



**THE PULL**  
**MARK 3:31-35**

**Matthew 10:34-35 NLT** 34 “Don’t imagine that I came to bring peace to the earth! I came not to bring peace, but a sword. 35 ‘I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. 36 Your enemies will be right in your own household!’

- What was the decision E had to make?
- Don’t think that decision is made only in Eastern religious conversions
- It is just easier to see there, the hostility more open

## **This kind of pull is on every born-again child of God in various degrees from various sources**

- Pull from society to be open and accepting of any new social norms
- Pull from scientist and intellectuals on how we are to view our world and existence
- Pull from politics on how to think and behave
- Pull of friends, workplace, family
- Pull of religious traditions and practices

**In the Kingdom of God there is only one pull that matters, that is the pull of God's will for you personally**

- Jesus understands this pulling from different sources with different intents
- We see that clearly in **Mark 3:31-35**

## We began seeing this pulling of Jesus last week

- **Mark 3:20-21 NLT** 20 One time Jesus entered a house, and the crowds began to gather again. Soon he and his disciples couldn't even find time to eat. 21 When his family heard what was happening, they tried to take him away. "He's out of his mind," they said.

## We began seeing this pulling of Jesus last week

- **Mark 3:22 NLT** But the teachers of religious law who had arrived from Jerusalem said, “He’s possessed by Satan, the prince of demons. That’s where he gets the power to cast out demons.”

## **Please don't hear in this Jesus is antifamily or thought little of family relationships**

- His Jewish listeners understood it was a rhetorical question because the family bond was a sacred trust
  - If you ask a rhetorical question it means you don't necessarily expect an answer, but you do want an occasion to talk about something.
  - It is intended to make a point
  - The point is the place God has in your life and everything else

## Please don't hear in this Jesus is antifamily or thought little of family relationships

- **John 19:26-27 NLT** 26 When Jesus saw his mother standing there beside the disciple he loved, he said to her, “Dear woman, here is your son.” 27 And he said to this disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from then on this disciple took her into his home.



## **Please don't diminish the intense pull upon the life of Jesus here**

- Pull from his family was to submit to their direction in his life
  - Social norms, Religious norms, Family norms
  - A decision had to be made by Jesus

## **Please don't diminish the intense pull upon the life of Jesus here**

- Will I following the pull of others or follow the will of God for my life?
- Will I be the Messiah they want or the Messiah they need?
- Will I disappoint others or my Father in heaven?

## **To following Christ requires a willingness to leave all if necessary – even one's family**

- You are either in God's kingdom or remain loyal to the other pulls in your life
- There is no middle ground
- God is either first priority or not

## **To following Christ requires a willingness to leave all if necessary – even one's family**

- Today we want to separate the act of salvation and discipleship
  - We are saved (going to heaven), but I can live anyway I want, a little sin does not hurt anything
  - You will not find that teaching or mindset anywhere in the teachings of Jesus

## To following Christ requires a willingness to leave all if necessary – even one's family

- Same mindset Paul talked about in **Romans 6:1-2 NLT**  
1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

## **To following Christ requires a willingness to leave all if necessary – even one's family**

- This is similar to the marriage counseling to couples about to marry
  - We talk about the pulls of family on both sides
  - This is how you are to live, think, who we are as family

## **To following Christ requires a willingness to leave all if necessary – even one's family**

- This is similar to the marriage counseling to couples about to marry
  - They must determine using God's leadership who they are as a family, what traditions will they establish
  - Be careful what you start at the beginning, it can be hard to stop after it gets established

## **To following Christ requires a willingness to leave all if necessary – even one's family**

- Jesus is saying the same thing
- This is all to be done in love, not arrogance or judging others
- It is not about isolation but rather being who God wants you to be in a sinful world



**To following Christ requires a willingness to leave all if necessary – even one's family**

- **John 17: 16-16 NIV** 15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.

## **You are not alone in this cruel world, but you are a treasured part of God's family**

- **Genesis 2:18 NIV** The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."
- The help for Christians today is the Holy Spirit within the Kingdom of God (Church)

# **You are not alone in this cruel world, but you are a treasured part of God's family**

- How long has it been, if ever, since you have felt treasured in this world or maybe even in your own family?
  - Good news – God treasures you in His family

# **You are not alone in this cruel world, but you are a treasured part of God's family**

- This world is good at putting you in your place, making it hard to reach your goals or changing your position within it
- Sometimes church is good at that as well

## **You are not alone in this cruel world, but you are a treasured part of God's family**

- Here before Jesus were people that had given up everything to follow him
- Notice he says to them, "You are my family. My brothers and sisters and yes mothers."
  - Do you hear acceptance in Jesus' word?

# **You are not alone in this cruel world, but you are a treasured part of God's family**

- Hear Jesus say to them
  - I understand the sacrifices you have made
  - I understand the pulls on your lives and the decisions you have made
- We as longtime church goes must ensure that all who come here that bear the name Jesus are accepted as full family members

**Notice Jesus gave a very specific qualification to identify those He considered true family: “obedience to the will of God”**

- I call this our spiritual birthmark
- **Matthew 7:21 NLT** “Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter.”
  - I am haunted by that statement, not for me but others

**Notice Jesus gave a very specific qualification to identify those He considered true family: “obedience to the will of God”**

- What is the will of God?
  - **John 6:28-29 NIV** 28 Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” 29 Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”



**Notice Jesus gave a very specific qualification to identify those He considered true family: “obedience to the will of God”**

- **Philippians 2:12-13 NLT** 12 Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. 13 For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

## **Three statements to give us some guidance as we seek to manage those times when family and friends misunderstand us**

- Face it
  - Realize that not all family and friends who don't know Christ will be able to understand your devotion to Him
  - Those who have never experienced new birth in Christ can only come so far in understanding the spiritual relationship you now experience

## **Three statements to give us some guidance as we seek to manage those times when family and friends misunderstand us**

- **Accept it**
  - **Don't fight it or try and force your perspectives, priorities and pursuits on them, or get mad**
  - **You can't force them into believing**
  - **Their attitude toward you and your faith is out of your control**

## **Three statements to give us some guidance as we seek to manage those times when family and friends misunderstand us**

- Adjust to it
  - Live your faith, pray for the faithless
  - Be ready to share your faith lovingly when the time is right
  - Look for ways to live your faith and interact with them

## **Three statements to give us some guidance as we seek to manage those times when family and friends misunderstand us**

- Adjust to it
  - Don't alienate them with a barrage of spiritual emails, constant invitations to church or hidden gospel tracks
  - Embrace your new reality that you now live with genuine commitments to both your natural family and supernatural family of God

## Three statements to give us some guidance as we seek to manage those times when family and friends misunderstand us

- We need God's wisdom, strength and help to know where to stand without dishonoring our earthly family and friendships
- **John 16:13 NLT** When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard.

## **We will simply trust God and will leave the results in His hands**

- **Proverbs 3:5-6 NLT** 5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. 6 Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.



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