

Recap of 5/21/23 message by Pastor Chris (Mark 3:20-35):

- Outsiders disregard Jesus' authority and fail to recognize His lordship. Jesus' family and the scribes, the experts of the Old Testament, are both seen as outsiders in this passage. They both seek to oppose Jesus and His ministry. One might assume that family would automatically make one an insider with Jesus, or perhaps ecclesiastical association in the scribes, that is they believed in the same God, worshiped at the same temple. Surely they would be an insider, but Mark shows that they are not because they fail to recognize Jesus' lordship and so disregard His authority. This makes one ask who is an insider, how can one be considered a part of the family of God, which Jesus answers later in the passage.
- The scribes attribute Jesus' miraculous power to Satan in order to try to deflect the evidence of God that was right in front of them. When one chooses not to recognize Jesus for who He truly is all manner of excuses are concocted within his or her mind to avoid the truth. Jesus points out their logical inconsistencies in His explanation of a house divided and the strong man vs the one who can bind the strong man. In this parable Satan is the strong man holding people captive, and Jesus is "robbing" them from Satan by setting them free from demonic oppression. Jesus can only do this because He is able (*dunamai* in greek, which is related to *dunamis* meaning power), meaning Jesus has the power to bind Satan. This gives an allusion to Revelation 20 when Satan will be bound. Jesus warns the crowd regarding blasphemy of the Holy Spirit which is commonly referred to as "the unforgivable sin," or the "unpardonable sin." We answered what this means through a quick bible study walking through the primary steps necessary to properly study the scriptures: observation, interpretation, correlation, and application. When understood within the context and correlated across other passages that reference this teaching we can see that blasphemy of the Spirit is not so much an act of rejection as it is a persistent and decisive rejection of the Spirit's message and work concerning Jesus. When a person obstinately rejects and fixedly refuses that message or evidence, that person is not forgiven. Allegiance to Jesus is the unifying theme in all three gospels that discuss blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.
- How then can one be an insider with Jesus? Insiders do the will of God. Jesus calls those who do the will of God His brother, sister, and mother. Submission to Jesus' authority and Lordship results in a life of obedience to the will of God and this is a key element of being a disciple. This doesn't mean perfection, rather it points to a life characterized by obedience. The will of God in the context of Mark is to obey the commission to be a disciple which is to "follow" Jesus. This is expanded in Mark 3:14 to being with Jesus and being sent by Jesus. We see this in the great commission in Matthew 28:19-20. We see that the will of the Father is to "believe in the Son" in John 6:40. Allegiance to Jesus is tied to obedience, and in order to be a disciple one must first be obedient to follow Him.