**The Gospel of Mark: A Disciple’s Mirror**

***Reflections on Following Jesus --***From A Handbook on Cross-Bearing

**Mark 3:7-35**

***Clash of Kingdoms:*** Two Kings, Two Families, Two Destinies

**What’s (happening in) the story?** Jesus declares war.

Jesus has been clear that his mission was not to bring temporal comfort through miracles, but eternal joy through forgiveness. He came to make people right with God. In order to do that, however, He must also release them from the realm of sin and the ruler of this world. The opposition is great. In fact, there already is a plot to kill Him.

So Jesus appoints and empowers the Twelve as soldiers sent into this spiritual battle. They not only proclaim His Kingdom, but also have power over the enemy, Satan and the demonic forces which hold sinners captive. The response? His family thinks Him unstable, and the religious leaders say He is evil. The battle is on! Everyone chooses a side.

**What’s the challenge in the story?** How will I face spiritual battle?

Put yourself in the place of Matthew or Peter. Jesus has just appointed you one of His key leaders, and empowers you to preach and cast out demons. Wow! Now, return home to discover that Jesus’ family think He’s crazy, and the religious establishment is accusing Him of being the Evil One. What will you do? Can you handle the conflict?

**What are the key elements in the story?**

After defining His mission (Mark 2:1–3:6), Jesus goes on the offensive in His war against sin and the powers of darkness, revealing people’s choices. . .

1. Jesus’ popularity demonstrates beyond question His power over sickness and His authority over the demonic. vv. 7-12

2. Jesus’ disciple-recruits are called by name to proclaim His message, and given authority in spiritual warfare. vv. 13-19

3. Jesus’ kinsmen show that apart from spiritual insight, even the clearest “signs” are meaningless. vv. 20, 21

4. Jesus’ enemies show that to reject Jesus’ divine authority means eternal rejection of God’s Spirit and salvation. vv. 22-30

5. Jesus’ true family are those who are obedient to God. vv. 31-35

**What’s the big idea (main point) of the story?**

*Jesus chooses us (disciples) by name, teaching us, empowering us, and recruiting us to share in His conquest of the works of darkness, creating of us an intimate, growing family of God’s children who will be both misunderstood and opposed.*

***forgiving their sins and freeing them from***

***the Law’s condemnation and sin’s devastation.***

***So let’s take a look at ourselves in Mark’s mirror. . .***

Has Jesus called me by name? Do I have a relationship with Him?

Do I have spiritual power to confront and overcome my own sin?

Am I surprised that others misunderstand and/or oppose my faith?

 Do I have full confidence in Jesus’ power and goodness and victory?

Matthew 10:16-25; 1 Peter 1:3-9; 2:9-12; 3:13-17; 4:1, 2; 12-19; 5:6-11