

## **Mark 3:7-35 Who is this man? The King who Conquers**

### **1. To the Victor goes the spoils**

As the saying goes, to the Victor goes the spoils.

And whether that be playing Monopoly – where you crush your opposition,  
Or whether that be in the corporate world of mergers and acquisitions,  
Or whether that be the lessons of war in history,  
The Victor does get the spoils of success.

As we return to Mark's Gospel.

God's king has come to conquer all opposition,

And not even the devil can thwart God's purposes,  
But what should we expect to be the spoils of victory?  
What will the kingdom of God look like?

### **2. The Story so far... vv. 7-12**

Well, where are we up to, as we've seen the plot unfolding in Mark's gospel?

Verse 7-12 provides us with a summary of the story so far. << vv. 7-12 >>

And so, as we ask the question, who is this man? Who is this Jesus?

We have the following answers already:

Jesus has authority over sickness, disease, and evil – the man in the synagogue w unclean spirit  
Jesus has authority to call his followers – even Levi – the tax collector  
Even more, Jesus has authority to forgive sins.

And here, the answer to the question, who is this man? Who is this Jesus?

The answer, is "You are the Son of God".

That is, you are God's chosen king.

You are the one to usher in the new kingdom of God.

And, the irrepulsive force of "the Son of God" marches on through the gospel.

And yet, Mark is also posing the question to us?

How do we respond to Jesus' authority?

Will we stand in opposition to an unstoppable force?

And yet, the story doesn't end there.

### 3. Completing the Call vv. 13-20

Jesus completes the calling of the disciples in vv. 13-19. << vv. 13-19 x 2 slides >>

The disciples are called not only to be with Jesus,

They are also called to be sent out from Jesus. << Apostles – literally means ‘sent ones’ >>

And the two instructions they’re given is:

- 1) to “preach” and
- 2) to “have authority to cast out demons”

Both of these instructions follow the trajectory of Jesus’ ministry.

Jesus bursts onto the stage and proclaims “the kingdom of God is near”

And Jesus has demonstrated that he is the demon-buster extraordinaire.

So the disciples are called upon to be involved in the in-breaking of God’s kingdom.

The disciples are to usher in God’s new world order through these two activities.

Note also, that the total number of disciples is twelve.

The twelve disciples represent a new form of the twelve tribes of Israel.

They represent a new community of God’s people.

That is, not only has God’s king burst onto the scene,

But also, God’s new community, God’s new people are gathered around him.

The call is complete.

God’s new community, gathered around God’s king,

Instructed to participate in the kingdom activities of

Proclaiming the message,

And casting out demons.

#### **4. Keeping it in the family vv. 20-35**

And so Jesus returns home again.

In Chapter 2, the last time Jesus came home, he declared “Your sins are forgiven” to the paralytic.

And boy, did that cause a huge stink!

So, this time, what happens? Huge stink? Or Happy families?

There’s an avalanche of opposition.

First, his own family come to collect their stark-raving mad relative,

Next, the scribes from Jerusalem accuse of being a demonic authority,

And then finally, his parents try to call him home, like a little boy.

##### **1. Certified lunatic v.20-21**

The first accusation is that Jesus is a certified lunatic. << vv. 20-21 >>

And saying “He is out of his mind” is quite diplomatic.

It really is the sense of psychological derangement – a psychotic break

Jesus has detached himself from reality, and his mind is not functioning correctly.

Why would they make such an accusation?

Well, Jesus is running around all the countryside claiming “the kingdom of God is near”.

He probably hasn’t eaten or slept properly because of his crazy itinerary.

And there is a fine line between zeal for God, and madness in their books.

But before Jesus can answer that claim, the bigger accusation is made.

##### **2. Demonic authority vv. 22-30**

The scribes who’ve trotted down from Jerusalem, to check out the fuss,

Well, in their opinion, Jesus has the authority of Beelzebul, the ruler of demons. <<vv. 22-30>>

Now, Jesus turns the tables on his opposition.

The logic of Jesus argument is this.

If you accuse me of having an unclean spirit,

Then you are actually blaspheming the Holy Spirit,

Because I have God’s spirit on me.

In fact, the Holy Spirit declared me to be God’s son, (Ch. 1)

And it is by the Holy Spirit that I bring the forgiveness of sins – Ch 2..

And so the ramification of calling Jesus demon possessed

is that you will never be forgiven,

Because you are cutting yourself off from the one who brings forgiveness.

Now, many a Christian has got themselves into all sorts of knots over this verse.

So, can I say, that this is not about Christians committing some mortal sin  
That disqualifies them from the forgiveness of sins.  
I want to assure you that Jesus has forgiven your sins, past, present and future.

But can I also say, to those who want to sit in judgment upon Jesus,  
To those who want to cast their own verdict about Jesus,  
That if you reject Jesus, you reject the one person who can forgive your sins.  
If you reject Jesus, then you have rejected the source of life.

Here, Jesus puts it all on the line.  
Either his opponents are right, and he is from the devil,  
Or his opponents are wrong,  
Jesus is from God, and is here to conquer the strong man.  
And his opponents will never be forgiven by God.

### **3. Family Feud vv. 31-35.**

And so we return to the family feud.  
We come back to his family's accusation – "You are out of your mind".  
We come back to his family, wanting Jesus to come home.  
And so the crowd asks in v. 32. "Umm.. your folks want you home..."  
His mum in the background - "Hey Jesus, dinner is served, get in here now!"

<< vv. 31-35 >>

And so, as the King declares the subjects of his kingdom – who belongs?  
As the King declares his Lordship over humanity – we are shocked by those who follow.  
It is not his biological family.  
Nor is it the spiritual guides of Israel – the scribes from Jerusalem.  
But rather, it is those who do the will of God, those who follow Jesus – including a tax collector, Levi!

At the same time, Jesus has answered the accusation of Lunacy, and demonic possession.  
Jesus is not a lunatic, Jesus is the Lord, the king.  
Because, Jesus is not demon possessed. Jesus is the King, coming to conquer the devil.

Jesus answers his critics – I am not a lunatic, I am not demon possessed – I am Lord.

## **5. Who is this man? The King who conquers**

And so, we finish with the question – who is this man?

Well, often, it is said that Jesus is the example, par excellence, for us to follow.  
This is true.

And yet, if this is the only answer to the question – who is this man, then it is lacking.  
For there are many fine examples in the faith to follow – Paul, the Apostles,  
Christians through the centuries  
But Jesus is distinctively different from them all.  
Jesus stands out against them all.  
Jesus stands above them all.

For Jesus is not a lunatic, he is not demonic – he is the Lord, he is the king who conquers.

And that means – we need to live our lives as his loyal subjects.

We need to give over every aspect of our lives to his Lordship.

Our hearts, our minds, our wills, our time, our lips, our hip pockets – all are subject to his Lordship.

The king who conquers, necessarily conquers us

- Not as a despot, and a tyrant – who has a maniacal grip on power of his subjects,
- But as the loving lord of all – who willing gave his own life for us.

So let's pray to our King, Lord and Saviour.