're a Christian because people who don't have faith in Jesus don't worry about this.

[16:41] It never enters their head. But worrying that you've done it shows that you actually believe that you need faith in Jesus to be saved from your sin. The second thing I want to say is because of the way it's worded, we're tempted to think that because it says we'll never be forgiven, that if you do this once, that's it.

No chance of you for forgiveness for the rest of your days. That is not the case. It doesn't mean, what it doesn't mean is that if you do this, then repentance is not on offer to you anymore. Because there is no record in the whole of the Bible of anyone genuinely repenting and seeking forgiveness and it being denied. There's no record of that. So the eternal sin can't mean that you make one mistake in your life and that's it.

There's no chance of forgiveness for you. The eternal sin is continual, perpetual holding to the belief that what Jesus does and did and said is evil and not good.

It's a continual holding to that belief because that would rule most people out. That would rule everyone out because people are saying today that what Jesus did all the time is not good.

[18:01] They're saying that what Jesus said about lots of things is not good. So that would rule loads of people out. So it's not saying that. It's a continual, the eternal sin is continued, perpetual, holding to belief that what Jesus does and did is said is evil and not good.

Nevertheless, we needed to pause there. It is still shocking and offensive to tell someone that if they persist with that view, they are excluded eternally despite how they've lived.

It is still shocking to say to someone, you're not good enough. So that's the first offensive thing he says to the teachers of the law. The second offensive thing is what Jesus says to his own family.

His family arrive at the house where he's been teaching and they send someone into the house to get Jesus. Your family are looking outside for you.

And Jesus says to them, who are my mother and my brothers? Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, here are my mother and my brothers.

[19:08] Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother. It is so offensive. His blood family, he's saying his blood family are not his true family.

And let's just be clear, there are times when the good news of Jesus is not received as good news. Not everyone but it will to some.

Both things that Jesus says are shocking. The scribes thought they were acceptable to God based on what they did and what they'd done. They taught the law.

They taught the Bible. They took forgiveness and being acceptable as a given. Why wouldn't God forgive them? They followed the law. They taught the law. What more did they need to do?

Look what he says to his own family. What does it teach us? It teaches that biological family in terms of spirituality and following Jesus counts for nothing.

[20:13] Mary, his mother, and his brothers were at that time not doing the will of God. They were opposing him, searching for him, telling others he's out of his mind. biological family in terms of following Jesus counts for nothing.

If you're born into a Christian family you don't get spiritual brownie points. You might have gone to church your whole childhood but it counts for squat. It is deeply offensive in both accounts to be told that your life and the life of your family is not good enough for God.

what do you mean? I've heard, you might have heard people say, I do all sorts for other people. Tell me why you think you're better than me.

I'll let you know I came from a very good Christian upbringing. I was baptised, I went to Sunday school. You're telling me that I'm not good enough that makes you so special.

It doesn't matter. To be told that you don't measure up, that you are not good enough is crushing. That God, the living God, actually rejects you based on how you've lived.

[21 : 24] That is crushing. And that you can't go any further with Jesus unless you accept his verdict of you. Okay.

Third thing that we're going to look at is Jesus' true family. Jesus' true family. I want to return to the two parables that he says to the Pharisees.

We looked at the first one earlier where Jesus proved that he wasn't doing the work of Satan because the house can't be divided against itself. In one sense it's very true Satan isn't divided against himself.

And whilst his dominion of darkness will come to an end, we know for 2,000 years he's still been at large doing evil. He's the prince of the air of the world and he still tempts, destroys and lies.

But in verse 27 Jesus tells a second parable. Look with me. Verse 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.

[22 : 32] The strong man in the parable is the devil, it's Satan. And Jesus is saying that he has come into the world, into Satan's domain, to plunder it.

He has tied Satan up, he's bound him, and so that his work, Satan's work is limited and he is plundering Satan's house. How? By setting people free from his lies.

Those whom Satan has captivated with his lies, Jesus is plundering his house and setting them free. You get the illustration that Jesus, is picturing himself as someone breaking and entering and causing havoc in Satan's house in the world.

And we know that Jesus comes down from heaven into the house of the evil one, binds the devil and plunders his house. Satan will never be forgiven, doesn't want to be, but does want to take as many down with him as he can.

And Jesus comes into his house and sets people free by offering them forgiveness for all the times they've believed the lies of the house, of the one whose house they live in, of Satan.

[23 : 46] Being tempted to believe the lie that looking after number one and doing it their own way is the right thing. Let me give you an example of how this might work out in your life.

I want to take a very everyday sin, like gossip. gossip. Really, when you gossip negatively about something, you see, what you're really doing is you're trying to prove yourself to them.

Because what you're doing is you make the person that you're talking to the judge of whether you're worth being a friend to. And you're saying, I'm worth knowing.

I'm a someday because I'm not like the person that I'm slagging off. That's what you're saying. And you're basing your sense of worth and value on what you're not like.

I'm not like this person who I'm slagging off, so you should accept me. And it is, once you start it, once you get in that cycle of gossiping or you become a gossip, it is addictive.

[24 : 52] Because every time you do gossip about someone and they give you your approval, it's like an adrenaline rush and a hit. Because you've gained somebody's acceptance.

Because you've told them what you're not like. And it's a cycle of trying to prove yourself to everyone. It's addictive. And it's a prison.

People become gossips because they love the feeling they get. The serotonin boost of everyone thinking they're not like the ones they condemn. But you can't escape the cycle.

You need to keep gossiping. It's a lie and it doesn't work. And you have to gossip forever because no matter how many people you will walk on, you'll never be truly happy because every time you gossip you'll need to do it again and again and again and again to keep that feeling of trying to prove yourself as acceptable in the person you're talking to sight.

The lies of Satan have got you. Jesus Christ comes into the world to plunder Satan's house and set you free from that type of miserable existence.

[26 : 07] He comes to plunder Satan's house and tell you, I love you. I love you not because you're better than anybody else. You're not. I love you not because of anything you've done but I love you because I've made you acceptable in my sight because of my finished work on the cross when I died for you.

He gives you a sense of value and worth based on what he's done to set you free. The next thing that he says also shocking who are my family?

Verse 34 then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said here are my brother, mother and brothers. Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother.

Remember his own mother is standing outside. His own mother is standing outside and he says to the crowd at this moment, at this moment as you sit before me you're more family to me than my

own mother is outside and you're more a brother than the brothers who are with her and you're more a sister.

You're my true family. The reason? Because you do God's will. Because you're obedient. We know that in families, don't we?

[27 : 37] Families look like one another physically but they look like one another. It's more than physical. They're the same in many other ways, not just physically.

They have the same mannerisms and turns of phrase. You notice in a family sometimes, you might have seen this in families, that they end up even doing the same job.

I became a nurse, my mother was a nurse. I know families where there's a line of every single one of them is a doctor. It sometimes happens that way, that they imbibe the same characteristics and personal traits that they follow on in the same family.

They have the same mannerisms. Families look like one another. Jesus is saying, you're my true family because you have the family mannerisms of your father in heaven.

You have the family mannerisms. You're doing the will of God. I do the will of God. And so, therefore, we're brothers. He's saying, you're his children, just like I'm his son.

[28 : 44] You do God's will just like I do. And did you notice what they're doing? They're sat at his feet around him and letting him speak and they're listening to him.

That's what they're doing. That's all they're doing. There's so many things we could say about what this means for us. The first thing I want to say is that the church, God's people, is your true family.

That is your true family. family. These people who we worship with, who we see every Sunday and midweek, these are the people you'll spend eternity with. These are the people that you'll be started side by side in the multitudes, praising forever.

You both share the same heavenly father. You are spiritually related forever. That has a huge impact with how we love and treat one another, doesn't it?

If within the church, a huge impact. You think of how we treat and love and spend time with our own blood relatives, and Jesus says, this is your true family. This is my true family.

[29 : 50] Those who do the will of God, who are the family mannerisms, who repent and believe and put their trust in Jesus as their Savior, Lord, King, and Brother, who look like Jesus because they've inherited the family mannerisms.

The second thing it says, you notice, I mentioned, you notice what the crowd are doing? They're sat at the feet of Jesus listening to him. They're not accusing him. They're not arguing like the scribes. They're not looking embarrassed by him like his own biological family. They're not ashamed to be in this house sat at his feet. Now, there might be more to say on what doing the will of God means, but look here at what it means.

It means sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to him. Sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to him. Let him, allow him to refresh you with his words.

Day by day, week by week, the King of Kings, your brother, has words for you every day that he just wants you to hear.

[30 : 58] That he will refresh you with. That he'll change you with. And so, as we come in for landing, we've thought about opposition, that opposition comes from unexpected sources.

It can come from good intentions and it can come from within the church. Jesus can respond with words that offend, that the gospel is offensive because it says that we're not good enough.

But we find in him that he gives us his finished work on the cross and so we become acceptable in the sight of Almighty God. Not based on anything that we've done, but on his work alone. We're acceptable and valued because of the finished work of Jesus Christ.

But then we thought about what does it mean to be the people of God? It means the true family, those who have the family mannerisms, who do the will of God, who look like Jesus, their brother, and who are the ones who sit at Jesus' feet, allow him to speak to us, to tell us, remind us of the redemption, to remind us that he's adopted us, made us his true children, by taking the family mannerisms and what we see, what do we see is sitting at the feet of Jesus.

We see the posture of Jesus. It is the posture of humility. It is the posture of humility, of sitting and realizing that he has got something to teach us because he's our king and he's our Lord and he loves senses.

[32 : 33] So, I he's the posture of sophio, that's what he knows about us. He has faith in being in how he knew this family, how he went the ability to focus on the nå that never unwirelywachs. But

then we just hear from the relationship with goodness.

I think this one is just one of the Feedback Sagemel, that's what we'll expect the leftovers, I mean saying, the■■■, and analysis was adapting to us to do a lot of us, and in depicts the annotation being