



**LC STUDY GUIDE**  
**“True Belonging: Home Edition”**  
The Passage: Mark 3:20-35  
January 7 - 20

**How to use the LC Study Guide**

Hello Leaders! Thank you for your ongoing commitment to pursue Christian community and the study of Scripture—study that leads to life transformation in Christ and strives to serve “the other.”

These studies have been designed with the following aspects in mind:

1. To facilitate a discussion on the passage of Scripture that was preached that particular Sunday using the Inductive Bible Study Method (not necessarily on the themes of that particular sermon). In summary, this method stresses “Observation” (what the reader can see from the text), “Interpretation” (what we can learn when we study the text with various tools, commentaries, and resources), and “Application” (how we can apply the Scripture to our lives).
2. Groups using this study range from the new leader to the highly experienced. Groups themselves have their own context. This study attempts to hit the middle. The stronger studies require about an hour or two of leader preparation to contextualize this resource to the needs and personalities of your group.
3. In addition to prep time, please spend time in prayer during preparation and before and after the study. It’s the power of the Holy Spirit that illuminates the Word of Scripture and we are humbled that He uses our combined efforts as part of this work. (For more tips on using this study, please see the endnotes.)

As always, we are so grateful for you, your gifting, your servant leadership, and all that you do for the cause of Christ. Please let us know if we can help you in any way.

Grace and peace,  
Pastor Tim, on behalf of the LC Team

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**Happy New Year and welcome back.** Hope you had a great Christmas and that the Lord will do extraordinary things in your life and through your life.

We’ve begun a new teaching series at Grace Chapel and we’ll be looking at biblical texts that will give us perspective into the nature of family in all its different forms. How can we be better family members to one another—to the people we are related to and to the ones we love but are not related by blood?

In this passage, we want to look at one scene that gives us a sense of the complexity the “Holy Family” was experiencing. Yes, even Jesus’ family had a bit of drama.

<sup>20</sup> Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. <sup>21</sup> When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, “He is out of his mind.”

<sup>22</sup> And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, “He is possessed by Beelzebul! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons.”

<sup>23</sup> So Jesus called them over to him and began to speak to them in parables: “How can Satan drive out Satan? <sup>24</sup> If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. <sup>25</sup> If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. <sup>26</sup> And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. <sup>27</sup> In fact, no one can enter a strong man’s house without first tying him up. Then he can plunder the strong man’s house. <sup>28</sup> Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter, <sup>29</sup> but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin.”

<sup>30</sup> He said this because they were saying, “He has an impure spirit.”

<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. <sup>32</sup> A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, “Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.”

<sup>33</sup> “Who are my mother and my brothers?” he asked.

<sup>34</sup> Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! <sup>35</sup> Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.”

### Mark 3:20-35

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**O** – There are at least three different sentiments concerning how people feel about Jesus. Identity them and spend a moment unpacking why they might think that.  
*(His family thought he was “out of his mind,” some religious leaders thought he was demon-possessed and given the packed house in verse 20, many must have thought Jesus was at the very least, amazing.)*

**I** – Why are the religious leaders convinced that Jesus is possessed by demons (v. 22)?  
*(It’s important to remember that no one had ever seen these types of signs and wonders before. They did not have any type of religious category for it so they concluded that it must have been demonic. In addition, the religious leaders saw Jesus as a deceiver. Had they only paid attention long enough, they may have had to realize they needed new categories for the Messiah.)*

**A** – Describe a time where you felt that someone had an unfair or completely different impression of you. How did it make you feel? How did you respond? Was there anything redemptive that eventually emerges (it’s ok if there wasn’t)?

**I** – What can we learn from Jesus’ response? What do you make of the sin that cannot be forgiven?

**(Leader note:** *Please use discretion in this question as it could lead to a rabbit trail. You might consider skipping it, but I know some groups will want to discuss it. And it’s something that Jesus said in the text.*

*In short, much has been made of the “unforgiveable sin.” Some say taking one’s own life is unpardonable since there is no opportunity for repentance. The text does not seem to support that claim however. Nor does this seem to be about insulting the Holy Spirit but more about assuming the role of the Spirit.*

*What seems more likely is that this is an issue of control and surrender. Jesus seems to be saying that unless you surrender your life to the Holy Spirit, you commit blasphemy as your life is not actually yours, but the Father’s. Not surrendering our will to the Father and not being obedient to the Holy Spirit puts one out of relationship to the Lord which means they have not come to the Lord for forgiveness of sin and have not chosen to place their trust in Jesus.*

*Again, this is a bit of a complicated theological explanation. Do your best to reach an appropriate landing point so you can keep moving on in the discussion.)*

**O** – Verse 31 has Jesus’ mother and brothers arriving, possibly for a family intervention. What do you think was going through their minds? Imagine what they said to each other along the way and what they were saying as they stood and waited.

**O** – How does Jesus define family?

**I** – As we can see, being faithful to the heavenly Father’s will is the basis of devotion to God and to others, including family. How does this challenge our personal and societal values and priorities to family?

**A** – How can we live in response to Jesus’ simple yet powerful message when it comes to family and faithfulness to the Father’s will?

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- a. Please note that not all these questions are to be asked in a single meeting. Take some time to prayerfully discern what will serve your LC the best. Select and reword the questions that best fit your voice and your Life Community group.
  - b. Complement these questions with “process questions” (what else? what more? what do others think?)
  - c. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. Wait. Take your time; don’t rush people but encourage participation. Avoid answering your own questions!
  - d. Application: Pace the study to conclude with difference-making application.

- e. Secondary texts—use other texts sparingly, even if they are relevant. Such texts will push you into “teaching” rather than facilitating, causing people to feel distracted or de-powered.