

June 10, 2018

Even when your family doesn't get it (#throwback)

Mark 3:20-35

1/4

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## PODCAST START:

[intro music]

Brian: Welcome to the Queer Theology podcast!

Fr. Shay: Where each episode, we take a queer look at the week's lectionary readings. We're the cofounders of QueerTheology.com and the hosts for this podcast. I'm Father Shay Kearns —

B: And I'm Brian G. Murphy. Hello hello hello and welcome to the second ever throwback episode of the Queer Theology podcast! This time we're doing it as an additional second bonus episode for the week – so this week you get *two* podcast episodes on the lectionary for this upcoming Sunday. This lectionary that you're going to hear today is from Mark 3:20-35, and it originally aired back in 2015.

But before we jump into the throwback episode, if the Queer Theology podcast is something that resonates with you, something that you enjoy, we would love your help in making the podcast reach even more people. You can do that quickly, simply and for free by leaving a review on iTunes. You can go to [QueerTheology.com/review](http://QueerTheology.com/review) to leave a review. When you leave a review, something with the algorithms makes it more likely to come up in the search results for other people. So let us know what you think about the podcast; you can give us your honest thoughts. Again, you can go to [QueerTheology.com/review](http://QueerTheology.com/review) to leave a review of this podcast and help more folks find out about the queer gospel. So without further ado, here's today's episode!

[transition music]

FS: Welcome to the Reading Queerly queer theology podcast, where each weeks, your hosts Brian Murphy and Shay Kearns will offer a reflection on the week's lectionary readings.

B: Welcome back! Today we are looking at the lectionary passage for Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup> [2015]. We're going to be looking at the Mark 3:20-35 passage. It's a little long, so we'll put a link to it in the description, but Jesus has come back to his hometown – that's the one.

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[not read aloud]

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

So Jesus called them over to him and began to speak to them in parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. 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. Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin."

He said this because they were saying, "He has an impure spirit."

Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you."

"Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked. Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother."  
[NRSV]

So, Shay, I know that you really like this passage. Why is that?

FS: I do. I find this one really interesting, for a lot of reasons. One is just the really human interactions between Jesus and his family. You know, at this point

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3/4

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Jesus has been getting some popularity, and along with popularity, especially when you're in an empire that's controlled by people who are not about justice, and you start speaking out about justice when you get a lot of attention, it also brings about some tension. And we see that in this passage, where people are thinking that Jesus has gone out of his mind, and his family comes to bring him home. I love this interaction between them. The fact that even Jesus's parents didn't really 'get' him, they didn't really understand him or his mission, and they just wanted to keep him safe and bring him home – I appreciate that about his family.

And then I also appreciate his emphasis that his work was important and that he needed to continue it, even if his family didn't understand. I think, for those of us who have remained in the church and have sometimes dealt with tensions with our family around our activism and around our work around queer theology – this passage, to me, is really comforting and really inspiring. How about for you?

B: When I came out, my family at first didn't 'get' it and were not super supportive and didn't want to talk about it. A few years after I came out, I got involved with faith-based activism, and they *really* didn't get that. They were like, "Why are you doing this? Can't you just live your life? We're okay with the gay thing, but just do *you*, don't make a thing of it." Right? You know. I think that this experience that Jesus is having is something that lots of queer folks have in their own lives. It's just really cool to see our own stories reflected in scripture and to remember that, like, we're already there.

The part for me that jumps out is when people were saying, "He's gone out of his mind." Something about that just really resonates with me. I know that my friend, author Shane Claiborne, has this saying – 'it can feel like you're going sane in an insane world.' I sort of feel like, once I see how LGBT oppression and liberation is bound up with race issues and economic issues and class issues, and I see the ways in which religion is used both as a tool of oppression and also a tool of liberation, I just – it's so impossible for me to unsee the ways in which these forces work in the world.

And also, as someone who's been doing this sort of work for a decade now, I can see so clearly the work that works, and how progress happens and how justice happens. I remember, years ago, not that I'm a big fan of [laughs] marriage equality anymore, but years ago when I was doing marriage equality work, people thought it was silly and a waste of time. They didn't get what we were doing. And now it's like, we will possibly have nationwide marriage equality within the next month. [2018 spoiler alert: it happened June 26, 2015!!] And so, it's also

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4/4

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so easy for me to be like, what do you *mean* you don't get it? Or, this isn't right, or this isn't working. Like, how can you not see it as I've seen it? I've seen what works. And so I sort of resonate with this idea that sometimes people, when you do this work, think that you're a little out there.

FS: Yeah, and I think that that can be a really lonely and isolating place and feeling. I think that this ending piece, where Jesus says, you know, 'whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother,' and the fact that for those of us who are on the front lines doing this justice work, doing this theology work, we have to claim people as family who are also in the struggle with us as a support system. And so that we don't feel like we're the only ones who are speaking truth, so that we don't feel like we're the only ones who are really out there and risking it all.

[outro music]

B: The Queer Theology podcast is just one of many things that we do at QueerTheology.com, which provides resources, community and inspiration for LGBTQ Christians and straight cisgender supporters.

FS: To dive into more of the action, visit us at QueerTheology.com. You can also connect with us online on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Instagram.

B: We'll see you next week.

**PODCAST END**

Transcript by Taylor Walker