SUNDAY THEOLOGY TALKS

The Rev. Dr. Luigi Gioia, *Theologian In Residence*

The Gospel of Mark: A Journey to Recognition

Mark vividly tells the story of disciples who follow Jesus without ever fully understanding him. Through movement, conflict, and irony, his Gospel portrays discipleship as a journey toward recognition, culminating at the cross and continuing in our lives.

1. A Reticent and Ironic Jesus (October 18)

Jesus remains strangely elusive throughout Mark's Gospel. His identity can be recognized only gradually, as his relationship with the disciples deepens and they learn to place their trust in him.

2. Blindness and Misunderstanding (October 25)

The inability of the disciples to understand Jesus is one of Mark's most powerful and unsettling themes, and yet his most reassuring.

3. Restless Discipleship (November 1)

Following Jesus in Mark means embracing uncertainty, leaving familiar ground behind, and discovering that faith is learned along the way.

4. A New Type of Community (November 8)

Jesus promotes a community shaped not by status or power but by the conviction that greatness is measured by the capacity to serve.

5. The Instant of Recognition (November 15)

The decisive moment of recognition occurs at the cross, and the Gospel's unfinished ending invites us to embark on the disciples' same journey.

GUEST SPEAKER

The Very Rev. Cynthia Briggs Kittredge,
Dean Emerita, Seminary of the Southwest

1. **Trees Walking: Imperfect Sight, Unfinished Faith in the Gospel of** Mark (December 13)

   The "two-try" healing of the blind person in Mark 8:22-26 offers paradoxical insights on the gospel for our human life on the road.

2. **How to Be Human: Mark's Good News (June** 13)

   While the gospel of Mark certainly does proclaim the identity of Jesus, the focus of the story may be as much about how to be human.

STRUCTURE AND OUTLINE OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK

1. Who Is This Man? (1:1–3:35)
    - 1.1. The beginning of the Good News (1:1–13)
    - 1.2. The proclamation of the Kingdom and the calling of the first disciples (1:14–20)
    - 1.3. A day in Capernaum: teaching, healing, and exorcisms (1:21–45)
    - 1.4. The first controversies: forgiveness, sinners, fasting, and Sabbath (2:1–3:6)
    - 1.5. The crowds, the Twelve, and the question of Jesus' identity (3:7–35)
2. Seeing Without Understanding (4:1–8:26)
    - 2.1. The parables of the Kingdom (4:1–34)
    - 2.2. The calming of the storm: “Who then is this?” (4:35–41)
    - 2.3. Power over evil, illness, and death (5:1–43)
    - 2.4. Rejection at Nazareth and the mission of the Twelve (6:1–30)
    - 2.5. The loaves, the sea, and the disciples' incomprehension (6:31–56)
    - 2.6. Purity, outsiders, and the boundaries of belonging (7:1–37)
    - 2.7. The second feeding and the warning against blindness (8:1–21)
    - 2.8. The gradual healing of a blind man (8:22–26)
3. Learning to Follow (8:27–10:52)
    - 3.1. Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi (8:27–30)
    - 3.2. The first passion prediction and the call to take up the cross (8:31–9:1)
    - 3.3. The Transfiguration (9:2–13)
    - 3.4. Faith, unbelief, and the healing of a boy (9:14–29)
    - 3.5. The second passion prediction: greatness and service (9:30–50)
    - 3.6. Marriage, children, and possessions (10:1–31)
    - 3.7. The third passion prediction: power and servanthood (10:32–45)
    - 3.8. Bartimaeus: seeing and following on the road (10:46–52)
4. The Kingdom and a New Human Community (11:1–13:37)
    - 4.1. The entry into Jerusalem (11:1–11)
    - 4.2. The fig tree and the cleansing of the Temple (11:12–25)
    - 4.3. The challenge to Jesus' authority (11:27–12:12)
    - 4.4. Caesar, resurrection, and the greatest commandment (12:13–34)
    - 4.5. The Messiah, the scribes, and the widow's offering (12:35–44)
    - 4.6. The destruction of the Temple and the coming crisis (13:1–23)
    - 4.7. The coming of the Son of Man and the call to vigilance (13:24–37)
5. The Cross: Recognition at Last (14:1–16:8)
    - 5.1. The anointing at Bethany and Judas' betrayal (14:1–11)
    - 5.2. The Last Supper (14:12–26)
    - 5.3. Gethsemane: prayer, abandonment, and arrest (14:27–52)
    - 5.4. Jesus before the council and Peter's denial (14:53–72)
    - 5.5. Jesus before Pilate (15:1–20)
    - 5.6. The crucifixion and death of Jesus: the centurion's recognition (15:21–41)
    - 5.7. The burial of Jesus (15:42–47)
    - 5.8. The empty tomb: fear, silence, and the unfinished ending (16:1–8)

HISTORICAL AND LITERARY BACKGROUND

6. Date of composition
    - 6.1. Most scholars date the Gospel of Mark to approximately AD 65–75, with a date around AD 70 particularly common.
        - i. AD 64–68: The persecution of Christians under Nero, following the great fire of Rome in AD 64, provides a possible historical background for the Gospel's emphasis on suffering and persecution.
        - ii. AD 66–73: The First Jewish–Roman War forms an important context for the Gospel.
        - iii. AD 70: The Roman destruction of the Jerusalem Temple is especially relevant to Mark 13, where Jesus predicts the Temple's destruction.
    - 6.2. The central scholarly debate concerns whether Mark was written shortly before or shortly after AD 70. Mark 13 is a major consideration, but its interpretation does not settle the question.

7. Authorship
    - 7.1. The Gospel is anonymous. The author never identifies himself in the text.
    - 7.2. Early Christian tradition attributes it to John Mark, a figure mentioned in Acts (12:12, 12:25; 15:37–39), Colossians 4:10, and 1 Peter 5:13.
    - 7.3. The earliest significant testimony comes from Papias of Hierapolis (early second century), whose account is preserved by Eusebius (Ecclesiastical History 3.39.15). According to Papias:
        - i. Mark served as Peter's interpreter.
        - ii. He recorded accurately what he remembered of Peter's teaching about Jesus.
        - iii. His account was not necessarily arranged in chronological order.
    - 7.4. This tradition established the association between Mark's Gospel and the apostle Peter.
    - 7.5. Modern scholarship: The identification of the evangelist with John Mark remains uncertain. Most scholars distinguish the anonymous author of the Gospel from the later traditions about his identity, although some defend the traditional attribution.

8. Intended audience
    - 8.1. The traditional view places Mark's community in Rome, possibly among Christians experiencing persecution.
    - 8.2. Several features suggest that the Gospel was written primarily for Greek-speaking Christians, many of whom were unfamiliar with Jewish customs:
        - i. Aramaic expressions are translated: *Talitha koum* (5:41), *Ephphatha* (7:34), *Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani* (15:34).
        - ii. Jewish practices are explained: particularly the purification customs described in 7:3–4.
        - iii. Latin vocabulary appears: including legion (5:9), denarius (12:15), and centurion (15:39).
        - iv. Suffering and persecution feature prominently: especially 8:34–38 and 13:9–13.
    - 8.3. However, Rome is not certain. Syria and other eastern Mediterranean settings have also been proposed.
    - 8.4. The intended readers were probably communities of Christians, including Gentile believers, who needed to understand what following a crucified Messiah meant in a world marked by hostility, uncertainty, and suffering.

9. Mark's place among the four Gospels
    - 9.1. Mark is generally considered the earliest of the four canonical Gospels.

i. Mark: approximately AD 65–75.
ii. Matthew: approximately AD 80–90.
iii. Luke: approximately AD 80–90.
iv. John: approximately AD 90–100.

9.2. According to the widely accepted hypothesis of Markan priority, Matthew and Luke used Mark as a principal narrative source.

9.3. Mark is especially important for understanding how the early Christian proclamation of Jesus developed into the literary form we call a Gospel.

MARK AND THE INVENTION OF THE GOSPEL AS A LITERARY GENRE

10. One of the most remarkable things about Mark is that he was the first Christian author to transform the proclamation of Jesus Christ into a sustained narrative of Jesus' life, ministry, death, and resurrection. In doing so, he established the literary model that Matthew, Luke, and John would subsequently develop.

11. Before Mark: The Gospel was a proclamation, not a book

11.1. The Greek word euangelion (εὐαγγέλιον) means good news or glad tidings.

11.2. In the Greco-Roman world, the term could refer to announcements of victories, imperial accessions, or other events regarded as beneficial to the public. In the Greek Old Testament, especially Isaiah 40:9 and 52:7, the language of good news announces God's saving intervention and reign.

11.3. For the earliest Christians, the Gospel was not originally a literary work. It was the proclamation (kerygma) of what God had accomplished through Jesus Christ.

i. Paul, writing some twenty years before Mark, uses the word in this sense: "I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation" (Romans 1:16).
ii. Paul's Gospel is fundamentally a message about Jesus' death and resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:3–5), not a narrative of Jesus' life.

11.4. Mark's innovation was to turn this proclamation into a story.

12. What kind of literary genre did Mark create?

12.1. Scholars have long debated how the Gospels relate to ancient literary genres.

i. Ancient biography: the canonical Gospels belong broadly to the family of ancient biographies. *Like ancient biographies*, Mark concentrates on a central figure, his actions, words, character, and death. *Unlike modern biographies*, however, Mark provides virtually no information about Jesus' childhood, physical appearance, or psychological development.
ii. Jewish biblical narrative: Mark also draws heavily on the narrative conventions of Israel's Scriptures: prophetic stories, accounts of divine intervention, the Exodus, and the suffering of the righteous.

13. Mark's most original literary decision: making misunderstanding part of the story.

13.1. In ancient biographies, the central figure's character is often revealed through memorable actions and sayings.

13.2. Mark instead constructs a narrative in which *virtually everyone misunderstands the central character*.

i. The demons know Jesus' identity but are silenced.
ii. The crowds are astonished but fail to understand.
iii. His family questions his behavior.
iv. The religious authorities oppose him.
v. Even the disciples repeatedly misunderstand him.

13.3. The reader knows something from the opening verse that the characters in the narrative struggle to discover.

13.4. This creates a powerful form of dramatic irony.

13.5. The reader is drawn into the disciples' confusion and gradually discovers that even possessing the correct title—Messiah, Son of God—is insufficient without understanding the cross.

13.6. Mark is not merely transmitting information about Jesus. He is shaping the reader's capacity to recognize him.

14. A narrative whose climax changes the meaning of everything that precedes it

14.1. Mark's Gospel is structured around the Passion.

i. Already in Mark 3:6, the Pharisees and Herodians begin plotting Jesus' destruction.

ii. From 8:31 onward, Jesus repeatedly announces his coming death.

14.2. The crucifixion becomes the decisive interpretive moment:

i. "Truly this man was God's Son!" (15:39)

ii. The declaration comes from a Roman centurion, at the moment when Jesus appears utterly defeated.

iii. The identity announced in the opening verse is finally recognized at the cross.

14.3. The ending at 16:8 is equally remarkable.

i. The women flee the empty tomb, trembling and afraid, and say nothing to anyone.

ii. Although later manuscripts contain additional endings, the earliest recoverable text ends here.

iii. The story refuses the kind of resolution we might expect. Its conclusion leaves the reader with a question about what happens next.

15. Key points

15.1. *Mark transforms proclamation into narrative*. Christianity is not simply a collection of doctrines about Jesus but a story in which his identity is gradually disclosed.

15.2. *Mark transforms the reader into a participant*. Through irony, misunderstanding, and delayed recognition, readers are invited to undergo the same journey as the disciples.

15.3. *Mark makes the cross the key to understanding the entire story*. Everything Jesus says and does acquires its fullest meaning in the light of his death.

15.4. *Mark invents a way of telling the story of Jesus that corresponds to the way Jesus himself reveals his identity*: gradually, relationally, without coercion, and through a journey that demands the participation of those who follow him.

MARK'S LITERARY STYLE

16. One of the most striking features of Mark's Gospel is its extraordinary economy of language. At approximately 11,300 Greek words, it is by far the shortest of the four canonical Gospels. Matthew and Luke are each almost twice as long.

17. But Mark's brevity is not simply a matter of length.

17.1. It is a distinctive literary style: abrupt, elliptical, sometimes almost cryptic.

17.2. Mark often tells us what happens without explaining why, describes actions without interpreting them, and records extraordinary events without elaborating on their significance.

18. A Gospel in a hurry

18.1. Mark's narrative moves at remarkable speed. One of his favorite words is *euthys* (εὐθύς), meaning "immediately" or "straightaway," which occurs approximately forty times.

18.2. Events follow one another in rapid succession, often connected by the simple conjunction kai ("and").

18.3. Mark frequently uses the historical present, narrating past events as though they were happening before our eyes.

18.4. The effect is one of urgency. Jesus is constantly moving, teaching, healing, confronting, withdrawing. There is little time for reflection or explanation.

19. The absence of explanations: Mark often leaves crucial questions unanswered.

19.1. Jesus' baptism (1:9–11): The heavens are torn open, the Spirit descends, and a voice speaks. Mark offers no explanation of this extraordinary event.

19.2. The calling of the first disciples (1:16–20): Jesus says, "Follow me," and they immediately abandon their nets. We are told nothing about their previous acquaintance with Jesus, their motives, or their deliberations.

19.3. Jesus' family (3:21): They come to restrain him because people are saying, "He is out of his mind." Mark does not soften the disturbing implications.

19.4. Jesus' emotions (3:5): He looks around at his opponents with anger and grief. Mark records the emotion but does not explain it.

19.5. The young man who flees naked (14:51–52): An enigmatic detail, narrated in two verses and never mentioned again.

19.6. The ending (16:8): The women flee in terror and say nothing to anyone. No appearance of the risen Jesus, no reconciliation with the disciples, no final explanation.

20. A cryptic Jesus

20.1. He speaks in parables that even his disciples struggle to understand.

20.2. He performs miracles and then commands silence.

20.3. He withdraws from the crowds.

20.4. He refuses to answer certain questions.

20.5. His predictions of suffering bewilder those closest to him.

21. Brevity as a theological strategy

21.1. Mark refuses to explain everything to the reader. We are often given just enough information to recognize that something important has happened, but not enough to master its meaning.

21.2. This becomes especially clear when we compare Mark with Matthew and Luke, who frequently expand, clarify, or soften his narrative.

21.3. He does not provide a comprehensive explanation of Jesus' identity. Instead, he places us before actions, words, silences, and questions whose significance emerges only gradually.

21.4. The reader is not allowed to remain a detached observer who simply accumulates information about Jesus. The reader must learn to recognize him.

21.5. In this sense, Mark's literary method corresponds remarkably well to the pedagogy of Jesus himself:

i. neither offers an immediate, exhaustive explanation.

ii. Both require patience, attention, and a willingness to remain with questions that cannot yet be answered.

GOSPEL OF MARK

CHAPTER 1

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

> "Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
> who will prepare your way,
> 3 the voice of one crying in the wilderness:
> 'Prepare the way of the Lord,
> make his paths straight,'"

4 John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. 7 And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. 8 I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

The Baptism of Jesus

9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. 11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

The Temptation of Jesus

12 The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. 13 And he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And he was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to him.

Jesus Begins His Ministry

14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

16 Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and
Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they
were fishermen. 17 And Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I
will make you become fishers of men.”[f] 18 And immediately they
left their nets and followed him. 19 And going on a little farther,
he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who
were in their boat mending the nets. 20 And immediately he
called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with
the hired servants and followed him.

Jesus Heals a Man with an Unclean Spirit

21 And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the
Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching. 22 And
they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one
who had authority, and not as the scribes. 23 And immediately
there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And
he cried out, 24 “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth?
Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy
One of God.” 25 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and
come out of him!” 26 And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and
crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. 27 And they were
all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying,
“What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands
even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” 28 And at once his
fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region
of Galilee.

Jesus Heals Many

29 And immediately he left the synagogue and entered the
house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. 30 Now
Simon’s mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they
told him about her. 31 And he came and took her by the hand and
lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve
them.

32 That evening at sundown they brought to him all who
were sick or oppressed by demons. 33 And the whole city was
gathered together at the door. 34 And he healed many who were
sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons. And he
would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

Jesus Preaches in Galilee

35 And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark,
he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he
prayed. 36 And Simon and those who were with him searched for
him, 37 and they found him and said to him, “Everyone is looking
for you.” 38 And he said to them, “Let us go on to the next towns,
that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.” 39 And
he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues
and casting out demons.

Jesus Cleanses a Leper

40And a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said
to him, “If you will, you can make me clean.” 41Moved with pity,
he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, “I
will; be clean.” 42And immediately the leprosy left him, and he
was made clean. 43And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him
away at once, 44and said to him, “See that you say nothing to
anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your
cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to them.” 45But
he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the
news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but
was out in desolate places, and people were coming to him
from every quarter.

CHAPTER 2

Jesus Heals a Paralytic

1And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was
reported that he was at home. 2And many were gathered
together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door.
And he was preaching the word to them. 3And they came,
bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. 4And when they
could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the
roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let
down the bed on which the paralytic lay. 5And when Jesus saw
their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”
6Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their
hearts, 7“Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming!
Who can forgive sins but God alone?” 8And immediately Jesus,
perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within
themselves, said to them, “Why do you question these things in
your hearts? 9Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins
are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk’? 10But
that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to
forgive sins”—he said to the paralytic— 11“I say to you, rise, pick
up your bed, and go home.” 12And he rose and immediately
picked up his bed and went out before them all, so that they were
all amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like
this!”

Jesus Calls Levi

13He went out again beside the sea, and all the crowd was
coming to him, and he was teaching them. 14And as he passed
by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and
he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him.

15And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors
and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there
were many who followed him. 16And the scribes of the Pharisees,
when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors,
said to his disciples, “Why does he eat[b] with tax collectors and
sinners?” 17And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, “Those

who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

A Question About Fasting

18Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. And people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" 19And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day. 21No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the patch tears away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. 22And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins—and the wine is destroyed, and so are the skins. But new wine is for fresh wineskins."

Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath

23One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. 24And the Pharisees were saying to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" 25And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: 26how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?" 27And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. 28So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."

CHAPTER 3

A Man with a Withered Hand

1Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. 2And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. 3And he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come here." 4And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. 5And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. 6The Pharisees went out and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

A Great Crowd Follows Jesus

7Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea, and a great crowd followed, from Galilee and Judea 8and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and

Sidon. When the great crowd heard all that he was doing, they came to him. 9And he told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, lest they crush him, 10for he had healed many, so that all who had diseases pressed around him to touch him. 11And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." 12And he strictly ordered them not to make him known.

The Twelve Apostles

13And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. 14And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach 15and have authority to cast out demons. 16He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); 17James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); 18Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot,[b] 19and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

20Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. 21And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind."

Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit

22And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "by the prince of demons he casts out the demons." 23And he called them to him and said to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? 24If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. 26And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. 27But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.

28"Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, 29but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"— 30for they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

31And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. 32And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers[c] are outside, seeking you." 33And he answered them, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" 34And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 35For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother."