

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for December 18, 2016

Amazing Unbelief
Mark 6:1-6

I. The hometown reunion (6:1-2a)

He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. 2 And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue,

- Where did He go away from?
 - Went away from Galilee by the sea (5:21-43)
 - He had just raised Jairus' daughter from dead in Capernaum
- Jesus' hometown was Nazareth (Mark 1:9, 24; Matthew 2:23)
- Mark notes that His disciples were following Him in His ministry
 - Not just inner 3 (Peter, James and John) anymore
 - This event would be an important demonstration before the disciples were sent to preach the message themselves
- Jesus took advantage of chance to teach on the Sabbath in the synagogue
 - He did this before in Capernaum (Mark 1:21-28)
 - Summary statement of preaching in synagogues in Galilee (Mark 1:39)
 - He healed man with withered hand under Pharisaical scrutiny (Mark 3:1-6)
 - Will He do this again? Not in the rest of Mark's gospel

II. The hostile rejection (6:2b-3)

A. Overwhelmed by Jesus (6:2b)

and many who heard him were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands?"

- Many were "astonished"
 - *ekplesso*
 - "To be blown away" is a possible parallel
 - Mainly used in gospels as people respond to Jesus' teachings and miracles
- How were they astonished?
 - First 3 of 5 questions
 - "Where did this man get these things?"
 - "These things" is a reference to His teaching they had just heard in the synagogue
 - "What is the wisdom given to him?"

- Only time “wisdom” is used in Mark’s gospel
- Jesus had not been flashy about His identity and knowledge while growing up in Nazareth
- “How are such mighty works done by his hands?”
- Probably a reference to stories of works they had heard in Jesus’ Galilean ministry
- They should have connected Jesus’ works as similar to the works they expected to be done by the Messiah
- They were sounding like the Jewish leaders from Jerusalem who observed Jesus only to declare that Jesus was working with Satan
- Their reaction of astonishment turned into suspicion of Jesus’ power and authority
- Nazareth was overwhelmed by Jesus but they did not have true faith

B. Offended by Jesus (6:3)

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.

- “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not his sisters here with us?”
 - Four half-brothers mentioned
 - James became leader of Jerusalem church
 - Jude wrote letter of Jude in our bibles today
 - Jesus’ occupation, family, and sisters in the community all highlighted Jesus’ ordinariness
- They took offense at him
 - *skandalizo* - Cause to stumble
 - They could not link Messianic expectations and report of Jesus’ ministry in Galilee with the familiar carpenter family of Nazareth
- Other responses to Jesus had similar concerns
 - John 6:42 “They said, ‘Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven?’”
 - John 7:15-16 “The Jews therefore marveled, saying, ‘How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?’ 16 So Jesus answered them, ‘My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me.’”
- Yet, this offense and opposition was prophesied

- Isaiah 53:1-3 “Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? 2 For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. 3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.”
- Luke 2:34-35 “And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, ‘Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed 35 (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”
- We too can expect the same things when we preach Christ
 - 1 Corinthians 1:22-23 “For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles”

III. The hindered response (6:4-6)

A. The expression (6:4)

4 And Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household.”

- Jesus states an unfortunate reality (v. 4)
- Returning home should be a joy...
 - Military heroes return to supportive hometowns
 - Celebrities feel the love of their hometowns
 - Sports teams thrive in their home stadiums/arenas
 - Yet Jesus is treated like He’s on trial by His hometown
- Modern day expression, “Familiarity breeds contempt”
 - Eating at same food place for years can bring contempt
 - Working the same job for years can bring contempt
 - They thought they already knew Jesus, the familiar carpenter, and there was no way He could be the Messiah
- Jeremiah 11:21 Prophet from Anathoth told by his own people not to prophesy
- John 7:2-5 “Now the Jews’ Feast of Booths was at hand. 3 So his brothers said to him, ‘Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. 4 For no one

works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world.' 5 For not even his brothers believed in him."

B. The exception (6:5)

5 And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them.

- Jesus did no "mighty works" there
 - Nazareth was the exception in Jesus' ministry compared to the rest of Galilee
 - He did heal a few sick people
 - "Laid his hands..." (Mark 5:23 reference to healing)
- Jesus is not primarily a magician or miracle worker
- Jesus' miracles and ministry revealed true faith

C. The explanation (6:6)

6 And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went about among the villages teaching.

- He marveled/wondered/was amazed at their "unbelief"
 - Matthew 8:10 Amazed at faith of centurion
 - Marveling in previous Mark accounts
- Parallel passage states Matthew 13:58 "And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief."
- The people of Nazareth failed to display true faith
- Faith is an important concept in Scripture
 - Hebrews 4:2 "For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened."
 - Matthew 17:19-20 "Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, 'Why could we not cast it out?' 20 He said to them, 'Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.'"
- This hometown rejection of Jesus paves the way for a greater rejection that will take place at the end of His life