

INTRO

- What is one of the best concerts/events you've been to? How large was the crowd?
- Are you part of any specific communities? What is a key characteristic of that community?

READ**Mark 3:7-35**

Remember the big picture of Mark:

- WHO is Jesus (Son, Saviour, King)
- WHY he came (deal with sin and usher in his kingdom)
- HOW should we respond (repent and believe)

REFLECT

Jesus begins forming a new community of followers around himself. In today's text, we see some distinctions of his new community emerge. These distinctions should be true of the church today.

COMMUNITY CENTRED around Jesus

A crowd grows around Jesus when word gets out about what he's doing. Jesus shows compassion on the crowd, but is not interested in growing larger crowds. He's building a community centred around himself.

Qu: what are some differences between a crowd and a community? How can we avoid just being a crowd and not a community as a church?

CALLED & COMMISSIONED

Qu: why does Jesus call 12 disciples? Why do you think that's significant?

Jesus calls and appoints 12 of his disciples so they "might be with him and he might send them out" (v14). Today, we are also called to be *with* Jesus in order to be more *like* him (especially in continuing his ministry).

Qu: what specifically did Jesus send his disciples out to do? How does that relate to what Jesus sends us out to do?

(hint: whilst the disciples received a very unique call as apostles, we have a similar call to be sent out with the good news in word and deed).

In CONFLICT

Few enjoy conflict. Yet, scripture and Jesus' ministry clearly shows we will experience conflict with the kingdom of darkness as we advance God's kingdom.

Qu: what is Jesus saying in v27? Who is the strong man and what are his 'goods'? How does Jesus demonstrate he is the stronger one now plundering Satan?

We must avoid the 2 errors of either making too much or too little of demons & Satan and their ability to affect our lives. But Jesus clearly affirms the reality of the supernatural realm and a big part of his mission is to destroy the works of the enemy.

CHARACTERIZED by obedience

Qu: what does v31-35 tell us about who is in Jesus' family? What characteristic does he highlight of those in his family?

The community of Jesus is characterized by *doing* God's will. In v31-35, Jesus is not downgrading the role of our natural families. Rather, he is upgrading the role of his new family in the life of his followers.

RESPOND

- What encouraged and challenged you the most out of today's discussion?
- How can you practically apply what you're learning to your personal life?

PRAY

- In light of the conflict we face as followers of Jesus, pray for one another to be strengthened, peaceful, and vigilant.
- Pray for our church to reflect more and more a community centred around Jesus and his mission.