

Segment Survey - Mark 3:20-35

1. Major Divisions

3:20		Jesus faces opposition on two fronts				3:35	
3:20	3:21	3:22	3:22	3:23	3:30	3:31	3:35
Jesus' family opposes Jesus		The TL oppose Jesus		Jesus responds to TL		Jesus responds to his family	

*TL - Teachers of the Law

- I divided the segment into four sections based on two conflicts, each conflict being composed of a confrontation and response.

2. Primary Structures and Interpretive Questions

Primary Structure 1: Intercalation

Jesus and Family Pt. 1	Jesus and TL	Jesus and Family Pt. 2
3:21 - Jesus's family goes to take charge of Jesus	3:22 - TL claim Jesus is possessed by Beelzebub	3:31 - Jesus's mother and brothers arrive at the house to take charge of Jesus
	3:23 - Jesus responds to the TLs in a parable	3:33-34 - Jesus responds to his mother and brothers presence and intent to take charge of him by saying whoever does God's will is his brother, sister and mother
	3:24 - Jesus explains that he cannot be possessed by a demon bc/ a kingdom divided cannot stand	

What stories are told in this segment? (Identification)

What does the outer story mean? What does the inner mean? What does the splitting of the inner story mean? What does the surrounding the inner story by another story mean? (definition)

Why does the author place the inner story in the middle of the outer story? Why does the author place the outer story around the inner story? (reasons)

What implications are drawn from these stories being intercalated? (implications)

Primary Structure 2: Comparison

Jesus's Family	The Teachers of the Law
3:21 - Jesus's family goes to take charge of Jesus	3:22 - TL declare that Jesus is possessed by Beelzebub
3:21 - Jesus's family accuse Jesus of being out of his mind	3:30 - TL were saying Jesus had an impure spirit
3:35 - Jesus responds to his family by saying whoever does God's will is his brother, sister and mother	3:29 - Jesus tells the TL whoever blasphemes the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven and are guilty of an eternal sin

In what ways are Jesus's family and the TL the same? In what ways are they different? In what ways is Jesus's response to the TLs and his family the same? In what ways is his response to the TLs and his family different? (Identification)

What do their similarities mean? What do their differences mean? (definition)

Why does the author draw attention to these similarities and differences? (reasons)

What implications are drawn from these similarities and differences? (implications)

Primary Structure 3: Causation

Cause		Effect
3:20 - Jesus enters a house	→	3:20 - Crowds assemble at the house
3:21 - Crowds assemble at a house to see Jesus	→	3:21 - Jesus's family responds to Jesus's fame by deciding to go and take charge of him and declaring that he is out of his mind
3:22 - TL come from Jerusalem accusing Jesus of casting out demons under the power/authority of Beelzebub, the prince of demons	→	3:23-29 - Jesus calls them over and speaks in parables. Jesus explains that satan can't oppose Satan bc/ then he would undermine himself. Jesus tells a parable of how to steal from a strong person, first you must tie them up. Jesus tells them there is no forgiveness

		for the person who blasphemes the Holy Spirit.
3:31-32 - Jesus's mother and brothers arrive at the house and attempt to take charge of Jesus	→	3:33-35 - Jesus stays in the house with the crowd and explains to them that his family is whoever does the will of God

In what ways does Jesus cause a reaction? In what ways does Jesus's family react to him? In what ways do the TL react to Jesus? (Identification)

What do Jesus's actions mean? What does his family's reactions mean? What does the TL's reactions mean? (definition)

Why does the author draw attention to these actions and reactions? (reasons)

What implications are drawn from these actions and reactions? (implications)

3. Strategic Areas

3:21-22 - Verse 21 details a key reaction to Jesus's ministry that serves as the intro to the outer story in the intercalation and a direct comparison to the TL's reaction to Jesus in v. 22. Verse 22 details a key reaction to Jesus's ministry that serves as the intro to the inner story in the intercalation and a direct comparison to Jesus's families reaction to Jesus in v. 21

3:29, 35 - Key moment of causation and comparison as Jesus responds to the TLs and his family.

4. Observations

- a. There is a recurrence of opposition to Jesus in the two stories in this segment
 - i. (v. 21) Jesus's family sets out to take charge of Jesus
 - ii. (v. 22) The TL accuse Jesus of being possessed by Beelzebub
 1. Although the theme of opposition recurs in this segment, it is clear that the author is comparing the opposition Jesus is receiving from his family with the opposition from the TL. The opposition in this segment is therefore better understood as comparison which is why I didn't include it as a primary structure.
- b. Recurrence of the word house
 - i. (v. 20) Jesus is again teaching in a house
 - ii. (v. 25-28) Parable of someone breaking into a strong man's house
 - iii. (v. 21, 31, 33) Explicit mention of Jesus's family (mother, brothers) [v. 35 mention of Jesus's spiritual family} - although house is not mentioned outright, the naming of familial relationships can be understood as drawing our attention to Jesus's household.
 1. I am not sure what significance this holds. It is striking that Jesus chose to tell a parable that was set in a house to talk about confronting demonic powers while teaching in a house and

especially when that story is sandwiched between the beginning and end of a story about Jesus's household. It is worth mentioning in the observation segment but given the ambiguity of the house theme I didn't include it as a primary structure.

5. Interaction with Secondary Sources

Garland, David E. *Mark: from Biblical Text-- to Contemporary Life*. Zondervan, 1996.

- "This segment is the first example of the Markan technique of bracketing (intercalation or 'sandwiching'), where the narration begins with one story but is interrupted by another before it is concluded" (Garland 130).
 - My assessment is that Garland is absolutely right, this is a classic example of intercalation. Although inclusio and chiasm also serve as a bracketing technique, this Garland is right in identifying it as intercalation because one story is abruptly interrupted for another to fit in before the original story is completed. Inclusio brackets using like terms which is not what we find in this text. Chiasm brackets the text but has more layers than we find here, this segment only has an outer and inner layer.

Donahue, John R., and Daniel J. Harrington. *The Gospel of Mark*. Liturgical Press, 2005.

- Donahue and Harrington argue that the mentioning of Jerusalem in v. 22 is foreshadowing of Jesus' crucifixion.
 - "Mention of "Jerusalem" here anticipates the place of Jesus' crucifixion" (Donahue 129).
 - The authors do not go on to claim that the foreshadowing here is proof that this segment is "Preparation" they could have made that case. Not only is Jerusalem foreshadowing, the parable of tying up the strong man in order to plunder his house is a clear reference to Christus Victor, which again points to the work of the cross, a work that will be realized in Jerusalem.
 - One could make the case that this whole segment is preparation because not only is there the aforementioned of Jerusalem and the Christus Victor Atonement motif, there is also the fact that Jesus's family's opposition to his ministry foreshadows his later abandonment by both his friends and family during the passion. While this could be one of the primary structures it is a stretch and the segment is better understood through the lens of comparison, causation and intercalation.

Lane, William L. *The Gospel According to Mark*. Eerdmans, 1974.

- "The insertion of the incident Involving the scribes from Jerusalem between the earlier and later phases of the family narrative is deliberate. It suggests that those in Jesus's family we declare that he is mad (Ch. 3:21) are not unlike the scribes who attribute his extraordinary powers to an alliance with Beelzebub, the prince of demons (Ch. 3:22)" (Lane 137).
 - Lane is right on. His note that the use of intercalation is to serve to strengthen the

comparison between Jesus's family and the TL is what I also noticed in the text. Although I held them as two separate Primary structures, Lane sees the intercalation serving the comparison structure, either way the point remains, Mark is inserting one story of opposition inside another story of opposition to compare how Jesus is opposed on multiple fronts.