

# PROPER 5

Sunday between 5 and 11 June inclusive  
(if after Trinity Sunday)

## Thought for the day

Anyone who does God's will is considered a close family member of Jesus.

## Readings

1 Samuel 8:4-11 (12-15) 16-20 (11:14-15) or  
Genesis 3:8-15  
Psalm 138 or Psalm 130  
2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1  
Mark 3:20-35

## Aim

To look at the scribes' accusations and Jesus' response.

## Starter

Play 'netball' using a blow-up beach ball and a bucket or bin for the net. Play first with even sides, and then with everyone on the same side, and no opponents. Compare the scores!

## Teaching

It is so much easier to score goals when we don't have any opposition! Today we are going to look at some opposition Jesus was faced with, and how he dealt with it.

It wasn't just when Jesus was around that people hit against God's way of love. Read the passage from Genesis to see that, right from the beginning, people have been self-willed, and their sin creates a rift between themselves and God; they no longer feel comfortable in his company. That is just as true now; we only feel comfortable in God's company when we are choosing to face his way and are being honest with him. Otherwise we try to hide from him, and avoid his company.

Now read today's Gospel, looking out for any friction and opposition to his work. There are two main areas in this reading – the accusation of the scribes, and the concerned family, coming to 'take charge' of Jesus.

What do the scribes accuse Jesus of doing? (Casting out demons by the power of demons.) Would this make logical sense? How does Jesus respond to what they are saying about him? (If Satan was fighting against himself in that way, his power would crash.) Logic proves that Jesus cannot be in league with Satan if he is overcoming evil spirits in people.

What about his family – why have they come, and why doesn't Jesus rush off home with them as they would like? Having heard the reports of the crowds surrounding Jesus all the time, giving him no time even to eat, and all the casting-out of evil spirits, they are anxious for him and don't understand that his work on earth is very important, and needs to be done, even if it's sometimes dangerous. He can't spend his life living quietly at home with his immediate family, or the saving work would not get done.

Sometimes families have to share their loved ones with a wider circle of people, and Jesus wants to include as close family all those who are doing their best to live God's way. That is the 'family likeness' which marks many people out to be members of Jesus' family.

## Praying

Make me a channel of your peace:

Where there is hatred, let me bring your love.  
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord,  
and where there's doubt, true faith in you.

(Taken from the song by Sebastian Temple,  
based on the Prayer of St Francis  
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## Activities

On the sheet there is space to put in an imagined subscript of Jesus' family, in order to put Jesus' reply in context. They can also draw a cartoon to get at the meaning of the scribes' accusations and Jesus' response. Some comments by those struggling with family expectations and God's calling can be used as discussion starters.

## Discussion starters

1. It is quite an honour to be considered Jesus' 'close relatives! Do we behave as if this is true? Do we show any family likenesses?
2. What does it mean in practical terms to pray to God our Father: 'Let your will be done on earth as it is done in heaven'?

## Notes