

Coming Into Focus: Insiders, Mark 3:13-4:34

Small Group Discussion Guide—1/27/2019

Has there ever been a time when you felt like an insider – maybe you enjoyed special privileges, attention, or access? Conversely, in what situations do you tend to most feel like an outsider?

Read Mark 3:13-19

- Why do you think Jesus gives alternate names to some of the disciples?
- What does Jesus's selection criteria for his 12 closest friends tell you about God, specifically about what's important to God? How does this compare to what's important to society (or what was important at that time)?
- Can you think of any applications of this truth for you today?

Read Mark 3:20-35

- God has always placed a high value on respecting one's parents/family (He even made it a commandment!). How does this fact jive with the scene here, where Jesus basically ignores his family? What do we (again) learn about what's most important to God?
- Has there ever been a time where you've felt torn between wanting to please your parents/family and God? Does this passage shed any light on how to deal with those situations when they arise?
- Jesus makes it very clear that certain people are not insiders, even if they feel entitled to be an insider. How does this make you feel?
- If it's not the people with all the "right" credentials that are insiders with God, then who does God consider an insider? How does this make you feel?
- Assuming that we all want to be an insider with God, are there any changes to your attitudes or habits that you want to make, in light of this passage?

Read Mark 4:1-9, 13-20

- Think of some of the characters from today's passages – the disciples, the Pharisees, etc. Which type of soil do you think best describes each of them?
- What does this parable teach us about God's heart for us? What does He want from us, if we are to be an insider?
- Are there any examples you can think of, of times when you've seen someone who seems to be "good soil" – someone well-known, or in your spheres, or maybe someone in your small group? If so, how would you describe that person - how was their overall demeanor, countenance, etc.?
- Pastor Josh summarized these passages by saying, "Insiders with God are people for whom friendship with Jesus takes precedence over everything else." Where are you in regard to friendship with Jesus—is it something you're considering? Something that has become central to your life?

Pray as a group, for one another, thanking God that through Jesus He made a way for us all to be insiders with Him!