Lesson 260
Jesus' Final Visit to Nazareth

Story Elements



- **Text***:* Mark 6:1-6**;** Matt. 13:54-58
- **Setting***:* circa 28 AD in Nazarethj
- **Characters***:* God, Jesus, the disciples, and the townspeople of Nazareth
- **Plot**: During his last preaching tour in his hometown, Jesus is once again met with rejection.
- **Key word(s):** ***"into his own _____"*** (Matt. 13:54, 57) – There is something tender about the thought of the Saviour among His own familiar neighbors. Yet when even they reject Him, we are reminded that those who come nearest to grace may still miss its blessing through unbelief.
- **Climax**: ***"and they were offended in him."*** (Mark 6:3; Matt. 13:57) All the mighty works and powerful teachings of Christ sparked their amazement, but not their faith. In the end, they could not look past the son of Joseph who was their neighbor to see the Son of God who would be their Savior.

Last Chance

1) (Mark 6:1) Many commentators understand this passage in Mark and Matthew to be the same event spoken of in Luke 4:16-30. A. T. Robertson explains why his harmony of the Gospels treats this story as a separate event: "There is not sufficient occasion to identify this visit to Nazareth with that described by Luke. That was at the very beginning of the great ministry in Galilee, and this is near its close. The details are quite different. It is perfectly natural that after a long interval he should give the Nazarenes another opportunity to hear his teaching, and to witness miracles, which he would not work for them when demanded, but now voluntarily works in a few cases, so far as their now *wonderful* unbelief left it appropriate."[1]

APPLICATION➔ It is a great demonstration of God's _____ that Jesus would return to his hometown to preach the gospel and to heal the sick when on his previous visit the townspeople threw him out of the synagogue and then attempted to throw him off a cliff. (Luke 4:28-29)

Jeremiah 3:12 *Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever.*

2) (Mark 6:2-3) As Jesus preached and healed, the people's response was twofold: they were…
   a) …_____ at his doctrine – Christ's powerful preaching and mighty miracles were undeniably divine.
   b) …_____ at his person – instead of responding in faith, the townspeople looked for reasons to remain in unbelief*. Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?*

APPLICATION➔ When confronted with the gospel and the evidence of its truth, many look for reasons to _____ what they have heard. In Nazareth, they rejected Jesus because they knew where he was from; ironically, in Judaea, they rejected Jesus because they did not know where he was from, *As for this fellow, we*

[1] A. T. Robertson, *A Harmony of the Gospels* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1922) 77. Emphasis original.

know not from whence he is (John 9:29). Just as Pharaoh turned to his magicians when Moses and Aaron gave him a sign, so they turn to their own Jannes and Jambres to justify rejecting the truth.

2 Timothy 3:8 *Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.*

Last Word

3) (Mark 6:4) Jesus rebukes their obstinate unbelief with a well-known proverb*: A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.* Our modern variation is "familiarity breeds _____."

APPLICATION➔ Charles Spurgeon said, "To be prejudiced against a truth because of the lowly origin of him who proclaims it is most manifest folly. Is a pearl to be rejected because it was found in a shell that is itself of no value? Would not a wise man pick up a diamond from a dunghill if he saw one flashing there?"[2]

Lost Opportunity

4) (Mark 6:5) **Did their unbelief limit Jesus' power, or did He choose to withhold His mighty works in response to their unbelief**? Mark seems to indicate the former (Jesus *could do no mighty work*) while Matthew indicates the latter (*And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief* [Matt. 13:58]). In practice unbelief ties the hands of omnipotence, but in reality, God will withhold blessings from those who _____ Him.

APPLICATION➔ Matthew Henry explains Mark 6:5 thus: "It is a strange expression, as if unbelief tied the hands of omnipotence itself; he *would have done* as many miracles there as he had done elsewhere, but he could not, because people would not make _____ to him, nor sue for his favours; he could have wrought them, but they forfeited the honour of having them wrought for them"[3]

APPLICATION➔ It has been stated by many faith healers that people who are not healed are, because of the lack of faith, responsible for the failure of the miracle worker. Charlatans love to use this passage to justify their lack of actual healing power. But we should note that the people of Nazareth were not coming to Jesus, nor receiving Him in faith. They had already tried to kill him, and now they were doubling down on their rejection. **These were not people who didn't have enough faith, these were people who had obstinate _____.**

5) (Mark 6:6) The people of Nazareth were astonished at Jesus' teaching; Jesus _____ at their unbelief. How incredibly tragic it is to be so close to grace, and then to turn one's nose up at it.

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Answer Key: key word(s) "country" • 1. ➔ mercy • 2. a) astonished; b) offended • 3. contempt • 4. refuse; ➔ application; unbelief • 5. marveled

[2] Charles Spurgeon, "THE CARPENTER'S SON AND HIS RELATIONS", preached ON LORD'S-DAY EVENING, MAY 20, 1866. <https://www.spurgeongems.org/sermon/chs3312.pdf>

[3] Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 1788.