**Faith, Fellowship, and Family**

*Mark 3:31-35*

**Introduction**

1. Jesus’ life stands as the perfect blueprint to build our lives by.
2. His perspective of this world should become our own.
3. He wants to transform our minds to be like His own.
4. This covers the entirety of our lives lived under the sun.
5. In Mark 3:31-35 we are shown the priorities and connections Jesus made concerning Faith, Fellowship, and Family.
6. Jesus’ Emphasis on Faith
7. Context
   1. Attempting to destroy Jesus using the Sabbath:
      1. **Mark 2:23-3:6** – Disciples pluck heads of grain to eat on Sabbath, and Jesus heals on Sabbath.
         1. Charge – **Mark 2:24** – but Jesus showed such was not unlawful. (**cf. Matthew 12:7**)
         2. Looking for charges to bring against Him – **Mark 3:1-2** – but Jesus healed the man, and showed why such was lawful. (**cf. Matthew 12:11-12**)
   2. Continued healing, and gathering of followers – **Mark 3:7-12**
   3. Charged Jesus with performing the miracles by the power of Satan – **Mark 3:20-30**
      1. Pharisees said such when they heard the multitude making connections to Jesus and the Messiah – **Matthew 12:23**
      2. Jesus shows the flaw in their logic – (**vv. 23-27)**
      3. Jesus exposes their motives, and sin – (**vv. 28-30)**
         1. Blasphemy against the Spirit won’t be forgiven – **Matthew 12:31-32**
         2. Why?
            1. Spirit – seal of Jesus’ ministry and Messiahship – **John 6:26-27; Acts 2:22** – proof. (**cf. Matthew 12:28** – cast out demons by Spirit of God.)
            2. Pharisees could not deny Jesus’ miracles – **John 11:46-48** – BUT THEY DIDN’T WANT TO ACCEPT HIM AS LORD AND CHRIST.

If they disregarded a claim He made without proof, that could be forgiven.

However, if they refused to acknowledge such with immense proof of the Spirit, there would be nothing left for them.

* + - * 1. Salvation only by Jesus Christ – **John 14:6**
        2. Jesus testified as Christ by Spirit **– John 15:26**
        3. Spirit of truth is last to be sent, thus, if you reject His testimony you cannot be forgiven. (And they did – **Acts 4:16-17**)
      1. Jesus is warning them that a rejection of the proof of Christ by the Spirit is a rejection of the last that God will send to convince, and thus lead men to forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Ultimately, the greatest proof of Jesus deity/messiahship by the Spirit was rejected by many of these same men – **cf. Romans 1:4)**
  1. Teaching interrupted by His family **– Mark 3:31-35** – emphasized that those closest to Him were those that believed and did God’s will. (This obedience requires faith – **John 7:16-17**)
     1. **John 7:5 –** brothers didn’t believe.
     2. **Mark 3:21** – possibly a reference to His family.
        1. Perhaps out of concern for Jesus, but nevertheless an expression of faithlessness.
  2. Parable of the Sower taught – **Mark 4:1-20**
     1. **(vv. 10-12)** – such teaching is designed to weed out the dishonest.
     2. **Matthew 13:15** – dull hearts.
     3. All in the context, including Jesus’ physical family, could be categorized by one of the soils – **(vv. 13-20**) – Those who did God’s will were the “good ground.”
  3. All that Jesus did was to incite faith in men. If any did not believe in Him as the Christ, the Son of God, and then obey Him, they missed the point of His presence.

1. Jesus Desires and Requires Our Faith
   1. He came to give life through spiritual light (enlightenment) – **John 1:4, 7**
   2. He urged men to believe while the light was with them – **John 12:35-36**
      1. **(v. 37)** – many didn’t believe.
      2. **(vv. 42-43)** – some believed but didn’t confess.
   3. The Faith that pleases Jesus is obedient – **Mark 3:35** – i.e. according to God’s will.
      1. It isn’t empty actions without authority – **Matthew 7:21-23**
      2. It isn’t outward displays to be seen of men – **Matthew 6:1-4**
      3. It isn’t split devotion, but full focus on God and His will – **Matthew 6:24**
   4. **Luke 6:46** – are we truly faithful, or are we giving lip service?
2. Jesus’ Evaluation of Spiritual Fellowship
3. Jesus and His Family
   1. Jesus was the first born of Mary by the Spirit, but Mary had other children by Joseph – **Mark 6:3** (rejected at Nazareth) – brothers and sisters.
   2. No doubt Jesus loved His family – **John 18:25-27** – as any would, and as evidenced by His provided care for His mother upon His death.
      1. Must provide for family – **1 Timothy 5:8**
   3. Jesus taught that faith is greater than family – **Luke 14:26-27; Matthew 10:37**
      1. He practiced what He preached – **John 7:5; Mark 3:33-35**
      2. He evaluated the spiritual relationship He had with disciples above that of His flesh and blood.
      3. THOSE WHO HAD SPIRITUAL FELLOWSHIP – SHARED IN OBEYING GOD’S WILL – WERE CLOSER TO HIM IN HIS ESTIMATION THAN HIS FAMILY WHO DISBELIEVED AT THE TIME.
      4. This is how Jesus wants us to see things today.
4. Blood is Thicker Than Water?
   1. “Blood is thicker than water” – Family is important above all else.
      1. Many hold to this notion, even to a fault – it doesn’t matter what the context is family comes first.
      2. Original proverb – “The blood of the covenant is thicker than the water of the womb.” – Blood shed on the proverbial battlefield bonds us more than simple genetics.
   2. Blood relationships are temporary:
      1. **Matthew 22:23-30** – answering the Sadducees, Jesus shows the temporal nature of physical relationships.
      2. **2 Corinthians 5:16** – none know Jesus according to the flesh any longer. (Included His physical family – **Acts 1:14; James 1:1; Jude 1** – Jesus’ brothers no longer considered themselves such, but His bondservants.)
   3. The spiritual relationship in Christ is not predicated upon any physical connection, but on faith in eternal truths:
      1. **1 Peter 1:22-23** – born of eternal seed into a spiritual family, which we are active toward in love (not one motivated by blood, but by faith)
         1. “Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently” (ASV)
         2. Idea – born into a spiritual family, thus, unto loving them.
         3. “Love of the brethren” – *philadelphia*; fraternal affection. (Strong) (MAY INCLUDE PHYSICAL FAMILY, BUT ALL ARE SHOWN THAT FRATERNAL LOVE.)
      2. **Ephesians 2:14-16, 19-22** – those of different race, culture, and backgrounds are one in Christ – members of God’s household.
         1. These physical differences aren’t to affect our treatment of each other.
         2. **Ephesians 4:1-3** – love, unity, peace.
   4. “The blood of Christ is thicker than the water of the womb.” – **Revelation 7:14-17** (Those in fellowship through Christ’s blood will have that connection for eternity.)
5. Jesus’ Identification of Disciples as Family
6. Jesus Identifies Believers as Family
   1. Jesus valued the spiritual ties over the familial ones – **Mark 3:33-35**
      1. He called His disciples family.
      2. **Hebrews 2:11-13** – we are called Christ’s brethren.
   2. We are members of God’s family by spiritual birth – **John 1:12-13; Hebrews 3:6**
      1. **1 John 3:1** – we are called God’s children.
      2. Thus, we are members of one another – **Romans 12:5** – i.e. to aid each other in any way needed according to God’s will.
      3. **Galatians 3:29** – we are all heirs of the family inheritance.
7. We are Blessed to be a Part of God’s Family
   1. “We’re part of the family that’s been born again; Part of the family whose love knows no end. For Jesus has saved us and made us His own; Now we’re part of the family that’s on its way home.”
   2. “When a brother meets sorrow we all feel his grief; And when he’s passed through the valley, we all feel relief. Together in sunshine, together in rain, Together in vict’ry through His precious name.”
   3. “And though some go before us, we’ll all meet again, Just inside the city when we enter in. There’ll be no more parting, with Jesus we’ll be Together forever, God’s family.”
   4. “And sometimes we laugh together, sometimes we cry. Sometimes we share together heartaches and sighs. Sometimes we dream together of how it will be when we all get to Heaven, God’s family.”
      1. (“God’s Family” – Lanny Wolfe)

**Conclusion**

1. Jesus was clear about what was truly important – our relationship with Him through faithful obedience, our fellowship with each other through His blood, and thus being a part of the eternal family of God.
2. Let us view each other, and life through the same lens that our Savior did while on this earth.