

**ARE YOU CRAZY?**

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church**  
Hallandale, FL

**St. Mark's Lutheran Church**  
Coral Gables, FL

**St. Timothy Lutheran Church**  
Miami Gardens, FL

**June 10, 2018 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

**Children's Message:** *Don't You Want To Be Part Of Jesus' Family?*

**Object:** A picture of your family, maybe even pictures of your extended family

**Scripture:** Mark 3:20-35

*Pro: Shine. Jesus Shine*

*Rec: Be Exalted!*

Good morning, boys and girls. This morning we're going to be talking about families. I brought a picture of my family to show you. (Briefly identify each person in your picture) Who are some of the people in your family? (Allow 3 or 4 answers) Did you know that Jesus is a member of your family, too?

In our Bible story today, Jesus is traveling around his town preaching and telling people about God. Jesus' family does not believe that he is the Son of God, so they are embarrassed by what he is doing. They try to make Jesus go home and stop preaching. And, you know what Jesus says to them? He says, everyone who loves God, and does God's work, is a member of Jesus' family. Jesus has a mommy and a daddy, and brothers and sisters, just like you and I do. But, Jesus says that anyone, anyone who loves God and does the work of God is also a member of his family, too. Don't you want to be in Jesus' family? I know I do. Because we are members of Jesus' family, let's remember this week to love God, and to do the good things that God wants us to do.

DEAR LORD: Because we are part of your family, help us to love you and serve you always. Amen.

AND, MAY THE PEACE OF GOD WHICH PASSES ALL HUMAN UNDERSTANDING  
KEEP YOUR HEARTS AND MINDS THROUGH CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.

President John F. Kennedy's used to love to hear his grandfather Fitzgerald tell stories about how he and friends would challenge one another on the way home from school to climb over stone walls along the lanes of the countryside. However, there were times when young Fitzgerald and the other boys were hesitant to climb over the walls. To motivate themselves to take the risk, they would toss their caps over the wall. You see, they knew they dare not go home without their caps, so by tossing their caps over the wall, they were sure to go over the wall to get their caps before returning home.

**Well, there are times when all of us long to toss our caps over the wall.** There are times when we hunger in our own way to be heroic - whether we want to change jobs, start our own business, go back to school, or whatever. There come those times in life when we feel the need to make a change. I know of 1 young man in particular who decided to make such a change. He owned a successful small business which had been left to him by his father. He was secure, he was liked and respected by his friends and neighbors, and he was meeting his responsibilities. But, he knew this was not where he belonged. He felt called to a ministry of teaching, preaching, and healing. So, he threw his cap over the wall. At 1<sup>st</sup>, he met with spectacular success and his reputation spread with amazing speed. But, as his popularity increased, so did the number of his critics especially in his home town. This man who threw his cap over the wall was Jesus.

**Of course, no one has ever accomplished anything note-worthiness without critics.** Toss your cap over a wall and you learn very quickly who your true friends are. In today's lesson from Mark's Gospel, Jesus is still in the early part of his ministry. His followers are growing and momentum is building toward a magnificent ministry. But, almost immediately he runs into opposition - 1<sup>st</sup> from his own family. Mark tells us that Jesus' family says to him, "*You must be out of your mind.*" Can you imagine that? Jesus' family wanted him to shut down his ministry and come home. Isn't that the way life is sometimes? Sometimes it is those closest to us who have the hardest time coming to grips with our dreams and aspirations. Often husbands and wives have that same problem.

I like the story about the 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher who took her pupils on a field trip to the zoo. Each child was given a turn at guessing the names of various animals. The camel, lion, giraffe, bear, and elephant all were named correctly. Then, it was this little boy's turn to answer. The teacher pointed to a "deer" and asked him if he knew what it was. He hesitated for a long time, looking unsure of himself. So, the teacher tried to prompt him by asking him to think of a name his mother calls his father at home. The boy brightened up immediately: "*So, that's what a baboon looks like!*" I won't ask you if your spouse has ever called you a baboon. But, I can assure you that anyone who seeks to make a dramatic change in their life is going to encounter criticism and tension. And, yes that criticism often comes from someone in our very own family. Often, it comes from colleagues. In Jesus' case, he got it criticism from his family and the teachers of the law who had come down from Jerusalem. With a poisonous sneer, the teachers of the law said of Jesus, "*He is possessed by Beelzebul! By the prince of demons he is driving*

*out demons.*” That’s the way life is. Start to make waves and others begin to belittle your work or may not even show you respect when you know what you are talking about.

Personally, it makes me feel good when someone comes up to me after worship and says, *“Pastor, that was a great sermon today,”* or *“Pastor, may I have a copy of your message today.”* But, it’s quite interesting, nowhere in the Bible does it say anyone came up to Jesus saying, *“That was a wonderful lecture you gave today,”* or *“Jesus, you have 1 of the best minds in all of Galilee.”* What they did say was this: *“Jesus, you have gone existemi,”* meaning, *“Sir, you have gone raving mad.”* Did you hear that in this morning’s Gospel? Read verse 21 again with me from our Gospel: *“When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, ‘He has gone out of his mind.’”*

Well, let’s you and me right now see if we can figure out just how crazy Jesus was. Let’s pretend Jesus is standing before us physically in this BLC//SMLC/STLC this morning, and let’s say to Jesus: *“Jesus, say something rational to us.”* Jesus answers, *“Alright. Check this out. 1) You can only grow up and enter the kingdom of God by becoming a child again. 2) Want to win? You do so by losing. 3) You “get” by giving. You “live” by dying.”* And, we respond, *“Wow. That sure doesn’t sound rational to us.”* Or, we might say: *“Jesus, say something thoughtful, but make it something that’s practical so we can use it in our daily lives.”* Jesus responds like is: *“Alright. 1) Blessed are the poor. 2) Happy are the hungry. 3) Oh, how fortunate are you who are divorced or unemployed. 4) Congratulations to those of you spiritually poor, those of you who don’t have much spirit.”* And, we say to Jesus, *“What? Blessed? Fortunate? Happy? Are you out of your ever-loving mind, Jesus – for real? Where you and I come from, when you are unemployed, people treat you like you have some sort of disease. They don’t want to catch what you’ve got. In our world, those who are poor or divorced are thought to be failures.”* Jesus replies, *“You don’t get it, I am trying to teach you a different sort of mind.”*

Well, here is the point: you and I all too often measure success by how much money we have in the bank or how many cars or houses we own. But, Jesus is telling us, he has a different mind, a different understanding – a spiritual way of thinking. Remember when St. Paul said to us, *“Have this mind in you which was in Christ”?* He doesn’t say, *“Try to have a right mind,”* or *“Have a mind of this world.”* Rather, he says, *“Have Jesus’ mind.”* In assessing the soundness of Jesus’ mind, I remind you that whether Jesus’ way, the way of the cross, is seen as reasonable or crazy depending on what you and I believe to be reasonable. For some folks, it takes a course in college or a life changing event to make them look at life differently. For those of us who gather in a congregation like BLC/SMLC/SLC each Sunday morning, I’d like to think it is our baptism that makes us look at life differently. What I am getting at is this – it is always easy to discount what someone else is saying to us by saying, *“He or she must be crazy!”* But, what Jesus is saying to us today and every time we read Scripture is this, ***“I am***

***not crazy, I just have a different mind, and I want you to have a different mind also, a mind that does not think the way the world thinks, but a mind that is born from above”.***

Folks back in the day did not mind Jesus preaching – what he said made a lot of sense. They did not mind him casting out demons or raising people from the dead, which was a nice thing for him to do. But, when he insanely gave everything he had hoped to do into the hands of 12 uneducated apostles who followed after him, ...well, the world with 1 voice said, “*He must be out of his mind.*” Clearly, Jesus had come proclaiming the Word with the idea of getting you and me, and all of his followers involved in enacting a very different sort of reality, another set of truths from outside this world counter to the expectations of this world. That reality is named, “*kingdom of God*”- a place, a system of values, a set of assumptions and expectations that is counter to the way this world works. But, they came along and dismissed Jesus by saying, “*He is out of his mind.*” And, to be honest with you, many Christians, maybe many of you here this morning, are afraid to say a prayer out loud in Church, give a testimony, lift your hands up in worship, or tell others about Christ because when you pray, testify, proclaim God’s Word, ...you might be afraid others might say, “*You are out of your mind.*” It is strange - we have no problem going out on the crazy streets of Miami to drive our cars, standing up for our rights in public places, or arguing with clerks at the Walmart to give us back our money when they shortchange us, but we are afraid to say a prayer aloud, share a testimony, lift our hands in worship, or tell someone about Jesus. The point of today’s Gospel is, if we are going to be serious about our faith, we must be like Jesus – take on another frame of reference, another consciousness, a new “*kingdom of God*” way of thinking.

**Sisters and brothers, if we are serious about our faith, it’s time we all throw our caps over the wall.** Do not confuse discipleship with respectability or discipleship with being a member in the church. There is no risk involved in being respectable or being a church member of BLC/SMLC/STLC. But, to be a disciple of Jesus, to move from a nominal belief to a radical conviction, to move from a nodding acquaintance with God to a complete commitment of one’s life to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, ... now let me tell you, that may be a challenge. But, it is a challenge Jesus is calling you and me to live up to today! Isn’t it time, sisters and brothers, to not only throw our caps over the wall, but to actually throw our hearts over the altar so that we may follow the One who actually can save us? Jesus threw his cap over the wall and in spite of the criticism, he allowed nothing or no one to distract him from his call. Yes, it is time for us to toss our caps over the wall or however you want to say it, to never to be distracted from Jesus in this lifetime. throw your hat over the wall toda!. Better yet, throw your heart over the altar, pray, tell others about Jesus, and be committed to Jesus today, now, and forever more. Amen.

