**Follow – The Gospel of Mark - Wk 8 – Which Are You?**

**The Gospel = amazing life changing news!**

**God thru Jesus redeems & restores mankind to the creator.**

**1 Gospel, 4 accounts - Each is unique. We are in Mark.**

**John Mark – The first and fast paced / action packed.**

**Mark focuses on the responses of others to Jesus – good and bad.**

**Who is the real Jesus? How would he respond to what is happening around us? Different responses - defiant, submissive, combative – we are getting diff Jesus’**

**Jesus is healing people, casting out demons, teaching more and more - crowds getting bigger and bigger, and coming from farther and farther to see him. Jesus is loves, followed, and hated.**

**Last wk- 4 clashes with that lead to a plot to kill Jesus**

**Today 4 groups - Fans, family, fakers, and followers.**

**The Fans - Mark 3:7 Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. (we will see soon and in the other gospels the crowds start to swell into the thousands) 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. (it was not what he was teaching – but doing. Understandably, life was hard) 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 (false spirits) strict orders not to tell others about him. (they misrepresent and misdirect others – demons can’t preach the goods news)**

**The Fans – We see fans in the churches**

* **Fans are drawn to the famous**

**Follow movements, crowds, and the popular – follow excitement. Love the energy – until it requires sacrifice and the fans fad – and apparently it was all a fad.**

* **Fans want the fix**

**What can you do for me - how can you fix me or make me feel?**

**Fans do not follow long - fair weather fans. When the feelings and fixes are gone – so are the fans.**

* **Fans can have solid beliefs**

**Like those demons - they can have good theology and a solid bible knowledge – but they do not truly love or follow Jesus.**

**The Fakers - Mark 3:20 (We will come back to 13-18) Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. (We will come back to verse 21) 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.”**

**\*\*Can you imagine looking Jesus in the face and saying that?**

**Jesus is demon possessed?!?! All the wonderful amazing things– and all they could see their traditions being broken – such ugly hearts. (Last wk, Jesus was angry and grieved over their hard hearts 3:5)**

* **How’s your heart?**

**Jesus explains as a warning to those around him - You don’t want to be on the wrong side of what God is doing. It will cost you eternity.**

**The Fakers – We see fans in the churches**

* **Fakers are interested in protecting their image and influence.**

**Angry w/ Jesus for moving people away from them and back to the heart of God (cutting into profits) So focused on their agenda and power, that they miss the very thing God is doing.**

* **Fakers look good on the outside but are filled with hate**

**They have an appearance of holiness but are filled with hate and self-righteous judgment. We see this in the church today.**

**Jesus then gives 2 examples and a controversial statement**

**Mark 3:23 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. (if he were an agent of Satan he would be working against Satan – in a demonic civil war. Satan comes to steal, kill, and destroy – not to heal, forgive, and redeem.)**

**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. (if I were in league with Satan – he would need to subdue me – but he can’t. I am stronger and in control of him. I am plundering the house of Satan!)**

**A controversial statement - Mark 3:28 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.”**

**Explaining the unpardonable sin. The Holy Spirit draws, convicts, gives us the ability to confess, fills, directs, matures, & empowers us to walk w/ Jesus. Without the HS we are lost… forever. To a Calvinist this is simply those where will never say yes to Jesus.**

**1 Corinthians 12:3 - Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus is accursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.**

**Blasphemy of the HS will never be forgiven – not because it is a sin “too big” for God to forgive, but because it is an attitude of heart that cares nothing for God’s forgiveness. It never has forgiveness because it never wants God’s forgiveness.**

**Seeing the works of Jesus, listening to the teaching of Jesus, hearing the very voice of God in Jesus – and all they could see was Satan and selfishness. Their hearts were so far from the HS – God was done…**

**How do you know if you are committed the unforgivable sin? Are you concerned that you have – that says you have not.**

**Fans, Fakers, and now Misguided Family**

**Mark 3:20 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 heard about this, they went to take charge of him, (grab and pullout) for they said, “He is out of his mind.” (faker pharisees said he was demon possessed now his family says he’s crazy! They did not yet understand – we grew up sharing the bath water??)**

**He faced daily rejection of the leaders he grew up respecting and now his family – who he loved… rejected his mission.**

**31 Then Jesus’ mother (uh oh mama’s here) and brothers arrived. (had several bro and sis – raised in a big family) Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. (Jesus let’s go – you’re embarrassing yourself) 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.”**

**His household family were not supporters of Him at first. (John 7:5 - For even his own brothers did not believe in him.) Even Mary seemed to be at odds w/ his mission – they were only human.**

**What would it take for you believe your bother is God?**

**The Misguided Family**

* **They Love you but may not see what God is doing in you**

**His family attempted to hinder His ministry – not realizing what God was doing and up to.**

**Jesus taught – that sometimes doing the will of God will incur the opposition of your physical family.**

**Jesus is bigger than our family’s expectations and demands**

**Jesus saying to his family, “You don’t really know or understand who I am? This is bigger than you – this is the will of God!”**

**\*\* We see this in our families and in our churches.**

**They love the people around them, but they don’t truly believe and follow Jesus… yet.**

**Many like the good stuff – but not the teaching of the God stuff. Many like the community that Jesus brings, but not the commitment Jesus asks.**

* **God’s spiritual family can be stronger than your physical family**

**Mark 3:34 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.”**

**I know what it’s like to have a church family that connects with me in ways my family have not or did not – there is spiritual & relational connection. Even w/ my kids the deepest part of our relationship is spiritual. I am so glad we are spiritual family!**

**Jesus was telling them - Your little bubble cannot contain the plan of God! Our schedules – our rhythms – our kids – must all submit to Christ.**

**Following the will of God will not always make since to family.**

**BTW Jesus family eventually came around (John 7:3-5)**

**\*\*\* 3:35 Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.”**

**Let’s talk about Jesus family of followers**

**The Followers - Mark 3:13 Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. 14 he appointed twelve…**

**We learn more in - Luke 6:12 One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. 13 When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles… (Like Jesus, picking leaders requires prayer & patience)**

**Jesus models the importance of prayer in big decisions.**

**Mark 3:14 He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons. (As the crowds increased, He intentionally drew closer to fewer) 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”), (fiery disposition) 18 Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew (aka Nathaniel), Matthew (Levi), Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus (aka Judas son of James), Simon the Zealot (political & violent) 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. (Sent out by two – listed in the original by pairs)**

**Interesting things about this group**

**\*\* Some were brothers (James & John, Peter and Andrew)**

**\*\* Come from different backgrounds (fishermen, tax collectors, zealots)**

**\*\* Not all were true believers of Jesus (Judas never believed)**

**(talking to the disciples) John 6:64 - Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. (but intentionally picked)**

**A man once asked a teacher, “Why did Jesus choose Judas Iscariot to be his disciple?” Teacher replied, “I don’t know, but I have an even harder question: Why did Jesus choose me?”**

**These appointed disciples were to become His Apostles – to lead church and to take the message of the Good News to the world after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus.**

**The Followers**

* **Followers follow**

**Mark 3:13 Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. 14 He appointed twelve that they might be with him…**

**Being a Christian is not simply a belief – ask the demons if they believe – they do. But they do not follow.**

**We follow not to get things – but to “be with him” – he is the reward for the followers.**

* **Followers have a purpose**

**Mark 3:14 He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons.**

**As Jesus called the original Twelve to specific tasks, He calls us to follow Him in the same way today.**

**Jesus frees us, and we in turn take Jesus to frees others.**

**We have a purpose - fishers of people / make disciples / preach the Good News of Jesus, the Kingdom of God and set the captives free!**

**\*\* Not everyone is a apostle but we are all disciples - all followers of Jesus are called speak the truth and make disciples. We are to pass on what we have been given.**

* **Following Jesus involves a price – everything**

**It all goes back to heart of Mark - Mark 8:34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. (Jesus invites you to follow)**

**This chapter has a warning of damnation and an invitation to follow Jesus in a spiritual family.**

**Who can be a disciple? Only the perfect, polished, prosperous, and privileged? Anyone Jesus calls to follow… do you hear his invitation?**

**Fans, misguided family, fakers, and true followers - Which are you?**

* **Fan – follows the crowd and feelings. What can I get from Jesus?**
* **Faker – likes influence & control, but has no love for God or others**
* **Misguides family – Good intentioned but just don’t understand**

**Jesus is not a fad - He is not looking for fans - Jesus has called us to be followers - Are you a fan, faker, or follower?**