

## Sermon-Based Bible Study Group



November 17, 2024

**“The Unforgivable Sin”** - Dr. Mike Elliott, Guest Speaker

**Text** : Mark 3:20-35 (NRSV)

1. What stood out to you about the message?
2. Consider the context for this portion of Mark’s account of Jesus’ ministry:
  - He healed a man with an unclean spirit (1:21-28) and many people at Simon’s house (1:29-34); he conducted a preaching tour throughout Galilee (1:35-39) and cleansed a leper (1:40-45).
  - He healed a paralytic (2:1-12) and invited a tax collector to follow him (2:13-17); he bested the Pharisees in a controversy about fasting (2:18-22) and again in a controversy over plucking grain on the sabbath (2:23-28).
  - He healed a man with a withered hand (3:1-6);
  - Crowds pressed around him at the side of the sea, and unclean spirits “fell before him, and cried, ‘You are the Son of God!’” (3:11).
3. **Read Mark 3:20-22. *The Accusation***
  - Why would the Pharisees have resorted to such vile accusations against Jesus?
  - Why do you suppose Jesus’ family responded as they did?
4. **Read Mark 3:23-27. *The Rebuttal***
  - Why might Jesus have chosen “parables” or metaphorical examples to respond to his accusers?
  - How do you think the Pharisees and Jesus’ family responded to his rebuke of a kingdom and house “divided against itself”?
5. **Read Mark 3:28-30, Leviticus 24:16. *Forgiveness Clarified***
  - Why would Jesus have decided to address the issue of forgiveness of sins, specifically the sin of blaspheming?
  - What is your understanding of blaspheming the Holy Spirit, described by Dr. Elliott as “the unforgivable sin”?
6. **Read Mark 3:31-35. *Family Re-visited.***
  - How does Jesus finally resolve the issues surrounding the role of his family in this situation?
7. How can we pray for you?