

Homecoming and Rejection

Վերադարձ Դեպի Տուն և Մերժում

Mark 6:1-13

Today we move on to the next passage in Mark. So far Jesus' ministry has been focused in Capernaum. In Mark 6 there is shift. Jesus comes back to his hometown where he grew up. One expects some kind of cheer from the locals. By now Jesus has become famous.

Yet, **Jesus brought revolutionary concepts into his community.**

- Jesus taught his disciples that **God is creating a new family**, the family of 12 disciples. He taught his disciples that when they hear the **call from God**, they will follow that call.
- Jesus gave a **new meaning to the Sabbath**; he taught us to find comfort and rest in Him.
- **Jesus did not reject non-Jewish people**. He traveled to the other side of the Sea of Galilee to heal the man who was possessed with demons. Two thousand pigs were thrown into the sea as Jesus was demonstrating how God could rescue them from evil.
- Jesus had become a celebrity. Although he needed to escape the crowd so many times, yet he always had compassion and mercy towards the needs of the people.

In this passage, we find that **Jesus is returning home. It is homecoming.**

Although his family had some problems with his teachings, yet Jesus wanted to go home. We read in chapter 3: **"And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, 'He is out of his mind.'"** (3: 21)

Let us read the passage:

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, 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? 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. 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." ⁵ And he could do no mighty work there, except that he

laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. ⁶ And he marveled because of their unbelief.

And he went about among the villages teaching. (Mark 6:1-6 ESV)

Jesus enters Nazareth and goes to the **synagogue to teach**. This is not the first time he goes to the Synagogue on the Sabbath (6:2a; see 1:21, 39; 3:1), and again **“many who heard him were amazed.”**

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.” (Mark 1:27 ESV)

Thus, this is not first-time people have question about Jesus:

“Their query about Jesus is the third in a series of questions raised by those who have been bowled over by his teaching and his deeds.

- First, a synagogue gathering asked, **“What is this?”** (1:27);

- Next some teachers of the law and then Jesus’ disciples asked themselves, **“Who is this?”** (2:7; 4:41).

- Now, the question has to do with **the origin** or source of his deeds and teaching, **“From where is this?”**¹

“Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him?...”(6:2) - They did not even use Jesus’ name.

“...this man, this guy, this fellow, who is he?”

They did not want to pronounce his name, as if it would defile their lips.

-Then, something worse comes: **“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?”** (Mark 6:3 ESV)

As if they were saying “Isn’t this the local guy? He was a blue-collar worker, a carpenter and not a scribe, and we know his family.”

-And more, in the Middle East we are called **by our father’s name. “Isn’t this the son of Mary?”**

This was an insult. Maybe his father Joseph was dead; it could be so. But even that would not stop from calling him the son of Joseph. Are they saying he was an illegitimate son of Mary and Joseph? I am not sure, but the tone of their questions is not pleasant.

Then they give the names of his brothers, and they say they know the sisters. Again, once more they are saying we know his family.

What good can come from this man? We know his occupation, his mother, and his whole family.

Mark adds: **“And they took offense (*skandalon*) at him.”** (Mark 6:3 b ESV)

So, the issue is not what Jesus is teaching, but that they are offended because they think they know his origins, Mary’s son. *Babam* we know, who does he think he is? **“Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”** (John 1:46 ESV)

“The people in Nazareth know Jesus from a worldly point of view” (2 Cor. 5:16), and their very familiarity with him is a hindrance to knowing him truly.”²

Is Jesus a stumbling block for you? Are you offended by Jesus? Jesus, the cornerstone, became a stumbling block for the ones who don’t believe. (1 Peter 2:7)

The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. (Psalm 118:22)

What was Jesus’ response?

And Jesus said to them, **“A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household.”** (Mark 6:4)

First of all, **Jesus is declaring he is a prophet of God.** Actually, he is more than a prophet, but he starts from there. Jesus also identifies with the prophets of the Old Testament. “Jesus’ self-identification as a prophet places his ministry within the biblical patterns of prophetic witness, rejection, and vindication realized earlier in Israel’s history and recounted throughout Hebrew Scripture (e.g. 2 Chr. 36:15-16; Jer. 35:15-17; Hos. 9:7).³

In his first chapter, John describes Logos as REJECTED by his OWN: **“He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.** (John 1:11) Their rejection did not stop Jesus. I believe he was also teaching his disciples that the world would reject them. That should not stop them from spreading the Good News.

“And 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. And he went about among the villages teaching.” (Mark 6:5-6 ESV)

How interesting. **Jesus stopped from doing “mighty work”.** I believe Jesus can do anything. But when we humans are not ready to receive his presence, Jesus will not push himself to us. How sad is the picture?

And he **marveled**, wondered, was astonished and surprised about their “**spiritual blindness**”. In the Bible, 46 times this verb (marveled) has been used sometimes in the positive sense and sometimes in the negative sense. **Jesus marveled when he saw the faith of the centurion (Matthew 8:10)**. Now he marvels when he finds lack of faith.

Do we marvel at the work of God in our lives? Do we have a sense of wonder and awe? Like little children who discover something new, do we marvel??? Or do you think God marvels when He finds lack of faith in our community?

Nothing stops his mission. Rejection will not stop Jesus.

- This event bothers me personally. I wonder these days that many who “knew” Jesus from the outside, Sunday school stories, youth ministries, never “knew” who Jesus of Nazareth is, the Son of God; I wonder if many young people left the church, or their faith in Christ, searching meaning in their lives in other places, because they never met Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Messiah. I wonder...

The next passage is advice to his disciples.

And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts—but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. And he said to them, “Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.”(Mark 6:7-11 ESV)

In the first chapter of Mark, the author explained how Jesus launched his public ministry saying:

The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:14-15 ESV)

To whom was he saying repent? To the Israelite. Some were open to receive the message of Jesus, and others just rejected.

If Nazareth rejected them, that did not stop Jesus from His mission. **The mission kept going** and grew stronger.

Jesus is sending the twelve, **two by two**, to the mission field, empowering them with authority.

-Two by two, sending them in pairs. If Jesus sent them alone, he would have covered more ground, right? Jesus works in a different way.

Why two by two?

Companionship, encouraging each other...

It reminds of “the Old Testament principle that something is established as true if testimony is given it to by two witnesses. (Deut. 19:15; Matt. 18:16) What one proclaimed, the other could verify.”⁴

**-Jesus asked them to go with almost nothing, no bag, no food, no money.
Just sandals and a staff.**

Why?

Sandals for walking and a staff for protection?

“The staff Jesus allows them to take may simply be a reference to a traveler’s stick, but it has a **rich imagery** in the history of God’s dealings with Israel,

- beginning with **Moses’ staff** (Ex. 4:2–5, 20).

- It may be connected to the **staves of the twelve tribes** (Num. 17)

- and a symbol of a **tribal leader’s authority** or a **prophet’s authority** (2 Kings 4:29).

- It may have some symbolic **connection to the covenant renewal of Israel** (see also Ezek. 20:37; 37:15–28). They are to call Israel back to God.⁵

Why no bag, no money, no food?

1. There is **urgency to pass the news** of redemption and salvation to the Israelite who need repentance, thus travel light.

2. I believe Jesus wanted the disciples **to trust God and not the things they owned**.

3. They will go poor; they depend on the generosity of others for food and lodging.

“The list reflects something about the character of their mission. To go on a mission entirely dependent on the generosity of others for food and lodging is an expression of extreme poverty.”⁶

As Minear puts it, “Weakness and poverty are effective means of proclaiming that men should repent (1 Cor. 2:3–5).”⁷

And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling,⁴ and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,⁵ so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (1 Cor. 2:3-5 NIV)

4. The poverty of the disciples may be intended as a prophetic warning of judgment that will come upon Israel.⁸

And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.

Shaking the dust of one's feet goes back to the Jewish custom. "When Jews who had traveled in Gentile regions came home, they were required to shake the dust off their feet at the border lest they bring the contamination of the Pagan world into Israel. That actions symbolize God's judgment on paganism."⁹

How interesting, now the judgment over Israelite if they reject Jesus, or any nation or person who reject Jesus.

Application:

1. If Jesus was rejected, we all will face some kind of rejection

It could be family, it could be a job interview, it could be school admissions, it could be your faith was not being welcomed ...

- e.g. a football coach who believed in prayer was kicked out of school, because he prays after the games in a public place...

"Joe Kennedy lost his job as a football coach in Bremerton, Washington, when the school demanded he relinquish his religious rights and stop praying after games."¹⁰

- What do we do when we are rejected?

How terrible it is to be rejected.

Jesus did not give up. His family rejected him. Fine, **Jesus created a new family.**

New relationships are not bound by blood and DNA. They are better; bonded by HIS BLOOD. I have a bigger family with Jesus. All colors and races, yet one Lord.

2. Second application is the way Jesus sends his disciples to the world.

"Do not take with you this or that, and go as light as possible."

Maybe some of the commands that Jesus gave to his disciples were applicable for their time, yet we can learn some important principles.

When we go to mission, I think Jesus wants us to learn to trust local families. We learn humbly by being with them.

-Badveli Kevin always finds a local mission organization, (family) to work with. Just in two weeks our youth is going to a mission project; they are working with Pari and her husband and the local mission team.

-Doug Barnett is a British pastor. He visited Lebanon many times. And many times he came to Ainar and stayed with us in our humble home. He was a preacher and a teacher. But more than that, he helped my wife to wash the dishes, he played with my kids, when we were snowed in, he helped me open the roads.... He became one of us.

You cannot do any mission work when you are not one of them. Isn't this the message of Christmas when God became a man?

You do not need to go Haysadan to do mission. Here in Fresno, we need to go out be one of them to do mission work.

Go... go and be the disciple of Jesus. The world will reject us. Fine, that means God will open new possibilities...

Amen

1. David E. Garland, *The NIV Application Commentary*, Mark P 231
2. David E Garland P 233
3. Dawn Wilhelm, *Preaching Mark*, p.103
4. R.C. Sproul, *He Taught Them as One Who Had Authority Mark*, P 113
5. David E Garland, P 241
6. Dawn Wilhelm, *Preaching Mark*, p.241
7. Minar Mark 80
8. Ulrich Luz, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus (Mt 8–17)* (Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament; Zurich: Benziger/Neukirchener, 1990), 2:97.
9. R.C. Sproul, *He Taught Them as One Who Had Authority Mark*, P 115
10. <https://www.clarkcountytoday.com/news/supremes-hear-case-of-coach-fired-by-school-for-praying/#:~:text=Joe%20Kennedy%20lost%20his%20job,and%20stop%20praying%20after%20games.>