

Daily Bible Study

“Without Honor ~ With Unbelief”

Mark 6:1-6

May 23-29, 2010

THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY – As we move along this week in our study of the Gospel of Mark we will take for our text, **Mark 6:1-6** and look at a lesson we are calling *“Without Honor ~ With Unbelief”*. If you remember back, when we left our text last time in **chapter 5** we saw revealed to us the power of Jesus in both the raising of Jairus’ dead daughter and as He traveled to Jairus’ house, He healed the woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years. After this all takes place we notice in the last phrase of **Mark 5:42**, Mark says, *“And they were overcome with great amazement”*. They were amazed at this work of Jesus as they had just witnessed. The Greek words here literally mean “to throw out of position, displace” and this is their mindset, they were “beside themselves”, “blown away” in their minds at what Jesus has just done in the demonstration of His power as Lord over all. There was an incredible curiosity and astonishment concerning Jesus as is evident from the massive crowds that followed Him. Tragically, curiosity, interest, and astonishment does not equate to saving faith. Just because you get a thrill watching or hearing about Jesus does not mean there is genuine repentance in your heart and life. Many people in Jesus day were either thrill seekers or folks who desired to be healed or saved from demons or disease. It was not just Jesus power in working miracles that got the interest of the crowds either. As we move to **Mark 6:1-6** we will see that the people were literally astonished at Jesus *teaching* as well. **Mark 6:1-6** *“Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him. And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, “Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands! Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house.” Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. And He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.”* In our text we see that on the Sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue of His hometown and He teaches the people. The people are *astonished* concerning the wisdom coming from this *carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon*. They know Jesus brothers and sisters even calling them by name but they are put off as to the incredible wisdom, words and power demonstrated by *this man* who grew up among them. These people believed the view expressed by Nathaniel in **John 1:46**, *“Can anything good come out of Nazareth”?* The problem is they did not even see Jesus and as His work as good; they were actually *offended at Him*. As we will see in the text, this offense and unbelief results not only in tragedy concerning the state of their souls but also for the healing ministry of Jesus among them.

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: Ask God to give you a genuine understanding, appreciation and love for Jesus and His work. Ask Him to protect you from the sin of unbelief.

TUESDAY – **Mark 6:1–2a** “*Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him. And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue.* We now find that Jesus leaves Capernaum (*out from there*) where He had been and He comes over to *His own country* where He enters what we would call His “hometown”, the town of Nazareth. The word used for *country* is patris or ones fatherland, native country, or place where a person was brought and this statement of fact is verified by **Luke 4:16**. It is interesting that although Jesus was born in Bethlehem (**Matthew 2:1-6**) and seemed to “headquarter” His ministry out of Capernaum (**Matthew 4:13**), He was called and is still referred to and sung about as “Jesus of Nazareth” (**Matthew 2:23, Mark 10:47**). Here Jesus with His disciples go to the *synagogue* on the *Sabbath* and Jesus begins to *teach*. We find an interesting connection with the synagogue and its service and ministers as we look back to **chapter 5** and remember that Jairus’ held a position of prominence as *a ruler of the synagogue*. Now, in **chapter 6**, THE ruler of the synagogue, Christ Himself enters His hometown synagogue and teaches. In **Luke 4:17** we are told that Jesus was *handed the book of the prophet Isaiah* and He read a portion from **Isaiah 61** and then handed the scroll back to the *attendant*. We will see what the reaction is to both Jesus and the teaching of His Word to the people momentarily, but for now may I point out again that Jesus went and gathered corporately to worship. **Luke 4:16** tells us that “*...And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day...*” It was *customary* for Jesus to attend public worship. If you remember the past several weeks of Wednesday Bible study we have focused on the matter of private worship, the “training” necessary to Grow in Godliness. We saw the example of Jesus as He illustrates for us the necessity of private spiritual disciplines for success in the Christian life. Scripture is replete with examples of Jesus devotion to private worship, prayer, study, and meditation upon God and His Word. But here we are reminded by the illustration of His life, that Jesus placed that same importance on public assembly, prayer, worship and reading of Sacred Scripture. You would have a tough time minimizing the need for faithful, consistent gathering together as God’s people in the face of the evidence we find both from the life of Jesus, the Apostles, the early church and church history (**Acts 2:42-46, Hebrews 10:24-25**). Jesus saw the importance of private and public communion with God and His people; do you?

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: Examine your practice of the spiritual disciplines; both private and public. Ask God to help you be more faithful and consistent in following the example of Jesus given in Scripture concerning both private and public worship.

WEDNESDAY – **Mark 6:2b–3** “*And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, “Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands! Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” So they were offended at Him.* Remember that when we take all the synoptic Gospel accounts together we get a lot of details filled in for us. We know from reading this passage in its entirety as well as reading the account from Luke that the reaction is not good at all from the people. But here Mark records for us at the outset that it almost seems to be somewhat favorable as the people *hearing Him were astonished...* Mark has told us before that people who heard Jesus speak and saw Him perform miracles were

constantly marveling at His authority and power and saying they had never heard or seen anything quite like this before (**Mark 1:27, 2:12**). But the sinful fickle nature of man is evidenced again as whatever favor seemed to be among the people at the outset is soon replaced with criticism. *Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands!* Jesus reputation no doubt has spread throughout the land and Capernaum is about 20 miles from Nazareth so it is without question that the people here in Jesus hometown have heard of the incredible miracles He has performed elsewhere. They also have just heard Him speak with power and authority like no one else. But instead of reacting with grateful faith and love for Christ and His teaching it appears they sarcastically respond with skepticism. The text specifically tells us that *He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them.* We will cover this more later but suffice to say, with that fact in mind it is as if the people are saying, “Why can’t you do all the stuff here in your own town like you do everywhere else”? They go on to say we know who you are *the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon and are not your sisters here with us?* They refuse to see and bow before Jesus as God beloved. They want to keep Him on a plane equal to them. They are in effect saying, “You are no better than any of us hometown boy with normal ‘Nazareth’ skills”. As is said, “Familiarity breeds contempt”.

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: Father, save me from attempting to lower You as it were from off Your high and holy throne. You alone are God and I am an undeserving sinner. Help me to live each day mindful of Your greatness, holiness, and also of Your love and grace to me.

THURSDAY – **Mark 6:3b-4** “*So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house.”* Yesterday I mentioned that old saying, “Familiarity breeds contempt”. This is to some degree what we see these people trying to leverage upon Jesus. They are saying, “we know you and your family and your trade, what makes you any better than us”? This is why they are *offended at Him*. If we read Luke’s account (*some scholars see this as a different occasion-more on that this Lord’s Day) we find that Jesus reads for them **Isaiah 61:1-2**. He then goes on to tell them, “*Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing*”. The text informs us that “*the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.*” They got it Beloved; He was telling them He was the Messiah, God in the flesh, the sent One who would save the broken. They were *offended* at the truth and the Lord of Truth. They were skandalizo in the original Greek. It is not hard to see we get our English word scandal from this Greek word. A scandal could be referred to as “a moral stumbling” if you will as someone is “ensnared” in something and this is what is being conveyed here. These people were ensnared in their proud unbelief, they were tripped up, and they stumbled over Jesus to their doom. They couldn’t accept that this hometown boy was any better than them and who did He think He was coming and telling them anything anyway? He thinks he is some great teacher, he is just a carpenter’s son. This tragic “stumbling” is spoken about in several Scriptures; namely, **Isaiah 8:14, Matthew 21:44** and **1 Peter 2:7-8**. Jesus then speaks a little proverb of His own for us when He says, “*A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house.*” All the experts come from out of town, right? We all know this mentality. Jesus is saying that here in His own town and among His own family He is dishonored,

not trusted nor respected. We know it is true that His brothers didn't even believe in Him at this point (**John 7:5**). Everywhere else He was more honored than at home. Here the people knew his family and they knew of His humble life and upbringing. They were proud and envious of His wisdom, and refused to believe and be taught by Him.

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me be humble and open to be corrected and taught by You. Thank You for being able to sympathize with my struggles Jesus.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY – Mark 6:5–6a “Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. And He marveled because of their unbelief.” What is not being said here is that Jesus somehow had lost the power and ability to do any mighty work there. We do see that He healed a *few* people. The unbelief of these people was their curse. Greater light was not given to them because they refused to believe in the light they had already been given. Remember Jesus told Jairus, “...*only believe*”. God looks for and rewards diligent hearts that seek and trust Him. These people were rebellious. The verse may just very simply point to the fact that the people were not even coming and approaching Jesus to be healed like they were in other places because they simply didn't believe in Him. Also in this is the fact that Jesus had not lost the power to heal as is evident, but He had not the will to heal the doubting unbeliever. Unbelief is so wicked and hard to comprehend because it refuses to believe while it ignores the obvious. “*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.*” (**Psalm 19:1-3**) These people saw God standing before them and heard Him speak and yet like so many today, refused to believe. *And He marveled because of their unbelief.* Jesus *marveled*; thaumazo “to wonder, wonder at, marvel”. Only three times in all of Sacred Scripture (concerning just two events) is this said of Jesus; that He *marveled*; first, here at the unbelief and lack of faith on the part of these people, and second in **Matthew 8:10**, & **Luke 7:9** where He *marveled* at the genuine faith of the centurion. The people, disciples, Pilate, Nicodemus and others were always marveling at Jesus but He not so; only twice recorded and both times concerning faith or the lack of it. Oh, the power and incredible sin of unbelief! All sins will be forgiven the sons of men but blasphemy of the Spirit, the rejection of Divine illumination (unbelief) will last forever throughout eternity. As a man, it was a surprise to Christ that His hometown people would not believe in Him but instead reject Him as The Messiah. They knew so much and had so much knowledge and “light” about His mission and commission from God, and saw the incontestable proof, qualifications and power yet were unbelieving and ultimately judicially blinded.

The Word Applied & Suggestion for Prayer: Lord I believe, help my unbelief.