

7/8/12 Sermon – Mark 6:1-13
Ascension Lutheran Church, Batavia IL

Grace, peace, and every blessing to you in Jesus' gracious giving. Amen.

Mark 6:1–13 (NKJV)

1 Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him.

2 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!

3 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.

4 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."

5 Now 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. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.

7 And He called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits.

8 He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in their money belts—

9 but to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics.

10 Also He said to them, "In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place.

11 And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!"

12 So they went out and preached that people should repent.

13 And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.

Jesus Enters with Mighty Works

"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." (1 Timothy 1:17, NKJV)

In Jesus name dear fellow redeemed,

Maybe you recall from science class what happens when you try to connect two positively charged magnets. If they are strong enough, no matter how you try to force them together they will always repel.

It is possible to reverse a magnets polarity, but the magnet will not do so on its own. Something else has to cause it to happen. In order to attract the magnets together, something has to change the polarity of the magnet.

Jesus enters with mighty works.

1. He departs because of unbelief

You would think that of all the places Jesus would be welcome, He would surely be accepted by his own hometown of Nazareth.

(v.4-6) Jesus entered with mighty works. He brought miracles. He brought the truth of God's saving gospel. Jesus is indeed the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He has excluded no one from His plan of redemption. He left not one sin unpaid for. Yet He receives a resistant charge – a magnetic force which repels. We read that He is forced to leave because of unbelief.

(v.2) Nazareth was thought of as Jesus' hometown – His stomping grounds. Before Jesus had embarked the beginning of His public ministry, He had been just another boy. Smart, yes; quiet and well mannered, but still just a boy. He was Joseph the carpenter's son. The works of His hands were supposed to be fixing tables not fixing diseases. This is like your local handyman walking into the public university and offering to teach philosophy. They were astonished and also offended. **(v.4)**

This statement that they were "offended" uses a word that pictures opposition, a cause for stumbling, a trap. It was a polar charge that would not allow Jesus to connect with them. They tripped over a spiritual obstacle on account of Jesus.

Amazement mixed with skepticism is a dangerous thing when it comes to faith. This skepticism stirred among them. The Messiah that would bring liberation to them could not be this carpenter's son. They could not see how this lowly figure of Nazareth do such mighty deeds and claim to teach greater authority than the scribes.

The offense went much deeper in fact. We read in v.12 of how the disciples went out preaching repentance. Here is the real offense. Repentance is an obstacle for our flesh. We read in **1 Corinthians 1:23 (NKJV) – 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block (an offense) and to the Greeks foolishness.**

To the Jews, Jesus was a stumbling block. It was as if the more mighty works He did, the more He was pushed away from His homeland. We find Jesus conducting much of His ministry to the north in Capernaum. This is because central to His ministry was the call to repentance and faith.

Mark 1:14–15 (NKJV) – 14 Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

With every healing came a recognition of sin and the need for a Savior. This was the mighty work of the gospel. And to those of His hometown, His family, who was this carpenter's son to tell them they needed to repent or they needed forgiveness?

Unbelief was that magnet that could not connect with what Jesus was bringing. It was a force that pushed His mighty works away.

And how often are we offended at Jesus' mighty works? Our flesh is no different than that of the Jews in our text. Jesus preaches repentance and we push away. We are offended. Repentance calls for humility, and humility calls for faith, and faith means I can't do it myself.

Often in our lives the gospel just doesn't seem like enough. More and more we want to have some part in making things right. If everything would just fall into this nice blueprint that I have written, then I would be content. We want to be the carpenter of our life – designing a structure that fits our desires. Our flesh has a vision for this project and trust is not part of it. In fact our flesh will never trust. **Romans 8:7 (NKJV) – 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.**

The carpenter that comes with mighty works of salvation is an enemy to our flesh. I want my life to unfold according to my plans. Who is this carpenter to tear down and rebuild what I have already constructed? My plans do not include repentance. They do not include changing sinful habits or admitting sin at all. v.5 - **“So they were offended at Him.”**

As Jesus sent out His disciples two by two, He gave them very serious instructions. The rejection of the gospel was not something to be shrugged off lightly. So often now a days our society does not want to offend anyone. I find myself thinking the same things. Should I be talking to people about sin or focus more on what will make everyone feel better about themselves? What right does a church have to judge another person's lifestyle? Well, hear the words of our Savior: ([v.11](#)).

The worst and most unloving act we could do would be to make light of a rejection of the gospel – either in our life or in someone else's. It is more than just that these disciples visited the house of sinners. It is much more than sin that caused these disciples to leave in a cloud of dust. This “shaking” was a ritual act announcing not their personal judgment, but God's judgment against those who reject His saving call to faith in Christ. We as much in the ministry of Paul: **Acts 13:46,51 (NKJV) – 46 Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, “It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. ... 51 But they shook off the dust from their feet against them, and came to Iconium.**

Notice ... they had judged themselves unworthy. The saving work of the gospel does not wait around or ignore rejection. It is a like a magnet which brings only resistance. The stronger the magnetic field, the further away the gospel is driven. Jesus' mighty works are withdrawn and He marvels.

2. He remains where He is welcome

Jesus moves on. He searches for a place where He is welcome. He sends His disciples out two by two into the surrounding villages, preaching repentance. Where He is welcome, there He will remain.

But where will He be welcome? Will some accept these mighty works because they have an opposite magnetic charge than those in our text? **Isaiah 53:6 (NKJV) — 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way;**

We should never look at a teaching of scripture and think that if side “A” of the coin exists then the opposite side “B” must also exist. Just because the rejection of the gospel is the fault of the unbeliever does not mean the opposite is true. It does not mean side “B” exists and the acceptance of the gospel is to the credit of the believer. **“All we like sheep have gone astray.”**

We, just like the Jews of Jesus’ day, have a resistant charge. The most mighty of works was not to be found in the healing of the sick. Nor was it in any of Jesus’ earthly miracles. When Jesus meets Nathanael and prophetically tells him that He saw Him sitting under a fig tree, He goes on: **John 1:50–51 (NKJV) — 50 Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” 51 And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”**

Jesus enters with mighty works. He enters Jerusalem with the mightiest of wonders.

Jesus enters and journeys to the cross where He takes with Him every sin. He carries the load of our guilt on His innocent shoulders and in a cry of despair, experiences the payment of hell for us.

Ephesians 1:18–20 (NKJV) — 18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know ... what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.

Yes, the most mighty of works is our salvation – our coming to faith in the saving knowledge of Jesus. With His mighty works, Jesus changes our polarization. He brings to our carnal mind a good news so powerful that it can remove unbelief and make believers out of us. He convinces us by His Spirit that we are sinful human beings and that through the mighty work of Jesus we have forgiveness.

This is where Jesus remains. This is where He is welcome. In hearts of faith which He Himself has created. **Ephesians 2:8 (NKJV) — 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,**

Now trust is born. Now comes a welcome home party for our Jesus. **(v.10)** We welcome this preaching of repentance, because we know that with our turning away

from sin, we are turning toward something great. We are turning toward the mighty works of our Savior who has carried our sorrows and griefs.

Jesus is even now entering in among us with mighty works. **John 14:23 (NKJV) — 23 Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.**

As you face tomorrow, you do so with mighty works. You do so with the God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit dwelling in you. No longer is our life a building project of our design, but picture yourself riding on the waves of God’s will.

Some of you may have lost power this last week as the storms rolled through. Yet in the midst of the power and great works God displays in nature, He knows exactly where you were during that storm. He knew exactly what you were doing. In every storm in fact, Jesus knows exactly where you are and what you are thinking. He guides you over wind and wave to know His mighty plan of salvation. This carpenter has designed a blueprint that will not fail. It will not come up short of funding or materials. As He sent His disciples with no provisions, but only with His word, so also He promises to provide for you. He has built for you, with His own hands, an eternal resting place in heaven and will be sure to get you there.

It is so easy to take for granted what Jesus has given us here. If you grew up with the CLC you may have never been without it. But many are. Many are without the pure message of Jesus’ mighty works of redemption. Only by grace has this message dwelt among us. Should we keep it to ourselves? Do we take for granted the carpenter’s son?

This coming week the Traveling Vacation Bible School will be sending six volunteers to us to assist us with the distribution of flyers for our upcoming Vacation Bible School. In fact, we will likely be sending them two by two up and down streets, in the surrounding villages if you will. Think of that one soul who has never known what mighty works this Jesus of Nazareth has done. Perhaps they don’t even have children or don’t come to our VBS, but rather they read the back of the flyer which declares the pure message of saving grace through Jesus. Oh that the Lord would use us to bring that saving word to just one sinner in need. Oh that when we get to heaven we would see that soul who received and welcomed Jesus to stay.

I thank God that we have welcomed Jesus to stay among us. I thank God that as your pastor you have extended a call to receive the preaching and teaching the gospel. You welcome these mighty works of Jesus to stay as you provide for the needs of me and my family.

Like the power of two magnets clinging together, opposites though we are, Jesus clings to us. May God keep this gospel alive both in preaching and in our hearts as we welcome Jesus to stay.

Jesus enters with mighty works. Amen.

