

Mark 3:20-35 Survey of Segment

Main Subunits

3:20 Jesus, crowds, family	3:22	3:23 Jesus respond to accusation	3:30	3:31 Jesus defines His true family	3:35
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- My divisions were made based on the narrative in this section.
 - First section sets the stage and introduces a claim about Jesus. (3:20)
 - Then, Jesus' "So" response to those claims. (3:23)
 - Finally, the "Then" transition back to the original narrative. (3:31)

Primary Structures

1. Intercalation with Contrast

The main narrative here is Jesus continues to draw crowds, that cause His own family and the teachers of the law lay charges against Him. Set in the middle of this narrative is a teaching of Jesus that addresses these charges. (3:23-30)

- A. 3:20-22 Jesus enter a house, crowds gather, family and religious leaders accuse Him of being possessed.
- B. 3:23-30 Jesus gives parable in response to the accusations.
- A¹. 3:31-35 Jesus' family then arrives and He claims whoever does God's will is His real family.

Evidence for Contrast

The way the B narrative explains the A is through contrast. There are two responses to Jesus: blasphemy or forgiveness.

A. His family and the teachers 3:21-22 Family/Teachers Respond to Jesus with Accusations.	B. Vs. 3:28-29 Blasphemy or Forgiveness	A¹. His Disciples/the crowd 3:34-35 Those with Jesus are His family
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What is the main narrative? (ID)

What is the intercalated narrative? (ID)

What are the contrasted elements? (ID)

How do these two narrative work together? (Means)
 Who does the author involve in each narrative? (Means)
 How does the Contrast tie these two narratives together? (Means)
 What is the point that these two narratives are making together? (Implications)

2. Causation with Interrogation

Cause	Effect/Question	Answer
2:20 Jesus draws a crowd	2:21-22 Family/Teachers accuse Him. Implied question of who He is	3:23-30 Jesus responds by discrediting and revealing

Evidence for Interrogation

The effect involves an accusation/question to which Jesus responds with the answer. Accusations from His family/teachers have to do with a misunderstanding/fear of who He is, that Jesus responds to in a parable.

Question: 3:21-22 The effect of accusing Him displays their misunderstanding or questioning of who He is.

Answer: 3:23-30 To which Jesus responds by:

1. Discrediting their accusation (3:23-26)
2. Revealing the real motives behind their accusation: their fear of Him (3:27-30)

What is the cause? (ID)

What is the effect? (ID)

What is the question? (ID)

What is the answer? (ID)

How does the effect flow from the cause? (Means)

How are the effect and question tied together? (Means)

What are the implications of the answer? (Implications)

Strategic Areas

- a) 3:28-29 Jesus' answer of the two possible responses to Him of blasphemy or forgiveness, within the intercalated narrative reveals the contrast in this section.
- b) 3:21-22 The accusations/misunderstanding about Jesus as a result of the crowds that gather around Him display the cause and effect relationship and also introduce the question of who He is.
 3:30 Jesus answering the question generated from the effect of 3:21-22

Additional Observations

1. Secondary Structures:

- The recurrence of a crowd gathered around Jesus at the beginning (3:20) and the end of the passage (3:32).
- Recurrence of “divided against” and “cannot stand” within Jesus’ Parable. (3:24-26)
- Recurrence of “Mother and Brother” right at the end of the segment. (3:31-35)
- Comparison of the strong man to Jesus? (3:27)

2. The intercalated narrative drives a wedge between those who are with Jesus and responding to Him and those who believe they know best about Him. The prior section introduces His disciples and this section displays the difference between His disciples, those who gather around Him and learn from Him, and those who believe they know Him (family teachers).

Interaction with Secondary Sources

“C. Jesus, His Family, and Beelzebul (3:20-35).” *Mark*, by Robert H. Stein, Baker Academic, 2010, pp. 177–190.

Stein divides this passage as follows:

3:20	3:21	3:22	3:30	3:31	3:35
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1. The main difference in our divisions is verse 3:22, Stein put it with the intercalated narrative and I included it with the introduction. My main reasoning for this was because, at least in my translation, verse 22 starts with “And.” Which I saw as linking 21 and 22 together, also 3:23 starts with “So” which I thought of as responding to the verses prior and thus beginning the next section.
2. Stein sees intercalation in this passage as well: “Mark probably intended his readers to see 3:31-35 as a continuation of 3:20-21, as a result it is an example of a “Markan Sandwich.” (178)
3. Stein also seems to agree that Jesus is contrasting His actually family with God’s family (or disciples as I put it): “followed by the resumption of the story about the unbelief of Jesus’s family and teaching concerning what it means to be part of God’s true family.” (179)
4. Stein doesn’t focus on the explicitly on Causation but he does recognize the Interrogation that happens in response to the cause and effect found in the introduction of this segment. In which the “scribes from Jerusalem show a similar but more hostile misunderstand of Jesus’s ministry.” In response, “Jesus provides a defense”... “and counters the charges of His

opponents by pointing out that they are the ones guilty of blasphemy.” (179)

5. Stein’s main focus is on the intercalation and contrast of the two responses to Jesus found in 3:28-29; “Although not mentioned by Jesus, the repentance and faith He preached will always result in forgiveness. The horror of the unpardonable sin is that prohibits the possibility of such repentance and faith.” (190)

“Mark.” *Mark*, by R. Alan. Culpepper, Smyth & Helwys, 2007, pp. 73–96.

1. Culpepper divides the section as follows:

3:20	3:21	3:22	3:30	3:31	3:35
A ¹ House, Crowd, Family		B The scribes		A ¹ House, Crowd, Family	

2. Like Stein’s division, he placed 3:22 in with the ‘B’ narrative whereas I did not. I struggled with where to place this verse but my reasoning can be seen above. (Stein, 1.)

3. Culpepper also views this section as Intercalation or using the “Markan Sandwich.” (113)

4. Culpepper also saw the contrast that is present in this passage. He describes it as “a scene in which Mark depicts the response of various groups to Jesus: the crowd that thronged around him; his family, who sought to protect him from himself; the scribes from Jerusalem; and his true family, those who do the will of God.” (112)

5. Culpepper illustrates the cause and effect relationship happening by saying that “scribes [were] sent from Jerusalem—presumably to investigate Jesus’ activities” (114), and “The accusations of the scribes from Jerusalem set up Jesus’ response” (115). This illustrates not only the causation but also the interrogation happening in this section. The scribes were sent because of what Jesus was doing (attracting crowds) and that their accusations moved into Jesus’ response.

6. Outside of the “Markan Sandwich” there isn’t much explicit mention of structure in Culpepper’s commentary. However, I felt that he was describing the same structures that I was seeing, just in different words.

- Brief mention of intercalation (113)
- But a lot more focus on the contrast as well as the cause and effect relationship. (112-115)