

Families.

1) THE DISCIPLE FAMILY.

v13-19. Mark highlights the appointment of the 12. Cranfield sees 12 as significant being deliberately chosen because of the number of the tribes of Israel. He sees the 12 as the nucleus of the new people of God.

Anderson discusses how the report highlights the sovereign decision of Jesus on selecting and appointing certain individuals from among the crowd and in turn the requirement to follow Him, cf.1:16-20.

The followers of Jesus occupy a privileged place with regard to His teaching, 4:11,33 and are "with him" 3:14 in a way that his natural kinsfolk who reject him can never be 3:21;6:1-6.

v13. He called those whom he wished. This stressed the initiative of Jesus. Vincent Taylor has remarked that the response is immediate.

v14. The twelve disciples are to be -

(a) with him, to learn before they are sent out by him, to hear before they speak for him.

(b) they are to be sent to preach and to have authority to cast out demons. Therefore their ministry was a sign of the presence of God's Kingdom in Jesus.

Jesus concentrated on teaching disciples especially after Caesarea Phillippi.

v16. Peter means "stone".

v17 Boanerges - John and James, "sons of thunder". Was it because their witness to Jesus will be as mighty as thunder or was it as Anderson suggests because they were men of thundery temperament, or fiery apocalyptic preachers? Or because of outbursts like 9:38, 9:54?

Mark mentions Peter, James and John together because they were seemingly the three leading disciples.

v18. Bartholomew sometimes is identified with Nathanael who also is associated with Phillip, John 1:45.

v18. James the son of Alpheus is mentioned only in the lists. Thaddaeus, is he Judas, not Iscariot, John 14:22?

Simon, the Canaanite. The word is derived not from Canaan or Cana but the Hebrew word meaning man of zeal.

That Jesus in fact instituted the twelve can hardly be doubted. Would the Church have included a Judas Iscariot in the twelve?

2) THE NATURAL FAMILY.

v20-35. Anderson has used the title here "The blindness that excluded Jesus' own people".

Following upon the appointment of the twelve as the nucleus of the new Israel of God the theme of how the wider family of the new Israel is to be made up is stressed.

These are a quite unexpected company around him.

v21 Reference to his friends. The phrase in Greek is not very precise. It could mean neighbours, friends, relatives. Here probably members of his own household or family.

"He is beside himself" - i.e., insane. Madness was often attributed to demon possession. So Mark presents a sharp contrast between the natural / true family of Jesus. Can be a member of the natural family of Jesus/Mary and not in God's family. John1v12-13 , not of blood or of the will of man.

3) THE RELIGIOUS FAMILY

v22. Scribes who came down from Jerusalem. That the official leaders of Judaism should come from such a distance from the HQ of their religion is a sign for Mark how widespread the fame of Jesus had become and also how Jerusalem is the principal seat of opposition to Jesus. Their accusation implies that they sensed that in Jesus

they faced a destructive threat to everything they stood for. They take for granted that he is possessed of supernatural power. Only they claim that it is the power of evil and not of good. It is not now just a question of religious practice on the part of Jesus and his disciples but of the very nature and origin of his authority. Beelzebub is the name of a Philistine god mentioned in 2Kgs 1:2 and means lord of the flies.

v23. A parable. An illustrative story here. Jesus does not question the reality of Satan's power but makes clear that strife in any house will invariably bring disruption and destruction. Since Satan's empire is not destroyed he cannot be at war with himself. Another power must be at work.

v28. "Truly". A Hebrew expression from a root meaning to be faithful and is commonly used after a wish or a prayer. It's usage at the beginning of a sentence is a characteristic of Jesus and is a solemn guarantee of the truth he is stating.

v29. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is attributing to the agency of Satan, exorcisms, wrought by Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit. Here this was the sin of the official guardians of the Jewish religion.

4) THE TRUE FAMILY

This is the only mention of Mary in Mark apart from Mk.6:3. The fact that there is no mention of Joseph suggests that he is probably dead by this time. His brothers are mentioned. There are 3 interpretations; sons of Joseph by a former wife and cousins of Jesus, sons of Mary's sister, or sons of Joseph and Mary. The first 2 are seeking to guard the idea of Mary's perpetual virginity (Catholic view).

v31-35. Obedience to God rather than physical relationship binds men close to Jesus. It involves those who share with him in obedience to the will of God.. The Kingdom of God involves personal fellowship between people who would do the will of God. So the expected ones, the religious leaders of the day v22ff and Jesus' natural own kinsfolk are not included here v21, v31-35. (see the statement "whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister").

Being in the family of God.

Some you would expect are not there.

Pharisees,

The religious

Judas

in church membership/office.

His friends,

In a christian family

Scribes,

those knowing the bible.

Those naturally related to Jesus

in the best family ever.

"Whoever does the will of my father the same is....Isaiah 53v6.