

THE KINGDOM OF THE KING

The Gospel of Mark 3:7-34

Bible Study Tools

Original Audience: Each book of the Bible was written in a particular time and context and for a specific audience. Of course the Bible is for us, but the writers of the book had certain people in mind at a particular point in history. As you read the text, think about who the original audience was and how what is written would have affected them. Are proper names used? Why or why not?

Old Testament Echoes: Numbers, places, certain key events from the Old Testament are carried forward into the gospel story. The original audience would have understood these references and made the connection. It is a bit more difficult for us, but take some time to think about these echoes of the OT and invest some time reading in Exodus, 1 Samuel, or Joshua to try to understand these foundational events in Hebrew history and apply them to your understanding of Jesus and his story.

Questions to Consider

- Look at a map and trace from where the crowds were coming. Do you notice a pattern?
- Where is Jesus when he appoints his “Apostles?” What does the word “Apostle” mean? Is there an echo of an Old Testament event here? What does it tell us about this point in Jesus’ story?
- What was his family’s reaction to what was happening at this point in Jesus’ ministry?
- Who are the “Scribes from Jerusalem?” What is their argument and what is the significance of Jesus’ response?
- Pay attention to who is “outside.” It is not just a detail of the story but a literary device - what does it mean?

Comments & Applications

Mark and Proper names: Mark does not use many proper names in his gospel but he does list the 12 Apostles by name even though he doesn’t talk about most of them in the story. Why? How does this relate to the original audience? So, when Mark mentions a proper name, ask yourself - why? Might that person have had an ongoing role in the Church?

Jesus’ Reaction to Rejection: When the religious establishment made up their mind about Jesus, how does he react? How is that surprising? What can we learn from his reaction?

Membership in the people of God: In the OT, the people of God was defined by people who were physically related to one another by blood relationships. They were a family. In this last story Jesus changes that for the Kingdom of God. What does he say and what does that mean for us?

