



The Crowd, the Demons, and the Disciples

Key idea:

Jesus had a distinct relationship and response to the crowds, demonic powers, and His disciples, who were called out of the crowd to be with Him and then go back to the crowd to proclaim the Gospel and confront Satan's kingdom.

Key text:

Mark 3:7-19

Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. ⁸When they heard 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 evil 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 who he was. ¹³ Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. ¹⁴ He appointed twelve — designating them apostles — 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.

Key points:

1. Mark 3:7-19 shows Jesus in distinct relationships with three different groups: the crowds, the demons, and His disciples.
2. Though Jesus had withdrawn to the lakeside, massive crowds came from near and far to be near Him. Even though it appears that their dominant motivation is not to learn from Jesus but to receive physical healing by His touch, Jesus is compassionate and heals many.
3. Demons possession people in the crowd immediately recognize Jesus and fall before Him, acknowledging that He is the Son of God. However, Jesus exercises total authority over them, expelling them and ordering them not to speak.

4. Jesus goes to the mountain and calls the Twelve - creating a new “twelve tribes” to be the fulfillment of God’s call to Israel. Although the Twelve occupy a unique place in the history of the Church, they are also a paradigm for what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.
5. In this passage, the call to be a disciple of Jesus consists of two main parts:
 - a. Being with Jesus
 - b. Being sent out by Jesus to proclaim the Gospel and to drive out demons

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. After five straight stories of conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees, why does Mark immediately turn to a massive crowd coming to Jesus? What does this tell me about Jesus and how He was being perceived by others at this point?
3. In what ways might we view the crowd in a favorable light? In what ways might we question their motives? What does this tell me about the outward response of crowds in our day?
4. Given the mixed motives of the crowd, what do I learn from the fact that Jesus continues to heal them and drive out demons? How does that apply to my efforts to minister to others?
5. Why does Mark record that the demons recognized Jesus’ true identity, even though Jesus ordered them not to speak? Why does He want the reader to know that at this early point in the Gospel?
6. In what ways is the call of the Twelve unique? In what ways is it meant to be a paradigm for all disciples? How can I know the difference?
7. Do I struggle more to “be with Jesus” or to “go forth in His Name”? Why do I find this aspect of discipleship more difficult? What practical steps can I take to grow in this area?
8. When I hear the phrase “spiritual warfare” what comes to my mind? Have I ever studied this topic much? Do I really think the demons are still active today and that my call as a disciple of Jesus will necessarily involve spiritual warfare? What do I think such warfare will entail?
9. Who will I call or see to invite to gather with the church this week?

For Further Study:

You can learn more about [spiritual warfare](#) on the BRCC teachings resource page.