

**“A Kingdom Secret”, #3**

(A Baptism Sunday) The fourth Sunday on “the (secret) kingdom of God”: the third of three actual secrets.

Reading the Gospel of Mark (Chapter 3, for example), we see Jesus in interaction with all sorts of people: needy strangers (vss. 1-5, e.g. the man with the withered hand), his own disciples (vss. 13-19), his opponents (vss. 6, 23-30) -- and his own family!

**Mark 3:20-21** Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind."

**NOTES:** Three related insights: one of them is good news! **Only one: but it's really good news!**

1. A real commitment to the real Jesus is as likely to divide a family as it is to unite it!

**Mark 3:31-33** And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you." And he answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?"

**Matthew 10:32-36** So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven. Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person's enemies will be those of his own household.

2. If your commitment to Jesus “divides you” from your family, that is a part of “the cost of discipleship”

**Matthew 10:37-39** Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Compare: And here is the good news...

**Mark 3:34-35** And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother."

3. **A KINGDOM SECRET:** Every servant in the kingdom is personally adopted by the king himself.

**Galatians 3:26** in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

**Galatians 4:4-7** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

**Romans 8:28-29** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

**ACTIONS:**

a) Make this your commitment to Jesus: **“No to myself; Yes to God.”**

Be a **Mark 3:35** person: Do the will of God: particularly the will of God regarding faith in Christ.

This morning, we hear from three people who have recently made this commitment: with all the implications that this commitment to Christ imports to a life.

b) **Make this commitment to Jesus for your own good AND for the good it will do your family.**

There is (often) in family life such a thing as a separation for the good of the family. A young man goes off to fight a war, to preserve the liberties of the family. A merchant goes off on a long journey to earn the money that will support the family. Jacob's sons went down to Egypt to beg for bread to feed his family. *This* separation could be *that* sort of experience, which would make it good news for the whole family in the long term. But it might seem like bad news for now, and might remain bad news for a long time!

How should we be changed by being adopted?

c) **Be a servant to your family**

**Matthew 19:29-30** And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

Think about this; be challenged by this!

The one real son, the firstborn (In fact, the only born son!) became the servant of all. ("The first shall be the last.")

**Mark 10:45** For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

**2 Corinthians 4:5** For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

