

Adult Catechesis at St. Dunstan's Anglican Church, Largo, FL
The Gospel of Mark – Week 9

Monday — Big Picture Overview (Mark 3:1–19)

Read Mark 3:1–19 in one sitting. If possible, reread Mark 1–2 to see how this passage fits into the larger story of Jesus' early ministry. Notice how conflict escalates around Sabbath observance, how Jesus draws large crowds to himself, and how he appoints the Twelve to share in his mission. This passage reveals Jesus' authority over both religious opposition and spiritual powers, and it marks a turning point as he forms the community that will carry out his mission.

1. Summarize what happens in this passage. What are the major scenes?
2. How do these scenes reveal Jesus' authority and mission?
3. How is Jesus beginning to challenge the religious status quo?

Prayer Prompt: Ask the Lord to help you see Jesus more clearly, not only as a teacher, but as the one who fulfills and reorients God's covenant people around himself.

Tuesday — Jesus Heals on the Sabbath (Mark 3:1–6)

Jesus enters the synagogue and encounters a man with a withered hand. The Pharisees are watching closely, hoping to catch him violating Sabbath law. Jesus responds, not by avoiding conflict, but by exposing their hardness of heart through a piercing question: “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?” Their silence reveals their moral blindness. Jesus restores the man’s hand, and the Pharisees begin to plot with the Herodians to destroy him.

Sabbath was not merely a day of rest but a symbol of Israel’s identity and hope. Over time, that symbol became a boundary marker, a weapon to exclude rather than a gift to receive. Jesus’ action reclaims the Sabbath for its true purpose: to reveal God’s mercy and new creation.

4. What stands out to you about Jesus’ initiative in this story?

5. How does this scene expose the dangers of hardened hearts and misplaced priorities?

6. How can we recover the true spirit of Sabbath as a gift, not a burden?

Prayer Prompt: Pray for a heart softened to God’s mercy, able to see where Jesus is at work even when it disrupts expectations.

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Wednesday — Crowds and Authority (Mark 3:7–12)

Jesus withdraws to the sea, but the crowds follow from every direction—Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan, Tyre, and Sidon. They come because they have heard what he is doing. In a world with little medical care, someone who healed drew desperate, hope-filled crowds. Even unclean spirits recognize him and cry out, “You are the Son of God.” Jesus silences them, asserting control over his own identity and mission.

This scene reveals both the hope and danger surrounding Jesus' ministry. The crowd sees power; the demons see the true King. Jesus commands both physical and spiritual authority, revealing the inbreaking of God's kingdom.

7. What does this scene reveal about the hope and danger surrounding Jesus' ministry?

8. Why is it significant that the unclean spirits recognize Jesus' identity before others do?

9. How does this passage expand our understanding of Jesus' authority?

Prayer Prompt: Thank Jesus for his sovereign authority over all powers—physical, spiritual, and political. Pray for a heart that recognizes and trusts his kingship.

Thursday — The Calling of the Twelve (Mark 3:13–19)

After the excitement of the crowds, Jesus ascends a mountain—a deliberate, symbolic act. There, he calls to himself those he wants and appoints twelve apostles. Every Jew understood the significance of twelve: it symbolized the twelve tribes of Israel. By appointing twelve apostles, Jesus signals that the long-promised restoration is beginning now through him. He is forming a new Israel—a community centered on himself.

Their mission stems from their relationship with him: first, to be with him; second, to be sent out to preach and cast out demons. Even Judas's presence shows that Jesus' redemptive mission will develop in unexpected ways.

10. Why is the number twelve so significant in this passage?

11. What does it mean to be with Jesus before being sent out by him?

12. How does this passage shape your understanding of the Church's mission today?

Prayer Prompt: Ask the Lord to shape you, like the Twelve, into a faithful disciple, one who abides with Christ and bears witness to his kingdom.

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Friday — Reflecting on the Whole Passage (Mark 3:1–19)

Revisit the entire passage and consider how Jesus' authority is shown through his healing, his control over spiritual powers, and his creation of a new community. Observe how opposition grows even as hope increases. Jesus redefines holiness, community, and covenant signs around himself, proclaiming the arriving kingdom of God.

13. How does Jesus' authority challenge and fulfill Israel's story?

14. What do you notice about how Jesus interacts with both outsiders and insiders?

15. How does this passage call you personally to deeper discipleship?

Prayer Prompt: Thank God for the freedom and newness Jesus brings. Ask for the courage to follow him even when he leads beyond familiar boundaries.