



## THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Study Guide Full  
Mark 3:7-19  
August 18, 2019

Last Sunday, Anthony turned the spotlight upon the matter of discipleship, asking:  
*How can we grow in Christ if we are not in any discipling relationships?*

We continue in Mark 3, looking at the text of the impure spirits asserting Jesus' divine sonship, and of Jesus appointing the twelve atop a mountainside. Indeed, what more appropriate response could there be to the realization of Christ's divinity than to grow in relationships of discipleship...together?

Note that the Greek word for "appointing," as in the appointing of the twelve, is actually the very common verb ποιέω (*poieo*), usually meaning "to do," "to make," or "to create"; in this sense, then, discipling relationships are God created: they are born and brought about through the will of God, by the call of Christ, in the power of the Spirit.

The vital question must be asked, then:  
*Are you in discipling relationships?*

If not, why have you not yet joined a Connection Group? If so, are you in honest, open, accountable discipling relationships?

Indeed, the ultimate aim of these Study Guides is that we all grow deeper in our discipling relationships, along the pathway of discipleship!



7 *Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed.*

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. 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 strict orders not to tell others about him.*

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 and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons. 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"), 18 Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.*

### Commentary Notes:

v 7. For the first time it is not just Jesus withdrawing to a lake, but his disciples as well. As such, it seems that the disciples are beginning to participate with Jesus in his ministry, and that the demands of the crowds are felt upon not only Jesus, but also upon the disciples.

## Mark 3:7-19

Notes:

### Discussion Questions:

*Reflect:* Do you have life rhythms of withdrawing "from the crowds"—from the demands of regular life, particularly full-time work and daily concerns—to be

with Christ? Do you have a rhythm of doing this in participation with others?

v. 8. In an age in which the Roman temples formed a key part of the Roman political landscape, and in which the temple in Jerusalem formed an essential centre of the Jewish religious landscape, the centre of this new movement is none other than Jesus himself, who is drawing crowds from all over—crowds that, as some Markan manuscripts make clear, were not only coming to him but accompanying and following him.

vv. 9-10. The crowds are such that Jesus commands that a boat may be ready for him; for the crowds are assailing him. The Greek word here for “pressing forward” in verse 10 is ἐπιπίπτω (*epiripto*), and the word most literally indicates a “falling upon someone,” as in throwing oneself upon another.

Also note that the Greek word in verse 9 for “crowding” is θλίβω (*thleebo*). “To press upon,” taken by most English versions, is an adequate

*Study:* Take a look at a Bible atlas, or simply Google a biblical map of the places noted in these verses. What is the emphasis of listing these places in particular? What would be a modern-day approximation of these places within the region and context of British Columbia?

*Discuss:* What do you make of the fact that Jesus himself is the moving (in a physical sense) centre of this growing movement that is following him, and that it is not simply the temple centrally located in Jerusalem? What might this truth have to say about our Christian practice of faith?

*Discern:* How are you living out the reality that we follow a God who longs to heal—physically, emotionally, spiritually, and otherwise—even if this is not always according to the timing/manner that we desire? How are you practicing congregational care this week?

*Reflect:* In accordance with the most literal translation of ἐπιπίπτω (*epiripto*) (see commentary note), when was the last time you wholeheartedly “threw yourself upon” the presence of God? What was that experience like for you? How did Christ and the Spirit meet you?

*Reflect:* Are you afflicted with the sufferings of others (see commentary note)? In other words, do you know individuals well enough to truly be compassionate—to walk alongside with and suffer with them? Or might you be

translation: the word as such is used in Matthew 7 to describe a “narrow road,” as in a compressed path; yet, these two occurrences are the only times in the NT that the word is so defined. In all eight other NT uses, the word means not just “pressed”, but “oppressed” and “afflicted”. Such, then, is the effect of Jesus’ healing, that those with diseases are going so far as to afflict Christ in crowding him; and such is the humanity of our Lord that he continues to heal, and yet also retreats.

**vv. 11-12.** The passage reaches its theological high point in the repeated declarations by the spirits that Jesus is the Son of God. Here the use of the imperfect Greek tense in a past narrative makes clear that this is kind of repeated, habitual activity; the unclean spirits truly do know that Jesus is the Son of God.

And yet, as Anthony made clear, while the impure spirits know cerebrally the truth, their existence does not testify this truth, as must our lives as Christ’s disciples; hence, the call for silence.

**vv. 13-19.** From the declaration of Christ’s divinity, Mark moves into Exodus 19-20 imagery of the mountain, and into Isaiah 44, 49, 60 imagery of the restoration of Israel. Such are the grand plans that Christ has to accomplish through a motley crew of twelve.

leading a life that is largely self-defined, in terms of priorities and commitments focused on the self? If so, what is one practical first step you can take to imitate Christ in terms of “being afflicted” by those who are suffering?

*Confess:* In what ways this week have you not lived in line with the truth that Jesus is the Son of God? Has it taken the form of anxiety, selfishness, or extreme busyness? If comfortable, confess to one another, and receive afresh his forgiveness.

*Study:* Where else have we seen in Mark thus far assertions of the divine sonship of Jesus?

*Discuss:* How does this one existential truth, of Jesus as the Son of God, change everything about our lives as Christ’s disciples?

*Reflect:* How are you drawing near to Christ—be in on a hillside, in a park, in an office, etc.—so as to be strengthened to teach, by word and deed, in all ways, the good news of Christ?

*Pray:* Pray that we, as disciples, would deeply know what it is to be *with* and be *like* Christ.